Kansas Sticks to Dangerous Path to Build Expensive Coal Plant

KDHE gives Sunflower the Green Light to Build New Coal Plant at Holcomb, Ignoring Pollution and Rising Costs

GARDEN CITY, KS -- The Kansas Department of Health and Environment signed off on what promises to become Kansas’ most expensive power plant if the project proponent, Sunflower Electric Cooperative, chooses to risk moving ahead with the plant despite a long list of remaining hurdles. KDHE’s permit addendum for the proposed coal plant comes after the Kansas Supreme Court unanimously decided last year that the original permit was flawed. That case was brought by Sierra Club, which was represented by Earthjustice.

“The rest of the country is moving forward, but KDHE is stuck in reverse,” said Amanda Goodin, an attorney with Earthjustice who represents the Sierra Club. “All over the country, states are taking advantage of natural resources like wind energy – which Kansas has in abundance. But KDHE and Sunflower are dragging Kansas backwards, burdening the state with a costly, dirty, outdated coal plant that will cover Kansas in a blanket of pollution. KDHE needs to move forward into the 21st century if it wants to create new jobs and allow the state to grow and thrive.”

The Kansas Supreme Court remanded the permit to KDHE in October 2013, citing the agency’s unlawful decision to ignore new, more protective standards for air pollutants that the Holcomb plant would emit. But several months later, KDHE proposed to reissue the permit virtually unchanged, without addressing the specific legal flaws identified by the Supreme Court. “Sunflower is out of step with the rest of Kansas,” said Bill Griffith with the Sierra Club’s Kansas Chapter. “We just
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2014 Summer - 2014
had the fight of our lives to protect our job-creating clean energy standards, we passed a law to encourage utilities to reduce consumption through energy efficiency programs, and KDHE now faces the critical task of reducing Kansas' carbon pollution. Sunflower can’t seem to hear the message that a new coal plant doesn’t have a place here in Kansas.”

The proposed plant is estimated to cost around $3 billion for only 895 megawatts of new generation. Sunflower is still deeply in debt to the federal government for its last overpriced coal plant, and has gotten a huge debt write-off from the federal government because it’s last bad coal investment didn’t pencil out. The huge price tag of the new plant means that if Sunflower’s gamble doesn’t pay off, ratepayers in Kansas will be stuck picking up the tab.

“Sunflower’s member cooperatives should be furious,” said Holly Bender, Deputy Director with Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign. “Sunflower’s mission says it’s committed to least-cost power, yet its board is lusting after a coal plant that guarantees to dramatically raise the cost of power for anyone it contracts with. I have no doubt that Sunflower’s Board is setting its member coops up for huge rate increases.”

The proposed coal plant, also known as Holcomb 2, is the most intensely contested coal plant in Kansas history, as well as one of the most controversial permits ever considered by KDHE. If built, the new plant would release thousands of pounds of toxic pollution in Kansas while the power it generates would belong to Tri-State Generation and Transmission Association, a Colorado-based utility.

“Colorado has stepped up to the plate and made a commitment to clean energy,” added Nellis-Kennedy Howard, a Senior Campaign Representative with Sierra Club’s Beyond Coal Campaign. “Colorado expanded its Renewable Portfolio Standard (RPS) for electric cooperatives like Tri-State, which will now procure new clean energy to meet growing demand. Buying into a new coal plant doesn’t fit into the direction Tri-State is heading and puts customers at risk of rate shock given the high costs of new coal plants Tri-State’s own statements indicate that it has no need for the Holcomb plant for the foreseeable future.”

Tri-State’s new focus on renewable energy is not the only hurdle that remains for the troubled Holcomb project. The United States Department of Agriculture must give Sunflower approval to move ahead with the project before construction can start. That approval must include an environmental review process that has not yet commenced.

KDHE’s announcement comes just days before EPA is scheduled to announce groundbreaking new rules to dramatically cut greenhouse gas emissions from power plants. The Holcomb plant’s carbon emissions put it on a collision course with these new rules. Over the next few years, KDHE will work to draft a plan to reduce Kansas’ carbon pollution from power plants as required by proposed Clean Air Act requirements.

**Coal, continued from page 1**

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Bill McKibben Issues ‘Call to Arms’ for New York Climate Summit

Veteran campaigner plans largest ever march in Big Apple during Ban Ki-moon’s climate meet in September

By Sophie Yeo

From RTCC.org (Responding To Climate Change)

Activists have issued a “call to arms” on climate change, hoping to assemble tens of thousands of people in New York ahead of a landmark UN Summit in September.

Led by Bill McKibben, environmental activist and founder of the 350 campaign group, over a thousand people have already said they will take part in a march through New York on 20-21 September, hoping to send a message to world leaders that tough action is needed on climate change.

The march will take place ahead of a one-day UN climate summit, which will be hosted by UN Secretary General Ban Ki-moon on 23 September. He has asked leaders of governments, businesses and civil society to come equipped with “bold pledges” on how they will combat global warming.

People from across society will gather for the march, predicts McKibben, reflecting a groundswell of movement that is already underway to tackle climate change, such as divestment from fossil fuels and investment in clean energy.

“There will be clergy and laypeople from synagogues and churches and mosques, now rising in record numbers to say, “If the Bible means anything, it means that we need to care for the world God gave us.” And there will, of course, be scientists, saying, “What exactly don’t you understand about what we’ve been telling you for a quarter-century?” wrote McKibben in Rolling Stone magazine.

“And students will arrive from around the country, because who knows better how to cope with long bus rides and sleeping on floors – and who knows better that their very futures are at stake?

“…And then there will be those of us plain old middle-class Americans who may still benefit from our lives of cheap fossil fuel, but who just can’t stand to watch the world drift into chaos.”

Last year, tens of thousands of protesters marched on Washington DC in the largest environmental protest in the US to date, hoping to convince Obama to reject the Keystone XL Pipeline.

The September march will be more globally relevant, as Ban Ki-moon has raised expectations that world leaders from across the world will attend, in order to raise ambition ahead of the UN’s climate conference in Paris 2015, where all countries have agreed to sign off a legally binding deal to prevent dangerous global warming.

Read more: in Rolling Stone at http://goo.gl/KD76yk. The Kansas Chapter will have more info as we approach the date and will send out details via email.

Sierra Club Petitions KDHE to Address Odor at Large Hog Factories

The Sierra Club today submitted a petition to the Kansas Department of Health and Environment calling for the Department to initiate a rulemaking process to address odors generated by large swine feeding operations.

During proceedings related to the massive Sea-board Ladder Creek hog confinement complex in Greeley County, the Kansas Chapter realized that KDHE had not adhered to the statute governing rules on odor control plans at swine feeding operations. We noted that, with their current rule for odor control plans, KDHE makes no distinction between an operation of 1000 animal units (2500 hogs over 55 pounds) and the Ladder Creek operation that will house up to 158,400 animal units (as many as 396,000 hogs over 55 pounds). KDHE has denied our contention.

“It’s obvious that a hog factory with 400,000 animals should have to adhere to stricter practices for reducing odors than an operation with only 2500 hogs,” said Craig Volland, Chair of the Kansas Chapter’s Agriculture Committee. “Right now long-time rural residents in Kansas are sitting ducks for an intrusion of massive, smelly hog factories.”

The Chapter has included in the petition some recommendations for tighter rules for odor control plans.

The petition can be viewed at Kansas.SierraClub.org on the Industrial Agriculture page under Advocacy. Post is dated June 6, 2014.
Flint Hills Burning Raises New Pollution Issue

By Craig Volland, Air Quality Committee Chair

In 2010 KDHE and EPA Region 7 worked with some stakeholders to produce a voluntary Smoke Management Plan (SMP) intended to balance the need of ranchers to increase productivity in their cattle with the need to reduce health impacts of downwind air pollution, especially ozone smog.

Test of the SMP. In 2011, heavy burning caused exceedances of the 75 parts per billion national ambient air quality standard (NAAQS) for ozone in Wichita, Topeka, Mine Creek in SE Kansas, and at the Konza Prairie monitor near Manhattan. Advocates said it was too soon to gauge the performance of the SMP. In December of 2012, over our objections, EPA Region 7 granted “exceptional event” status to the 2011 exceedances and removed the data from any calculation toward a violation of the NAAQS. The acres burned in 2012 and 2013 were much reduced due to drought. There was not much grass to burn.

The 2014 Burn Season. While the acres-burned figures are not out yet, it appears to have been a normal year and hopefully a good test of the efficacy of the SMP. Although the data has yet to be quality assured and certified, it appears the burn season this year caused only one ozone exceedance, at a monitor in the Wichita area.

However, last year KDHE lobbied the landowner (The Nature Conservancy) and the operator (KSU) to withdraw permission for the EPA-owned ozone monitor at the Biological Research Station in the Konza Prairie near Manhattan. KDHE asserted that the monitor was improperly sited for regulatory purposes. EPA complied, and the Konza Prairie monitor was unplugged on April 5, 2013. Thus there was no monitor this year at the site where two exceedances had been recorded in 2011.

A New Red Flag. Any hopes that a page had been turned on the Flint Hills burning saga appear to have been dashed by measurement of several exceedances of the NAAQS for fine particles (PM2.5) at continuous monitors in Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska. These are directly downwind of the rangeland burning. PM2.5 is believed by many scientists to be more dangerous than ozone, because particles of this size are respirable and can even enter the blood stream.

On March 30, April 6 and April 18 values of 38.7, 38.6 and 60.5 ug/M3, respectively, exceeded the 24-hour average, PM 2.5 NAAQS standard of 35 ug/M3 at the continuous monitor in Lincoln. On April 12 the Omaha monitor recorded a 24-hour value of 37.4. There was also a near-miss on the 12th in Lincoln. These peaks pretty much line up with reports in the April 14 issue of the Manhattan Mercury of heavy smoke in the City of Manhattan and on the KSU campus. This data still needs to be quality assured.

Naturally we reasoned that if there were exceedances after heavy Flint Hills burn-days in Lincoln and Omaha then there must have been problems in north central Kansas as well. But guess what? There are no continuous PM2.5 monitors in northern Kansas for a distance of some 280 miles between Kansas City, Kansas and the Cedar Bluffs monitor in western Kansas. None in Wichita, either. There is a PM2.5 filter-type monitor in Topeka, but it assesses the air only every third day.

PM2.5 pollution was rarely mentioned in the discourse surrounding the SMP and exceptional events proceedings. Is that because there are no fine particle exceedances to worry about? No. For all practical purposes, fine particle pollution immediately downwind of the Flint Hills burning is not being consistently monitored.

In fairness to KDHE, the EPA rules generally require compliance monitors be sited only in urban areas of a certain size, to capture the influences from industrial and vehicle pollution. In other words monitoring the Flint Hills burning has fallen through the cracks.

Investigation Continues. Meanwhile it took a year for the national EPA to fully respond to our Freedom of Information Act request for the record on the shutting of the Konza Prairie ozone monitor. At least they didn’t charge us a fee. As a result our investigation has only recently resumed, and we hope to complete our report in time for the next issue of the Planet Kansas. We are adding to this effort a new element on the fine particle pollution from the Flint Hills burning.

Meanwhile KDHE and the CDC are supposed to be working on a study of health effects in the immediate vicinity of the burning. So stay tuned.
Solar Leasing Questions Answered

By Bill Griffith, Kansas Chapter Energy Chair and Project Developer for Cromwell Solar

As a project developer for Cromwell Solar, I have found a common thread of questions our clients ask concerning the popular solar leasing program we have. AND, your Kansas Chapter is in final negotiations with Cromwell for a partnership in which Cromwell makes a major contribution to our annual Chapter budget!! So to help Sierra Club members and their friends understand the inner workings of the program I will attempt to answer these queries. As a reminder, Cromwell Solar is offering a leasing program for zero down, with zero installation, and zero maintenance. Your leasing payments will be less than your annual electrical bill savings.

How does the lease work?

Once approved by our partner, Mid-America Bank, the bank purchases the solar equipment from Cromwell Solar and hires us to do the installation. The bank is responsible for any maintenance and the homeowner puts the solar array on their homeowner’s policy. It is a lease-to-own agreement.

How much can I save by going solar?

A great question. It depends on the roof, shading issues, the size of the array. Most homes are usually 4-8 kW systems and over the 25 year warranty of the solar panels a homeowner could save 20-30 thousand dollars. We give a projection of pollution savings and dollar savings based on 25 years. During the lease we attempt to have the homeowner break even each year on cash flow. I use the analogy of you might save the equivalent of a few cups of coffee a month from your favorite coffee shop or you might pay that amount. You should not be in this for short-term cash flow unless you live in Hawaii or California.

What about hail damage and my deductible?

The panels are rated to withstand 1-inch hail at 90 mph. If you have hail that does damage your panels you probably already are replacing a roof and your deductible is taken care of. If panels need to be replaced under the leasing agreement the insurance company pays the bank and it contacts Cromwell to arrange for panel replacement for the client.

Do the panels stop working after 25 years?

No, that is when the warranty expires. They will continue to work for many years but their efficiency goes down over time. We calculate that as .08 percent per year.

Do I get credit for energy I sent back to the utility?

Yes. It is a one-to-one exchange that expires at the end of the month or at the end of the year and then starts anew.

How long is the workmanship guaranteed for?

Cromwell Solar recently increased their workmanship guarantee from 5 years to 10.

What happens if I want to move?

There are two options: first, the buyer of your home can qualify to take over the lease (this is very common in California) as the same credit score is generally needed for either transaction. Or, any time after the 60th month of the lease, you may buy the lease out and add however much you wish to the sale price of your home.

What do I do to get the process started?

Call or email me at the contact information listed below. I will need the last 12 months of your kilowatt hours used broken down per month and the monthly amount you paid. If you are planning any large electric load purchases in the near future (plug-in vehicle, heat pump, electric water heater) please let me know as well. I will get a Google Shot of your home (or business) and create a file for our solar design team and they will get a proposal ready for you. To get a proposal or have any other questions answered you may call me at 913-702-4611 or email me at bgriffith@cromwellsolar.com.

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Kansas Chapter Conservation Conference July 19

The Kansas Chapter is holding a Conservation Conference on July 19 as a response to your members’ requests at our 40th Anniversary Celebration!! last March. The July 19 conference is designed to get member input and to share strategy and projects that will make the Kansas Chapter vibrant in our communities.

**What:** Kansas Chapter Conservation Conference

**When:** Saturday, July 19, 2014, 10 a.m. to 4:00 p.m.

**Where:** Rock Springs 4-H Center
1168 Kansas 157, Junction City, KS 66441

**Cost:** $10 covers lunch

**RSVP:** A MUST! Email: yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org

**Payment:** Make your check payable to Sierra Club Kansas Chapter.

**Mail in your check to:** Yvonne Cather, 1920 S. Hillside, Wichita, KS 67211

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**Deadline:** July 8 we must know the head count for our conference! If you want to pay the day of the conference for your lunch, please let me know. However, we have to pay whether you attend or not once we turn in the head count.

**Facility Website for Rock Springs 4-H Center, Camp, Conference and Retreat Center is http://www.rocksprings.net/**

**Discussion Sessions:**
1. New Energy (renewable and alternative)
2. Old Energy (fossil fuels)
3. Water (water policy and comprehensive plan)
4. Industrial Agriculture
5. Other conservation issues (conducted by you - your opportunity to give us your take on other issues you feel the Kansas Chapter needs to focus on)

PLEASE RSVP early and send me your list of issues you are interested in sharing on July 19!

Thank you for your dedication and efforts towards a more vibrant Kansas!

Yvonne A. Cather
Kansas Sierra Club Chair

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**Kansas Sierra Club Pac Fundraiser / House Party**

On June 7, the Kanza Group held a PAC Fundraiser and House Party at the home of Gary Mass and Cynthia Jacobsen in Leawood in Johnson County. A major attraction was their garden featuring raised beds and a great variety of herbs, vegetables, fruit and nut trees (see image).

Candidates from both parties were invited. The theme was “wind and solar, not coal and oil.” Forty members and twenty-four candidates attended. Candidates included two for Congress: Kultala (D-3rd) and Wakefield (D-2nd); three for Johnson County Commission: Peterson (Chair), Nauser (1) and Skoog (4); and fourteen for Kansas House: Poe (D-78), Fevurly (D-42), Neighbor (D-18), Rooker (R-25), Bollier (R-21), Meeker (D-17), Wolfe-Moore (D-36), Clayton (R-19), Haines (R-16), Easterwood (D-16), Lusk (D-22), Gallagher (R-23), Ousley (D-24), Robinson (D-25), Versola (D-23), McGuire (D-16), Johnson (D-40), Meyer (D-29), and Burroughs (D-33). A statement was read for Ring (D-14). Each candidate gave a brief presentation (see image).

This event was a great success with $1555 raised. The outlook for the 2014 election is positive. High attendance by candidates from both parties indicates the importance they attach to environmental issues. Mike Miller, Political Chair for the Kanza Group, organized the event and Sarita Singh coordinated hospitality. Numerous other Kanza Group members helped with the event.

To donate to the Political Action Committee (PAC), send checks made out to the Kansas Sierra Club PAC to Gary Anderson, Treasurer, 5240 Decatur Rd, Meriden KS 66512. Include your complete mailing address, plus occupation for donations over $150. Donations to the PAC are not tax-deductible.
Living Upstream with a Conscience

By Robert F. Sommer

Driving south from Kansas City to Prescott, Kansas, on Super Bowl Sunday, I passed the construction site for the Enbridge Oil Company’s Flanagan South pipeline. Construction of this 600 mile, 36 inch pipeline has quietly forged ahead despite lawsuits filed by the Sierra Club and the Missouri Coalition for the Environment. When it’s fully operational the pipeline will transport 600,000 barrels a day of dirty tar sands oil across streams, rivers, farmland, and neighborhoods throughout the Midwest.

The pipe sections were strewn like massive Lincoln Logs on each side of the highway through clearcut forest in the pristine Marais des Cygnes National Wildlife Refuge. Gaudy plastic banners framed the construction site, giving it the look of a used car lot, a stark emblem of what the natural world means to an oil company.

Seeing this reminded me of why traveling to William “Brad” Bradley’s farm on a very cold and gray day mattered more than a football game.

Trying to picture Bradley’s farm, I imagined arriving at the front gates, dropping my old Jeep into four-wheel drive and rumbling up a snow-covered dirt farm road to his Thomas-Kinkadesque cabin, where inside I’d warm myself beside a fire blazing in a stone hearth.

Not so much.

Bradley passed me on the highway and guided me along a mile or so of unpaved county road to his place. (I got the four-wheel drive part right, anyway.) The only building was a steel machine shed surrounded by galvanized grain storage bins. He unlocked the door and led the way to a partitioned section he used for living quarters when he visited. The cavernous shed was cold, dark, and crowded with farm equipment and hunting and fishing gear.

No heat in the living quarters either, but better than outdoors. A buffalo head mounted on a swivel stand was so prominent that it was unavoidably where conversation began. Bradley said he paid a fee to a conservation organization in South Dakota to “harvest” the buffalo in a herd culling. Running my fingers through the massive animal’s fur, I felt a momentary resonance of what buffalo once meant to the prairies and the people who depended on the vast herds that grazed here. Just a wink in geological time, a flash. Only 150 years ago this region had a vastly different character.

The land here has seen many uses and much abuse since then, including four decades of strip mining. I was here to see the project Bradley had undertaken to restore health to his water and soil after discovering a breathtaking level of contamination beneath a veneer of topsoil.

Brad Bradley wryly describes himself not as a conservative Republican but a “conservation Republican.” He’s a Sierra Club Life Member and sits on the board of The Nature Conservancy in Kansas. He will plainly tell you that he supports these organizations in part because they don’t oppose hunting.

He exemplifies the common interests of environmentalists and sportsmen in preserving wildlife habitat. Hunting quail, turkey, and deer was one reason he bought this place. Yet to characterize Bradley as a hunter and outdoor lover is to sell him short on his passion for the natural world and his depth of understanding of its workings.

The Sawmill Ranch straddles Stateline Road five or six miles east of Prescott, where Kansas meets Missouri about 70 miles south of Kansas City. A railroad track runs through Prescott, a village of about 250 with a sprinkling of small houses and a public library whose roadside sign cheerily announces that it’s warm inside and you can read a book there, too.

Once a practicing attorney in Wichita, Bradley dreamed in the early days of his career of traveling western Kansas in an RV as a circuit court judge. But life took him elsewhere, and he’s now a senior officer in a regional software company he helped found.

Bradley bought the first of several parcels here in 2007, but soon after he took over the Sawmill Ranch it became obvious that something wasn’t right with the water in one of the ponds. Nothing was living in it. He had it tested by a private consultant, who found the acid level at an astounding 2.5 on the pH scale, effectively ten times greater than acid rain. The pond might as easily have been pure vinegar, except this acid wasn’t organic. There were several ponds on the property then. All but one were contaminated.

“I knew there had been mining activity on the land,” Bradley said, “as there had been on much of the surrounding land. But people were fishing in strip pits all around. What could be so bad about the activity on this property?”

The Sawmill Ranch had seen several owners over the eighty years before Bradley purchased it—farmers, a sawmill operator (thus the name), and from the 1940s through the early 1980s, the Peabody Energy Corporation, based in St. Louis, which still operates a coal mine a few miles north of here. Peabody operated two strip mines on Bradley’s property, both part of the Mulberry coal seam in eastern Kansas and western Missouri.

As we toured the farm, Bradley pointed out sections of “haul roads” where coal was delivered from local strip mines to a central location on his farm. Here it was dumped and sprayed with water, resulting in acidic mine drainage, also known as acid and metalliferous drainage (AMD), a common waste product of coal mining. AMD is a charcoal gray sludge with high sulfur content left behind when the washed coal was scooped up in tipping buckets and put on rail cars.

Bradley soon learned that AMD had formed a layer of sludge...
about one foot thick in five massive “hot spots” or “gobs” covering roughly 50 acres of his property. Peabody had attempted to mitigate the hot spots by blanketing them with an 18 inch layer of soil taken from so-called “borrow areas” elsewhere on the land. The company additionally installed two concrete structures in downstream spots near the property lines where blocks of limestone were placed in a token effort to neutralize the water before it left the property. (Bradley generously suggested that Peabody was only doing as much as the law required at the time.)

So the borrow areas were raided of healthy soil, while the hot spots of AMD were left to react with rain and moisture as it drained through the cover soil and then percolated in natural iron-sulfur deposits to produce a foot-and-a-half thick seam of sludge. On several ridges around the property these seams were exposed like a layer of stratified charcoal. The result was sulfuric acid in levels so high that nothing could live in the streams or ponds.

Still worse, the water drained off Bradley’s property into other, larger streams.

“I am near the height-of-land for drainage,” he said. “My water drains to the Little Osage River, and from there to the Missouri and the Mississippi and the Gulf.”

He thought for a moment and added, “There’s an old saying, ‘We all live downstream.’”

Some, he realized, more downstream than others.

He told me solemnly that he was “very angry” when he learned how contaminated his land was.

A lawyer by training, he wasn’t about to accept this without doing something. But what?

He hired an attorney, who advised him that a lawsuit would have little chance of success. Additionally—and here was a dark twist—he probably wouldn’t have any liability as long as he didn’t make the problem worse, presumably through almost any activity that involved water flowing off his land, like diverting a stream or even farming.

Still, doing nothing meant that water was flowing off his land, and that was unacceptable. He refused to pass this problem on to others.

He hired an engineer and dirt contractor and developed a plan to mitigate the damage. He undertook an extensive research and self-education project, including a course in stream water testing with the Missouri Department of Conservation.

Bradley is now in the fifth year of a five-year water mitigation plan he developed with an environmental engineer from Springfield, Missouri, named Ray Forrester. This plan is part of an overall conservation project he first developed for the Sawmill Ranch with a private land conservationist. The project includes burning out invasive species, like eastern red juniper trees and the Asian grass sericea lespedeza, and reseeding the land with big bluestem, little bluestem, switchgrass, and other native grasses. Bradley pointed out that their deep roots may ultimately penetrate the gobs and contribute to the land’s renewal. He’s also removed two ponds and replaced them with streams lined with limestone, bringing in nearly a thousand truckloads of limestone to spread into the new stream beds in stretches ranging from 700 to 1,000 feet long.

Bradley prefers not to say how much he’s invested in this effort, but it’s enough to have made him a source of amusement to friends and bewilderment to neighboring farmers.

As we drove across snow-covered fields thick with stalks of dried out Queen Anne’s lace as high as the windshield, I asked what he ultimately wanted from this venture.

“To make the water as good as it can be when it leaves my property,” he said. “And to bring back life to the streams. People’s attitudes and practices are shortsighted. This land is one example of that.”

In 2013 Bradley was awarded the Bates County [Missouri] Wildlife Conservation Award.

He hopes to complete his five-year plan so he can hunt quail and return to his original project of clearing non-native trees and restoring prairie to the region.

“I felt like I needed to give something back,” he said, as I was getting ready to leave.

For him that’s the land and the water.

Robert F. Sommer is the Director of Development for the Sierra Club’s Kansas Chapter. His new novel, A Great Fullness, is forthcoming from Aqueous Books. Don’t miss Bob’s interview with Brad Bradley in the July/August 2014 issue of Sierra Magazine. Don’t miss Bob’s interview with Brad Bradley in the July/August 2014 issue of Sierra magazine, also available at http://www.sierrraclub.org/sierra/2014-4-july-august/grilled/William-Brad-Bradley
Kanza Day II: Celebrating Kansas Wild Lands

September 27, Black Hoof Park, Lenexa, KS

Sierra Club celebrates the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Wilderness Act and the 40th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act!

Sierra Club members and their guests are invited to meet at Oak Shelter in Black Hoof Park of Lenexa, KS, at 3:00 pm on September 27, 2014 for a fun-filled family-focused afternoon of self-guided outdoor activities including canoeing/kayaking, fishing, hiking, geocaching, nature watching and biking.

This is a free event underwritten by the Kanza Group of the Sierra Club in celebration of the 50th anniversary of the passage of the Wilderness Act and the 40th anniversary of the Endangered Species Act.

Come celebrate with us and learn about “wild lands” in Kansas. We may not have designated wilderness areas, but we do have several national wildlife refuges (Marais Des Cygnes, Flint Hills, Quivira, and Kirwin NWR - US Fish and Wildlife Service), as well as two federally protected grasslands (Cimarron National Grassland - Forest Service and Tallgrass Prairie National Preserve - National Park Service).

Dress appropriately and bring your own gear, including boats, GPS units/phones, bicycles, fishing tackle/bait, etc. Sunscreen and insect repellent are strongly recommended. Pack your coolers and folding chairs!

Oak Shelter is an accessible, covered picnic area with tables, electrical outlets, grills and modern toilets. Two new adjacent playgrounds are available for the kids. Friendly dogs are allowed on-leash. There is an easy 2-mile trail around Lake Lenexa, half of which is paved, and a wetlands boardwalk with watershed-related signage.

Supper will consist of grilled bison burgers and assorted potluck side dishes provided by attendees. Consider bringing something for non-meat-eating guests to share: vegetarian, vegan and/or gluten-free! Lemonade, tea and ice water will be provided; this is an alcohol-free event.

There is a campfire ring near the shelter for after-dinner socializing and entertainment. Weather permitting, we’ll check out the night sky and call owls.

The celebration will be held rain or shine. Registration is not required. Updates will be posted on the Kansas.SierraClub.org website and calendar as the event approaches.

For more information, contact Elaine Giessel at sealaine@yahoo.com or call 913-888-8517.

Dr. Riki Ott to Speak at Great Plains Nature Center

Dr. Riki Ott is making a trip to speak about the Keystone XL Pipeline and traveling along its route. She will be in Wichita on Saturday, July 12 at 2:00 pm at the Great Plains Nature Center, 6232 East 29th St N, in Wichita to speak and have an open discussion with local leaders and environmentalists.

Please join in on the discussion to see this powerful speaker and activist.

Dr. Ott witnessed first-hand the ecological destruction and social chaos from the Exxon Valdez oil spill in Prince William Sound, Alaska and became an “accidental activist” in its wake. A trained marine toxicologist and former commercial fisherwoman, she has written two books on oil spill impacts to ecosystems, people, and communities and starred in Black Wave, an award winning feature film. She has a PhD in marine toxicology and has taken a stand against oil, tar sands and the use of dispersants like we saw in the Deepwater Horizon disaster.

Later that day at 6:00 pm, join us for a Meet and Greet with Dr. Ott for a cookout at Yvonne Cather’s house with keynote speaker Bill Griffith, Energy Consultant talking Solar with Dr. Rikki Ott as our guest for a meet and greet. Contact Yvonne Cather 316-204-8920 yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org.
Kansas Chapter Announces 2014-15 Grants to Educators

By Robert F. Sommer

The Sierra Club’s Kansas Chapter has announced its 2014-15 teaching grants. Now in its second year, the Sierra Club Environmental Grants for Kansas Primary and Secondary Educators program was uniquely created by the Kansas Chapter. This is the first program of its kind in the Sierra Club. These grants support the efforts of teachers who are educating students about climate change and exploring solutions to the immense challenges it poses.

This year’s grant recipients are Candace Stewart (Frontier Trail Middle School, Olathe School District), Doug Moles (Shawnee Mission West High School, Shawnee Mission School District), and Kristan Langton (Mill Creek Middle School, DeSoto School District).

Along with her team in the Science Department at Frontier Trail, Candace Stewart will use her grant to purchase water testing equipment.

“We’re very excited to get this,” Stewart said. “The money is going to be used toward funding our testing kits so we can go to nearby creeks and test the water quality and compare that with what our water quality has been over the years and how the climate has changed and see if there’s any correlation between the two.”

Kristan Langton is also engaged in water testing. She plans lead her sixth classes at Mill Creek Middle School in studying the water in the creek behind their school.

“My love for the outdoors began at a young age,” Langton wrote in her grant application. “When my family was camping, my friends were going to Disney World. It took me a while to realize the gift of those camping trips. They instilled in me a passion, which can so wonderfully lead to a cause.”

Chemistry teacher Doug Moles sponsors the Environmental Club at Shawnee Mission West High School. He has undertaken a multi-year project in sustainable agriculture.

“We’re going to put a high tunnel in the courtyard of our school,” Moles said, “and start teaching the kids about sustainable agriculture using our high tunnel to grow year-round vegetables and other produce in our courtyard.”

Moles hopes to see the fruit and vegetables from the school’s courtyard served to students and staff in the cafeteria.

This year’s Education Grants Committee included Gary Anderson, Carol Barta, Yvonne Cather, Dave Kirkbride, Craig Lubow, Scott Smith, Craig Wolfe, and Bob Sommer (Chair).
Kansas Chapter Supports the KidWind Challenge

By Dan Whisler

With the increasing development of the wind energy industry and the push to involve students in more STEM-related classroom activities (Science, Technology, Engineering & Mathematics), combining the two seems like an ideal opportunity for students in Kansas classrooms. The good news is that is exactly what is happening in more and more Kansas schools!

Sterling High School was selected as one of the first schools to participate in the Kansas Wind for Schools program (2007-2008 school year). As an Environmental Science teacher at Sterling, I’ve been working since then to develop a renewable energy curriculum complete with hands-on classroom activities. Since completing the week-long KidWind Wind Senator training in Maine two years ago, I’ve hosted six different teacher workshops and helped over 100 Kansas teachers learn how to use these activities with students in their classrooms, too.

Going a step beyond the classroom activities, student teams are encouraged to share what they have learned and challenge themselves by competing in the Kansas KidWind Challenge. Described by KidWind Director Michael Arquin as the “Pinewood Derby of wind energy competitions,” the mission behind the KidWind Challenge Events is to:

1. Get students excited about the promise and opportunities of renewable energy—specifically wind power—and its relationship to global climate change.
2. Foster opportunities for students to build, test, explore, and understand wind energy technology at a manageable scale.
3. Get students—particularly girls and under-represented populations—excited about careers in STEM fields related to renewable energy.
4. Build capacity of teachers, coaches, and other educators to better understand wind energy technology and development, as well as its promise and limitations.
5. Connect students to mentors and role models in the renewable energy industry.

The Kansas KidWind Challenge was held on April 4th and hosted by Dr. Ruth Douglas Miller at Kansas State University. “Team Wind Advisory”, a team of three advanced environmental science students from Sterling High School won the Kansas KidWind Challenge and, thanks to the support of several sponsors, including the Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club, these students experienced a trip they will always remember as they flew to Washington DC to compete in the first annual National KidWind Challenge! Here is a link to a short promotional video the team put together before the National Challenge: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Wx9dHAlb6U

Editor’s note: Sterling High School Environmental Science teacher Dan Whisler was awarded a Sierra Club Environmental Grants for Kansas Primary and Secondary Educators. Additionally, the Kansas Chapter supported a team from Sterling High to attend this year’s National KidWind Challenge in Washington, D.C.

Hosted at the Walter E. Washington Convention Center in conjunction with the US Science & Engineering Festival, this national competition featured 38 teams of middle school and high school students from across the country. Team Wind Advisory finished third in energy output for the high school division and in sixth place overall. https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hSUJWEdjzHM

Thanks to an invitation from Mr. Ryan Freed, Director of the Kansas Energy Office, on Thursday, May 1, the “Team Wind Advisory” students traveled to Topeka where they had the honor of giving their presentation to Commissioners at the KCC meeting. They also had the opportunity to meet Gov. Sam Brownback to express their support for continued wind energy development in Kansas.

The Kansas Energy Office is working to host an Energy Expo at the Kansas State Fair and has invited me to work with the students at SHS to assist with this, so if you attend the State Fair in September be sure to stop by to see the wind energy activities the students across Kansas are being invited to work on.

Thanks again to everyone in the Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club for your support of these KidWind activities!

Dan Whisler
Sterling HS
whislerd@usd376.com
Thanks to all the local businesses that supported Southwind Group’s Chance Drawing on June 13th! Only one was from our neighbor to the South...Oklahoma.

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Obama Makes Brownback Build a New Coal Plant!

Field Notes from the DD...

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

No, that headline’s not from The Onion, though sometimes it feels like we’re living in an alternate universe here in Kansas.

Was it just a coincidence that the Brownback Administration approved the permit to build Holcomb II, Sunflower Electric’s proposed coal-fired utility plant, on the Friday before the Monday on which the Obama Administration released its new regulations on carbon emissions? You’d have to be pretty naïve to think so.

I doubt anyone on the mailing list for Planet Kansas was fooled.

So what does it all mean?

The EPA’s new “Clean Power Plan” targets reducing nationwide carbon emissions 30 percent from 2005 levels by 2030. The Plan still has to go through a public comment period that will conclude in June 2015. Then states have another year to submit plans based on their proposed portfolios of renewable and fossil fuel energy sources.

To meet the standard, Kansas will have to reduce its carbon pollution by 23 percent. Perhaps Gov. Brownback believes that constructing a new 895-megawatt coal-fired power plant will accomplish this. Or maybe, as with his snub of the Affordable Care Act and the Medicare Expansion, this is one more way of thumbing his nose at the President.

Will the coal plant get built?

Sunflower Electric spokesperson Cindy Hertel hedged when asked by KSNW-TV in Wichita.

“We’re still in the process of reviewing those guidelines,” she said. “Even after the guidelines are reviewed, it will be very difficult to determine how the plan will impact Sunflower since the standards will be implemented via state specific plans that have yet to be developed.”

Translation: it could be years.

And that suggests that the Governor’s gesture was more about politics than electricity.

Conservatives in Kansas have joined a nationwide outcry about the new carbon rules, using the same tiresome fear tactics—it will kill jobs, hurt the economy, raise...
Thank You, Contributors

The Sierra Club thanks those companies and organizations whose donations have made this event possible

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- Performing Arts Series at Johnson County Community College
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Kanza Group Pulls Off Another Successful Fundraiser

The Kanza Group Fundraising Committee is happy to report that our Annual Fundraiser/Silent Auction was a whopping success. Explorer and photographer Jonathan Chester gave us a beautiful, educational and humorous look at antarctica that was not without alarm bells as to what climate change is causing at the bottom of the world. Volunteers came through once again to make this one of our most successful fundraising events. Great local wines, healthy foods, inspiring music, education about our miracle of a planet... it doesn't get much better that that.

And we can thank Ken Schefter for the photos below. To really appreciate the shots, you really should check out the color version of the Planet Kansas at www.kansas.sierraclub.org (look under News).
Antarctic explorer and photographer Jonathan Chester gave us a riveting look at what is going on at the bottom of the world.

Craig Wolfe provided music from his group Soular while the bidding was going on.

Jamie Wolfe explained what she was pouring.

Aron Cromewll of Cromwell Solar explained his amazing zero down solar PV leasing deal.
Where Have All the Cow Patties Gone?

Eating as Though the Earth Matters

By Judy Carman, M.A.

None of Nature’s landscapes are ugly so long as they are wild.
John Muir

Water and air, the two essential fluids on which all life depends, have become garbage cans.
Jacques Ives Cousteau

A young couple recently purchased 5 acres adjoining 10 acres belonging to a friend of mine. All went well for awhile—a very nice little family. Two cute little kids. Then came the fencing. And before long there were 12 cows on approximately 3.5 acres, the fence being about 100 yards from my friend’s front door. Her wildlife sanctuary, complete with frog pond, forest, and fields of flowers is downhill from the cows. So is her creek that runs about 3 miles before it carries its waters into the Kansas River.

It’s difficult to determine exactly how many cows per acre is proper, but a few sources estimated it to be around 6 acres per pair of cows in our area of Eastern Kansas. My friend’s neighbor has room then for one cow or a pair if he supplements with hay in summer. Of course, he is supplementing with hay. He has to. If he continues to keep that many cows, she will be looking at a muddy enclosure uphill from her. Already the pond appears to be choking on algae, and intact cow patties have been washed into her yard by the rain.

Of course, when one moves to the country, there is a bit more freedom to do what one wants with one’s own land, and respect and tolerance for neighbors is vital. I only mention this because, as inconsequential as it may seem, this is a microcosm of what is happening all over the earth, drastically affecting our land, water, air, and our children’s futures. Friends of the Kaw (Kansasriver.org) tells us that KDHE and the EPA can regulate “point source” pollution, i.e., pollution entering the river at an identifiable point, such as a pipe. However, agricultural toxins can enter the river at many unidentifiable places when rain water carries pesticides, herbicides, manure, and fertilizer down to the river and ultimately to the sea. That kind of pollution is nearly impossible to regulate. The only way to control it is if we, as responsible citizens of planet earth, stop participating in the process.

Robert Goodland and Jeff Anhang’s “Livestock and Climate Change” 2009 article on worldwatch.org takes to task many of the statistics reported in the 2006 United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization’s article “Livestock’s Long Shadow.” As if the FAO’s findings weren’t harrowing enough, the Worldwatch article paints an even darker picture. It points out that the Long Shadow article left out the greenhouse gas emissions (GHGs) from such things as: Deforestation taking place worldwide to provide land for grazing animals and to grow feed for them. There is a global shortage of grassland now. The only way to accommodate the enormous and increasing number of animals people eat is to destroy forests. Rainforest, they say, stores about 200 tons of carbon per hectare. (2.47 acres). When it is turned into degraded, grazed grassland, a hectare then can only store 8 tons. I will add to that the terrible toll that deforestation is taking on forest species.

- Fish farms.
- Marine organisms that go into animal feed which, by the way, is an abnormal food source for grazing land animals.
- Emissions from keeping animal products cold or frozen.
- Cooking meat, since that generally takes longer than non-animal based foods.
- Disposal of waste, such as bones, fat, blood, spoiled meat, etc.
- The production of leather, feathers, and other animal related products.
- The production of packaging for animal products since that involves more attention to sanitation.
- Medical treatment and pharmaceuticals for all the human illnesses caused by eating animals, eggs, and milk products.

The Goodland/Anhang article is looking primarily at the GHGs of raising and killing animals for people. But we must also look at what this monstrous industry is doing to all the waters of earth, the air, wildlife, biodiversity, and indigenous people who have lost their homelands and independence because of the rapacious appetite for animals.

From the 2006 “Livestock’s Long Shadow” article to the 2009 Worldwatch article referenced above, Anhang and Goodland estimate that “the tonnage of livestock products worldwide increased 12%.” They say that, while Long Shadow reported 21.7 billion animals per year worldwide, many non-governmental organizations have estimated the number closer to a jaw-dropping 50-60 billion land animals and billions more aquatic animals used for human food. Some project that number could double by 2050 if we do not take action. And consider this—Anhang and Goodland estimate that 26% of land worldwide is used to graze animals that are used for human food and 33% of arable land is used to grow feed for these unfortunate animals. That adds up to 59% now. Any increase in animal numbers will push that percentage higher.

The PEW Environment Group’s “Reforming Industrial Animal Agriculture” provides some chilling facts. They quote the U.S. Department of Agriculture as saying that today’s water pollution is connected to “ever-growing numbers of livestock and poultry per farm and per acre.” The 2000 National Water Quality Inventory, PEW says, found agriculture to be the number one cause of water pollution in rivers and lakes and the number two cause of wetland degradation. Other findings were:

- The production of leather, feathers, and other animal related products.
- The production of packaging for animal products since that involves more attention to sanitation.
- Medical treatment and pharmaceuticals for all the human illnesses caused by eating animals, eggs, and milk products.

The only way to control it is if we, as responsible citizens of planet earth, stop participating in the process.
The EPA found animals raised for slaughter, eggs and milk products contributed to more than 100 shellfish bed closures in one year (1995).

Forty-three percent of drinking water sources have been found to contain pathogens connected to “concentrated livestock feeding operations.”

North Carolina was home to a hog manure spill of 22 million gallons into the Neuse River. It killed 10 million fish.

In 2004, a national wildlife refuge that was close to a large hog farm found harmful algae blooms and possible sources of avian botulism and cholera that was toxic to birds visiting the refuge.

The U.S. Geological Survey considers the enormous mountains of animal manure to be the biggest source of nitrogen pollution in rivers.

Wisconsin manure runoff in 2004 caused fish kills and contaminated 20 homeowner wells, with one well spewing manure out of the tap.

New York’s Black River was fouled in 2005 by 3 million gallons of waste from a dairy. Watertown temporarily stopped using river water for drinking and 375,000 innocent fish died.

Nitrate levels in Delaware, primarily around poultry farms, were recently found to be 10 times greater than the EPA safety level. Nitrites are especially dangerous for human infants, among others.

Recreational Grand Lake St. Mary’s in Ohio was declared an “economic disaster” after toxic algae blooms from farm runoff closed the lake to recreation in 2010. According to PEW, animals raised for food, through no fault of their own, but simply because there are so many of them, produce somewhere between one half billion and one billion TONS of manure full of pathogens, viruses, antibiotics, and other toxins every year in the U.S.

The Sierra Club is urging the EPA and the Army Corps of Engineers to “clarify which waters of the United States are protected under the Clean Water Act…and to finalize a rule that is protective of all streams and wetlands—including wetlands outside of floodplains—that directly influence the physical, chemical, and biological integrity of the nation’s rivers, lakes and bays.”

Of course, we have to make every effort to involve government, but those wheels move slowly and often go in reverse as we all know. But we, “the people,” can move quickly and make dramatic progress with or without government help if we all work together.

As you no doubt know, there is an oxygen depleted Dead Zone in the northern end of the Gulf of Mexico. Some of the contaminants that drift into the Zone come right down my friend’s creek from the guy up the hill, into the Kansas River and onward to the Gulf. And they come right down creeks, storm water drains, and ditches in Lawrence, Kansas City and our other towns. This is personal.

So what can we do? Clearly, time is of the essence. Well, if you’ve been reading my column, you know I always end with good news in spite of the overwhelming odds we, our earth, the animals, and future generations face. At my house, we’ve installed solar panels to produce all our electricity. We run our vehicles on filtered waste vegetable oil from restaurants in Lawrence. We planted a butterfly garden. All of you are doing many, many things to help stop the destruction. But it’s going to take many years to establish the infrastructure required for wind, solar, electric cars and so forth. The good news is that there is something each one of us can do three times each day starting with our next meal a few hours from now, and if enough of us do it, the positive results will be massively effective.

Of course, I’m talking about what I call the Mother of All Boycotts—the boycotting of the industries that kill upwards of 100 billion innocent and defenseless animals (including aquatic animals) each year. Anhang and Goodland agree. “…An effective strategy,” they insist, “must involve replacing livestock products with better alternatives, rather than substituting one meat product with another that has a somewhat lower carbon footprint.” From their research, they conclude that eliminating livestock products from our diets completely can literally “reverse the ongoing world food and water crises.” Their focus is on climate change, and they believe strongly that a vegan, plant-based, non-animal diet “is the best way to combat climate change.”

But in this article, you and I have looked at more than just climate change. We have faced the enormous pollution caused by unimaginable tons of toxic animal excrement; the heart breaking destruction of forest lands that has displaced indigenous people and ended the lives and even species of wild living animals. We have seen our creeks and rivers, once pristine and life-giving, turn into carriers of disease and death. We have seen what little remains of our wetlands unable to cleanse the waters of earth, so toxic have they become from man’s insatiable appetite for animal flesh and the wealth it brings to a few.

Let us bear witness to all this. Let us see the “garbage cans” Cousteau saw and vow to cleanse our water and air; let us bring the wild and beautiful back to “Nature’s landscapes,” so loved by John Muir. If enough of us make this sacred commitment and convince others to do the same, the earth has a good chance. The answer is literally right under our noses—what we put in our mouths can make all the difference. And, best of all, we don’t need to wait for new laws or new infrastructure. We can start today.

© 2014, Judy Carman, M.A., is author of Peace to All Being: 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 circleofcompassion.org and peacetoallbeings.com.
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| Summer - 2014 |
General Meetings

General public is welcome to attend

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
Tuesday, July 8, 6:30 pm
Powell Gardens Harvest Garden
7:00 pm - Director Mark Gowron of the Heartland Harvest Garden will describe America’s largest edible landscape garden-- where every tree, shrub, flower and groundcover is part of the story of where our food comes from. As a FOLLOWUP, there will be a special Powell Gardens tour ($9.50 admission) on Saturday, July 12, for us to see these amazing gardens in person.
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)
Tuesday, August 12, 6:30 pm
Prairie Chicken Restoration
6:30 pm - Come early, and we will have goodies, along with good conversation followed by our program.
7:00 - The Prairie Chicken in Kansas is quite controversial. Ranchers want to burn to improve gas for the cattle. The conservative legislature wants to ignore the Endangered Species Act. Against these obstacles, how do we insure that the prairie chicken will survive.
Where - Overland Park Lutheran Church, 7810 W. 79th St. 8 blocks west of Metcalf at Lowell. Park on north side..
Contact - Mike Miller, (913) 362-2600, mrmiller1@mindspring.com

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
Tuesday, September 9, 6:30 pm
Mercury Rising.
6:30 pm - Come early, and we will have goodies, along with good conversation followed by our program.
7:00 pm - Program with Craig Volland who will discuss coal plant developments and the probable effect that these plants will have on global warming and mercury emissions. What are we doing about mercury? How serious is the problem?
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)
Saturday, July 12, 2:00 pm
Dr. Riki Ott and the KXL Pipeline
Riki Ott has been a fighter since the Exxon Valdez oil spill 25 years ago and has a PhD in marine toxicology. Dr. Ott will speak and have an open discussion with local leaders and environmentalists. Bill Griffith will also discuss zero down solar installation for your home.
Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 29th Street North & Woodlawn
Contact - Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Southwind Group (Wichita)
No General Meeting in August

Southwind Group (Wichita)
Friday, September 12. 6:30 pm.
Solar Energy Update
6:30 pm - Salad, pizza and pop will be available.
7:00 pm - There will be a discussion about how to simplify and make more green your life. Members will be given examples and give examples. There is a social hour that begins at
Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 29th Street North & Woodlawn
Contact - Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Topeka Group
Tuesday, July 22, 6:30 pm
Ian Spomer of Cromwell Solar
6:30 pm - “Meet and Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Ian Spomer, Sales Director for Cromwell Solar in Lawrence will describe their company and their unique program for installing solar panel for residential and business customers. They have a residential plan that involves installing solar panels that will cost the homeowner less per month than the electricity costs that they save. He will also be able to update us on the status of solar incentives and issues in Kansas.
Where - Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, Marvin Auditorium, 101C, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka
Questions - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@hotmail.com

Topeka Group
Tuesday, August 26, 6:30 pm
Dorothy Barnett - Climate + Energy Project
6:30 pm - “Meet, Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Dorothy Barnett, Executive Director of CEP will give us information about electricity transmission, energy efficiency and energy and water conservation in farming among other activities. She will also share about any new projects they are involved in.
Where - Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, Marvin Auditorium, 101C, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka
Questions - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@hotmail.com

Topeka Group
Tuesday, September 23, 6:30 pm
Candidates Forum
6:30 pm - “Meet and Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Meet candidates for Shawnee County and surrounding areas plus Congressional offices. This will be an important election so come and ask you questions and challenge the candidates.
Where - Topeka Shawnee County Public Library, Marvin Auditorium, 101C, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka
Questions - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@gmail.com
Sierra Club Outings

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 Meetup webpage for the latest outings updates at: http://www.meetup.com/KC-Sierra-Club-Outings/. Outings are also listed at http://kansas.sierraclub.org/outings/.

Sat, July 05, 5:00 pm. Hike the Hallmark Nature Trails
Hike a three mile loop of prairie and woodlands that has been restored by Hallmark and the MDC. We'll meet late afternoon/early evening to miss the heat of the day and to have optimal hours for wildlife viewing. $3 donation requested. Kanza. Renee Andriani, (913) 488-4445, randri@kc.rr.com

Sat, July 12, 6:00 pm. Cook Out and Meet & Greet
Cookout at Yvonne Cather’s house with keynote speaker Bill Griffith, Energy Consultant talking Solar with Dr. Rikki Ott as our guest for a meet and greet. Southwind. Yvonne Cather, (316) 204-8920, yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org

Sat, July 12, 10:00 am. Guided Tour of the Heartland Harvest Garden at Powell Gardens
Director Mark Gowron of the Heartland Harvest Garden will lead us on a tour of America’s largest edible landscape as a follow-up to his presentation at the July 8 Kanza General Meeting. Admission to Gardens is $9.50. Kanza. Steve Hassler, (913) 707-3296, hassler@planetkc.com

Sat, July 19, 10:00 am. Kansas Chapter Conservation Conference
The Kansas Chapter is holding a Conservation Conference on July 19 as a response to your members’ requests at our 40th Anniversary Celebration!! last March. See article on page 7. Chapter. Yvonne Cather, (316) 204-8920, yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org

Sun, July 20, 8:00 am. Summer Stroll at Jerry Smith Park, Kansas City, MO
See the prairie with us on an easy early summer morning hike of 1 to 2 hours before the heat arrives. Rain date 7/27. $3.00 donation requested. Kanza. Steve Hassler, (913) 707-3296, hassler@planetkc.com

Sat, Sep 06, 12:00 pm (Time Tentative). Walk For Wilderness, Kansas City, MO
Walk this easy 1-2 mile loop to celebrate the 50th anniversary of the Wilderness Act. Learn about the 10 Essentials for Hiking and Leave No Trace Guidelines as you walk past Brush Creek, Kaufman Gardens, Theis Park and the Gorman Discovery Center gardens. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileen4250@sbcglobal.net

Sat, Sep 20, 9:00 am. Beginning Backpack Class Series, Part 1
Learn backpacking basics in this 5-hour class covering gear from head to foot and everything in between. Class size is limited to 25. This is part 1 of 2 classes, followed by a backpack trip. Participation in both classes ensures a place in the beginning backpack trip. Donation for series is $50 per person. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Sat, Sep 20, 9:00 am. Canoe/Kayak Float on the Kaw River, Topeka, KS
On this float hosted by Friends of the Kaw, we'll put in at the Seward Avenue access east of Topeka and paddle 13 miles to the Rising Sun access near Lecompton, stopping for a hot dog roast on a sand bar near the Big Springs bluffs. Kayak rentals available. $3.00 donation requested for each group, Sierra Club and Friends of the Kaw ($6.00 total). Topeka. Tim Cross 785-330-3655 tecross3@gmail.com

Sat, Sep 20, to Sun, Sep 21,. People’s Climate March... Call to Arms
This is an invitation to change everything. In September, world leaders are coming to New York City for a UN summit on the climate crisis. UN Secretary¬ General Ban Ki¬moon is urging governments to support an ambitious global agreement to dramatically reduce global warming pollution. With our future on the line and the whole world watching, we'll take a stand to bend the course of history. We'll take to the streets to demand the world we know is within our reach: a world with an economy that works
Sierra Club Outings

General public is welcome to participate

for people and the planet; a world safe from the ravages of climate change; a world with good jobs, clean air and water, and healthy communities. To change everything, we need everyone on board. Sunday, September 21 in New York City. Join us. Lori Lawrence is working with the Kansas and Missouri Chapters to bring a bus from Wichita to NYC for the People's Climate March. http://peoplesclimate.org/march/ If you are interested in joining us please contact Lori for more details as they are determined. Bus tickets will be available and one overnight will need to be booked. We will have choices of motels or camping for that night. Email Lori at lawrencelorid@gmail.com for all the information! Don't wait! We need to reserve the bus by August 1st! Chapter. Lori Lawrence, (316) 688-1484, lawrencelorid@gmail.com

Brownback, continued from page 14

electric rates, tilt our flat, 6,000-year-old planet and send us all over the edge!

They hit the same talking points, too, sometimes even the last one. And that's no accident.

Almost a year before the EPA released its Clean Power Plan, the American Legislative Exchange Council (ALEC) provided state legislators nationwide with model language to write laws opposing the EPA's new rules. For Kansas Tea Party conservatives, whatever comes down from Koch-funded organizations like ALEC and Americans for Prosperity is scripture.

Meanwhile, back in reality, 90 percent of Kansans support development of renewable energy sources. And a majority of Republicans support the need for carbon regulation. They know that renewables are good for the economy as well as the environment, and that science isn't just a matter of opinion.

The Sierra Club in Kansas faces major challenges right now.

We support the only lobbyist for the environment in Topeka. Additionally, our lawsuit delayed construction of Holcomb II this long. The Sierra Club is currently reviewing its legal options regarding the coal plant.

And there's more: threats to water and wildlife from massive hog farms in western Kansas; hydraulic fracturing, with the growth of the natural gas industry in Kansas; and an organized and well-funded misinformation campaign designed to mislead Kansans about the threat of climate change.

Your support is vital—and it's needed now more than ever.

Please remember, too, that 100 percent of your donation to the Kansas Chapter stays right here in Kansas!

Donate on-line at kansas.sierraclub.org (click the DONATE button).

Please make checks payable to the Kansas Sierra Club and mail to:
J. Scott Smith, Treasurer
Sierra Club – Kansas Chapter
2111 Snowbird Dr.
Manhattan, KS 66502

Sat, October 04, 9:00 am. Beginning Backpack Class Series, Part 2
This 5-hour class, will offer hands on demonstrations of pack loading, tent pitching, water treatment, cat holes, food, repair basics. Completion of Part 1 is a prerequisite.. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Sat, October 18, 9:00 am (Time Tentative). Beginning Backpack Class Series, Shakedown Hike
The goal of this outing is to get you more familiar with your gear, wearing and adjusting your pack, hiking on a rocky trail, and setting up camp. Many participants have found this exercise very helpful in preparation for their upcoming backpack trip. Completion of Parts 1 & 2 is a prerequisite.. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Fri, October 31, to Sun, Nov 02,. Beginning Backpack Class Series, Backpack Trip
Apply what you learned in the backpacking classes. The trip will focus on applying the knowledge you have acquired. We will be applying map and compass skills. Completion of Parts 1 & 2 is a prerequisite.. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com
### Calendar of 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 and Outings page 22. For the latest update on events, go to [http://kansas.sierraclub.org/calendar/](http://kansas.sierraclub.org/calendar/)**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event Type</th>
<th>Date</th>
<th>Time</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Contact Information</th>
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</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Out</td>
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<td>Hike the Hallmark Nature Trails</td>
<td>Kanza, Renee Andriani, (913) 488-4445, <a href="mailto:randri@kc.rr.com">randri@kc.rr.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Sun, July 06, 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Southwind’s Executive Committee Meeting</td>
<td>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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<tr>
<td>GM</td>
<td>Tues, July 08, 9:00 am</td>
<td>Time Tentative</td>
<td>Kansas Chapter ExCom Meeting, Chapter</td>
<td>Yvonne Cather, (316) 204-8920, <a href="mailto:yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org">yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Topkea Ian Spomer of Cromwell Solar in Lawrence</td>
<td>Topkea, Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; <a href="mailto:giandersen1963@hotmail.com">giandersen1963@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>July 24, 7:00 pm</td>
<td>Kanza ExCom meeting</td>
<td>Kanza, Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, <a href="mailto:craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org">craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>CM</td>
<td>July 24, 7:00 pm</td>
<td>Conservation and Joint Action Committee</td>
<td>Kanza, Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, <a href="mailto:craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org">craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Dorothy Barnett - Climate + Energy Project</td>
<td>Topeka, Gary Anderson, (785) 246-3229; <a href="mailto:giandersen1963@hotmail.com">giandersen1963@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<td>GM</td>
<td>Aug 28, 7:00 pm</td>
<td>Kanza ExCom meeting</td>
<td>Kanza, Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, <a href="mailto:craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org">craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Kansas City, MO</td>
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<td>Sun, Sep 07, 6:00 pm</td>
<td>Southwind’s Executive Committee Meeting</td>
<td>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>Southwind, Yvonne Cather, (316) 204-8920, <a href="mailto:yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org">yvonne.cather@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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<td>Kansas Chapter ExCom Meeting</td>
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<td>Canoe/Kayak Float on the Kaw River</td>
<td>Topeka, KS</td>
<td>Topeka, Tim Cross 785-330-3655 <a href="mailto:tcross3@gmail.com">tcross3@gmail.com</a></td>
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<td>Kansas, Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, <a href="mailto:wildwoodp@hotmail.com">wildwoodp@hotmail.com</a></td>
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<tr>
<td>CM</td>
<td>Sep 25, 7:00 pm</td>
<td>Kanza ExCom meeting</td>
<td>Kanza, Craig Lubow, (913) 299-6620, <a href="mailto:craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org">craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org</a></td>
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