Chapter Urges EPA to Fix the Flint Hills Burning Problem

In a letter to EPA Region 7 Administrator Karl Brooks the Kansas Chapter says that KDHE’s 2010 Smoke Management Plan has failed to mitigate the intensive rangeland burning practices in the Flint Hills, citing eleven air quality standard exceedances in 2014 including dangerous fine particles extending well into Nebraska.

Dear Mr. Brooks,

As you know the Kansas Sierra Club has been concerned about pollution from the burning in the Flint Hills since 2003 when numerous exceedances of the national standards were recorded at several monitors in Kansas. We appreciate that certain staff at EPA Region 7 began researching this issue shortly after 2003. However after 10 years we do not seem to be any closer to solving this serious problem for the public health. The continuing problems are summarized as follows.

Inadequate Smoke Management Plan. The 2010 Smoke Management Plan (SMP) has clearly failed to mitigate the intensive burning practices in the Flint Hills.

The April, 2014 rangeland burning season in the Flint Hills resulted in eleven exceedances of the ozone smog or fine-particle smoke (PM2.5) national ambient air quality standards (NAAQS). Four of the 2014 exceedances occurred at monitors in Lincoln and Omaha, Nebraska. Heavy smoke was reported in Manhattan, Ks. on April 11 and 12 that corresponded to intense rangeland burning well to the south.

The 2.5 million acres burned in 2014 was modestly above

See Burning on page 6

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With your help we can protect the wolf
Wolves are vitally important to maintaining nature’s balance, culling out weak and sick animals to keep populations of elk and deer healthy and in check. The Sierra Club is working to defend wolf populations from continued threats from politicians.

Lead the pack & JOIN Sierra Club.

Joining by clicking on the above membership application will help raise money for you Kansas Sierra Club!!

Winter - 2015
Oil Is Pernicious!

By Bill Griffith, Energy Chair

Oil is pernicious. Not only when we breathe it in the variety of forms we have conjured up, but a social malignancy seemingly trails behind it wherever it is pumped, stored, transported, or consumed. Until the early 1900s, coal was the bearer of this title, but oil has far outpaced coal's global impact socially. (Carbon Democracy/CITE)

It is a stark fact that most of the oil-producing countries are politically unstable, have abysmal human rights records, and consider international law an impediment to be ignored or gamed. These countries practice nepotism for profit, bribery, and violence in order to maximize the oil revenues for the few at the expense of the many. (Institute for the Analysis of Global Security)

Oil exploration companies have a grim record with their disregard for indigenous people and their land. One example is Shell's continuous assault on the Waorani in eastern Ecuador, which goes back to the 1950s. The roads that are built there bring in outsiders who raise tensions and change the native's cultures far too quickly for their ability to adapt. Violence skyrockets, and biodiversity plummets. This cycle is repeated over and over with every local tribe that experiences these multi-nationals coming into their homelands.

A recent revelation to toss into this cauldron is sex slavery. My wife and I were watching, “This is Life with Lisa Ling” on CNN in October. The focus of the program was about oil. Women are brought to these modern-day Deadwood s involuntarily to work as prostitutes for the oil field workers, who are also far from home. Crime of all types has grown exponentially. Many residents wonder if the problems outweigh the benefits.

I will only touch on oil and climate change briefly, as our members are well aware of this goo’s contribution to it. 40% of global warming emissions worldwide is from oil (PriceOfOil.org), and the oil and gas industries are forging ahead, investing over 150 billion dollars annually searching for more. Can we blame them? (Well, yes we can.) They also receive 775 billion dollars worldwide each year in subsidies. These numbers appear overwhelming, and they are when viewed through a business-as-usual perspective.

With that kind of money at stake the multi-national fossil fuel industry will not cease to exist on its own, committing corporate suicide, in order to save the planet from climate change. The human

See Oil on page 7

Planets Kansas, the official publication of the Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club, is published quarterly. Subscription is included in membership dues or is $10 per year. Advertising rates are available upon request at info@kansas.sierraclub.org. We reserve the right to refuse advertising which conflicts with the tastes of our readers. Contributions of articles, letters to the editor, poems, original cartoons and photos are welcomed. All articles copyright by Kansas Chapter of Sierra Club unless otherwise indicated and may be reprinted as long as credit is given. Next deadline for submissions is March 10.
Kansas Sierra Club Grants for Climate Change Education

Are you an educator? Do you know one?

If so, here’s great news! Once again, the Kansas Sierra Club is offering a limited number of grants to K-12 teachers in accredited Kansas schools who undertake projects, activities, and lessons related to climate change and the immense challenges it poses.

Grants may be used to attend conferences, purchase materials for experiments, and prepare lessons on climate change.

Got a great idea for an art project, a field study, a writing activity? A Sierra Club grant may be right for you. Certified K-12 teachers in Kansas school districts in any field of study may apply. Teachers do not need to be Sierra Club members to apply for a grant.

Grants range from $250 to $1,000. The deadline for applications is March 31, 2015. Awards will be announced in May. Grant recipients will agree to present their projects at a General Meeting of one of the Kansas Sierra Club Groups during the 2015-16 academic year. Sierra Club General Meetings are open to all members and the general public.

For more information and to download an application, please visit the Kansas Chapter’s Education Grants web page at: http://kansas.sierraclub.org/projects/climate-change-education-grants/.

Please share this opportunity with any educators you know who may be interested.

It is our hope to partner with teachers throughout Kansas in educating students about the nature and causes of our changing climate, and so to contribute to their success in addressing this vital issue.

With warm regards,
Robert F. Sommer, Director of Development and Chair of the Kansas Sierra Club Education Grants Committee.

Kanza Winter Solstice Festival Fun for Entire Family

Moti Rieber receives Exceptional Volunteer Award for his work as Political Chair

Elaine Giessel receives Species Guardian Award

Juan, Angel, and Valerie Bautista Family receives the Youth Volunteer Award

Gail Shafton receives the New Volunteer Award

The Green Spirit Band kept our toes tappin’ with environmental tunes understood by young and old.

As always, the pot luck dinner was a hit for all.

Chet McLaughlin received the Energizer Bunny Volunteer Award for his consistent help whenever needed “above and beyond the call.” Chet could not attend.
The Future of Wildlife in Kansas: Remember the Redbelly Snake!

By Elaine Giessel, Endangered Species Chair and Wildlife Chair

On October 16, politics did indeed trump science in Kansas. Political influence and pressure from developers in Johnson County won. And a precedent was set that guts the law passed 40 years ago to protect rare wildlife species in Kansas from possible extinction.

The Commission of the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism (KDWPT) considered the “political strategy” arguments of Secretary Jennison and voted 6-1 to override the unanimous recommendation of its own scientific advisors to retain “Threatened” status for the Red-bellied Snake. Down listing the snake to a “Species in Need of Conservation” or SINC, eliminated any requirement for local utilities and developers to obtain permits and to provide mitigation when destroying designated critical habitat.

The only organization that provided formal testimony at the Salina hearing in support of retaining protective status for the redbelly was the Kansas Chapter of the Sierra Club. Our communications team alerted members across the state, created an online petition and sent out email alerts. Our social media team pushed the message nationwide, keeping the issue visible. Our media release was picked up by AP; articles on the Kansas redbelly situation appeared in newspapers from the West Coast to the East, from the Gulf to the Great Lakes.

Our members value biodiversity and they were willing to step up when called upon, even on behalf of a small slug-eating snake. We were able to deliver more than 300 signatures, many with personal comments, to the Commission opposing down listing of the snake. That is the power of the Sierra Club.

Although we lost the battle, we are not done. We have already approached Secretary Jennison about working with the agency to repair the damage done by the October decision. We must ensure that a promised recovery plan for the redbelly is developed and implemented as soon as possible, despite funding issues at KDWPT. We are gearing up now to lobby in the next legislative session in an effort to stop any potential threats to the wildlife species that belong to all Kansans.

In the meantime, a huge thank you to all our passionate members for assisting with this issue. As a grassroots organization, our success depends upon your involvement. We appreciate and need your ongoing support!

[For background information on this issue, re-visit the article by Felix Revello “Kansas Chapter Fights Delisting Redbelly and Smooth Earth Snakes” in the Fall 2014 edition of the Planet Kansas available under the News tab on our website at Kansas.SierraClub.org. Comments submitted by the Chapter are also posted on the website.]
the average of 2.1 million acres burned each year over the past 15 years and about the same as 2011 when widespread burning caused numerous ozone exceedances in eastern Kansas.

**Failure to Alert the Public.** KDHE failed to alert the public in Kansas with a specific health advisory on any of the days when exceedances were recorded, as promised in the SMP (Page 25). The only reason we found out about the high level of dangerous fine particles to the north of the Flint Hills is because Lincoln, Nebraska is a large population area with a continuous monitor that detected them on a real time basis.

**Lack of Downwind Air Quality Monitoring.** Neither KDHE nor EPA has the means to assess on a timely basis the true extent of the health risk assumed by people living downwind of these burns. Currently, there are no continuous PM2.5 monitors capable of detecting these dangerous pollutants on an hourly basis between Kansas City, Kansas, and the Cedar Bluff Reservoir west of Hays, a distance of some 280 miles. There are no continuous ozone monitors between Topeka and Cedar Bluff, a distance of 230 miles.

In 2011, KDHE declined to proceed with the planned Tallgrass Prairie Ncore monitor capable of continuous measurements. In 2013 KDHE arranged for the closure of the Konza Prairie LTER continuous ozone monitor. They also moved both the ozone and continuous PM2.5 monitors from Mine Creek in Linn County to Chanute in Neosho County. The ozone monitor at Mine Creek had exceeded the current 75 ppb standard during the burn seasons of 2000, 2001, 2003 and 2011. All of these changes had the effect of minimizing the capability to assess downwind impacts on a timely basis.

**Inadequate Proposed Changes to SMP.**

On Nov. 6, 2014, KDHE convened a meeting in Manhattan, Ks. to discuss possible responses to this problem. Judging from their presentation, KDHE appears to be doubling down on their smoke-plume modeling tool as the main solution. This model fails in several respects to address the current public health issue. First, it is focused on keeping smoke plumes away from large population centers, i.e. Wichita, Topeka and Kansas City… as if nobody else in eastern Kansas and southern Nebraska rates any concern (see slide 17 of Nov. 6 KDHE presentation). Secondly, visible smoke is not an adequate surrogate for the actual cause of the most serious health effects. It’s the invisible particles (PM2.5) and ozone, a product of an atmospheric reaction, which are the relevant regulated pollutants.

Thirdly, and most important, even if KDHE improves the predictive model, it will not actually prevent future exceedances and associated health impacts. KDHE is still not addressing the techniques used for the burning and the concentration within a short time interval. All KDHE will accomplish with a better model is the means to tell more people downwind to stay inside. Further, the lack of continuous monitoring at strategic locations in and downwind of the Flint Hills will inherently call into question any study of health impacts because of the inability to determine actual exposures.

**EPA Action Needed.** We don’t know all the reasons behind the failure to properly monitor air pollution associated with the Flint Hills burning. The failure may, in part, relate to EPA’s rules governing placement of monitors that gives priority to population centers and is not protective of people in small towns and rural areas. It may have to do with budget limitations. We do know, however, that it is EPA’s direct responsibility to sort this out with KDHE as soon as possible.

The steps KDHE has taken to date are unlikely to resolve this air quality problem. In addition, the U.S. Clean Air Act requires EPA and the states to control emissions that drift across state lines and harm air quality in downwind states. We are requesting that EPA Region 7 require KDHE and, if necessary, Oklahoma to develop a new range of options that will finally resolve the issue.

For example the 2010 SMP listed a number of contingency measures that could be taken if the Plan failed to solve the problem. Other options would be to give priority to ranchers who use “patch burn” techniques or initiate their burns outside the usual late March through April envelope.

More detailed information on some of points is available in the attached fact sheet. (see link to fact sheet)


Sincerely,

Craig Volland, Chair, Air Quality Committee
Kansas Chapter, Sierra Club
condition allows for psychological denial of a situation until it is too late to rectify it. This is a prime example of that evolutionary glitch. Of course, our elected leaders are influenced by this largesse and are slow to act to address climate disruption. In fact, our leaders often direct policy to go backwards.

It is readily apparent that the oil industry and the legion of politicians they have bought and paid for will not do an about-face leading to a needed paradigm shift. Are we doomed to wring every last drop of oil out of the ground? Not necessarily. An abrupt dismantling of this empire can be brought about by technology as we have seen in other products. Whale oil, wide use of animals for horsepower, and typewriters have all had their sun set and the internal combustion engine may be headed that way as well.

The technology is electric cars—or for the near future—electric hybrid vehicles. How would you like to pay 73 cents to a dollar for a gallon of gas right now (www.hybridcars.com)? Even with our lower gasoline prices right now, they seem practically high compared to a plug-in automobile. With an internal combustion engine as back-up for range concerns, we can cut 80% or more of our oil consumption. Also, electric cars have far less maintenance, and the savings add up.

An additional incentive for us is the federal government’s $7,500 tax credit that can lower the investment in one of these cutting-edge vehicles. But wait—there’s more. Would you like to lower the fuel cost even more and cut your fossil fuel usage even more? Go solar!

While plugging into the grid does use less fossil fuel and save a great deal of money, your local utility still uses a great deal of coal and natural gas, as well as nuclear power. How about powering your car with solar electrons instead of fossil ones? You can save up to an additional 40% of your fuel cost by going solar (www.sullivansolarpower.com). A gasoline-powered car may cost 20 cents a mile while a solar-charged one is only 4 cents a mile. At that rate, it doesn’t take a long time for most of us to make our money back on a plug-in vehicle. Plus, it helps to accelerate the disruption of the status quo we need.

But someone might say, “Sounds fantastic, but that is a great deal of money upfront.” However, if you lease the solar panels for zero down, the lease payment would actually be most of your old gasoline bill (you can still stop at the convenience store for Funyuns and Slim Jims) and a chuck of your electric bill.

It seems almost surreal that we can reward ourselves with a peppy and stylish car complete with new-car-smell, while drastically lowering our carbon footprint. But we can. A plug-in vehicle or a plug-in with a solar array is our best bet to escape the grasp that oil has on us.
Wise matters!

Field Notes from the DD…

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

“Anyone who thinks that they are too small to make a difference has never tried to fall asleep with a mosquito in the room.” — Christine Todd Whitman

Last year one of the Kansas Sierra Club’s generous supporters included the following note with her contribution: “Fixed, limited income. Best I can do. Hope it helps! Use wisely!”

The enclosed check was for ten dollars. That message has stayed with me all year. Each sentence rings with a story of hope and care—and admonition. Use wisely!

That donor and every Sierra Club member in Kansas should know that I delivered her message to our leadership. They didn’t need to be told, but it never hurts to be reminded: Use wisely!

The pages of Planet Kansas and the many email and social media updates our Chapter provides are filled with testimony to the passion and efforts—and prudence—of the Sierra Club in Kansas. From fighting to preserve wildlife habitat to taking legal action when it’s necessary to supporting outings and education, the leaders and activist volunteers in Kansas are among the liveliest in the nation. That’s not hyperbole—I’ve heard that more than once from staff and volunteer leaders at the national Sierra Club.

Here’s another takeaway from that note: the ten dollars that generous donor sent might well have been a larger percentage of her checking account than the hundred thousand a CEO sent to his or her favorite charity last year. Our donor’s generosity reflects the passion of recognizing that not much else will matter for her grandchildren if we lose the amazing natural world that supports and nourishes and enriches us.

Wondering what ten dollars can do?
If every Sierra Club member in the Sunflower State contributed just that much, we’d cover six months of operating expenses for the Kansas Chapter. That’s powerful. Ten dollars turns out to be a lot of money.

Full participation by our members will enable our Chapter’s Executive Committee, as well as Group leaders throughout the state, to do better long-range planning. It will increase our impact in Topeka, provide support for struggling Sierra Club Groups, and develop more effective communications and education programs.

Currently only 10 percent of members in Kansas provide financial support to the Chapter. That means that this generous woman is part of a small group of members carrying the ball for all of us. And that in turn means the future is always uncertain for the Sierra Club in Kansas.

Make this the year you put some skin in the game. Look at how much ten dollars can do!

And if ten dollars a month is in your budget—just $2.50 a week—please consider a sustaining contribution. Providing reliable income is the best way to support long-range planning for the Kansas Sierra Club.

Make your one-time or sustaining donation on-line at kansas.sierraclub.org (click the DONATE button). Or, 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

Remember, when you contribute directly to the Kansas Chapter, 100 percent of your donation to stays right here in Kansas!

Thank you for all you do to protect planet Earth!
And a personal note to the special donor who inspired this column: Yes, it did help, and your Chapter leaders did use it wisely. Thank you!

“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.

The Rowes are one of the first to install a Sierra Club/Cromwell Solar Photovoltaic system.

Ed and Leonore Rowe are one of the first Sierrans to take advantage of the Sierra Club/Cromwell Solar partnership to install solar systems for Sierra Club members and friends. “The real important thing about the program is that we can lease these solar collectors with no money up front,” says Leonore Rowe. “People can do this. Now folks can install these solar systems without shelling out $15,000 up front. And the money you save on your monthly electric bill is as much or more than your lease. We wanted to show folks how easy this is to do.” See ad on page 7 so you can get started.
Hungry Hawk Haunts
Halloween

A true story By Mike Calwell

Have you ever been startled and amazed at the same time? Like most of us, I had always enjoyed trick or treat night on October 31st but this year an extraordinary event thrilled us all. This is how it happened. As usual, I was out in the front yard setting up my fire pit and treat table in readiness for the arrival of the traditional hoard of little neighborhood goblins. My trademark for this event is a mechanical flying bat that always amazes the kids. I bought it a few years ago in a novelty store, but they are now available online under “FLYING BAT”.

Hanging the bat from a tree takes some effort. First I cast a fishing line over a 25 foot high limb and clip it on to the battery operated bat so that it hangs about 6 feet off the ground. I figure that this is just high enough to keep the little buggers from grabbing it. Once it was connected, I flip the switch and give it a gentle push start. The 17 inch wing span serves to mimic the flight of a real bat. The tough little motor inside powers the flapping wings as it flies at full speed in a 20 foot circle. Apparently most onlookers think it looks pretty real.

Just as I was hooking up the bat, our neighborhood red tailed hawk landed in a tree located about 100 feet across the street. He looked like he might be on his way home for dinner. Unsuccessful. He’s a familiar resident so I ignored him and proceeded to launch the toy bat. It flew perfectly in a circle with me at the center. Suddenly I felt a loud “WHOP” like a tennis racket hitting a softball! The hawk and swooped in over my right shoulder having skillfully targeted this plastic morsel. The sound had come from his open talons striking the bat with his full body weight. This all happened instantly and within only two feet of my head. I could feel the wind from his powerful wing beat. Luckily, I was just far enough from those talons to escape injury. The eight pound test fish-

ing line had snapped in midair as he gracefully carried his would-be dinner away.

I yelled, “bring my bat back, you thief,” and chased the hawk to his roosting point on a roof nearby. He was trying to kill the bat but it continued flapping. Undoubtedly frustrated by this unexpected situation, he took flight once again and disappeared beyond the next house. Later, I decided to follow his line of flight to see if he had dropped his plastic dinner. My search was rewarded. In the center of a neighbor’s front yard, I found the fishing line dangling from a tree and my now silent bat on the ground below. The mortally wounded bat had been shredded into pieces, and the hawk was long gone. I couldn’t help wondering what was going through his mind as he struggled to kill and eat this meal of plastic and cloth!
Sierra Club Southwind

5th Annual FRAGILE EARTH BANQUET & AUCTION

FRI MAR 13     Doors open 6:00 pm
DELICIOUS dinner 6:30 EXCITING speaker 7:30
Ticket price $25 per person

Unity Church 2160 N. Oliver, Wichita
Four course dinner featuring Vegetarian, Vegan, and Regular Entrees
Contact any Southwind Excom member for more info
(always on the Chapter & Group Leaders page in every Planet Kansas)
Guest Speaker Richard Crowson,
Artist, Wichita Eagle cartoonist, blue grass banjo player, KMUW commentator, environmentalist, public education supporter, and renaissance man, Richard Crowson is loved by educators, environmentalists, and enlightened thinkers and is feared by obtuse, far-right politicians, and people who are unkind to dogs.

Save the Date
Kanza Group Annual Silent Auction Fundraiser
Saturday, April 25
Thompson Barn, Lackman & College Blvd, Lenexa, KS

Special Guest Speaker - Julene Bair

- Earth friendly snacks
- Great local wines
- Great bargains and more!!

EAGLE DAYS @ KAW POINT
The park is open seven days a week.

Special Event Days

Friday Jan 30 - Student Day. Call 913-677-2088 to reserve time slot, 9 am, 10 am, 11am, 12 noon, 1pm, 2pm.
Saturday Jan 31 is public tours and displays

Don’t miss it. Eagles appear December 15 through March 1st. The confluence of the Kaw and Missouri Rivers has long been recognized by bird watchers as an active winter fishing site for our American Bald Eagles. These great birds will roost here during the freezing temperatures because the churning waters provide oxygen and openings in the ice, attracting fish. These are perfect conditions to allow families of eagles to catch an easy meal.

The magnificent aerial acrobats have gathered here annually for countless generations. You are invited to enjoy the show. Please park on the upper lot and walk the concrete path out to the point (the statue). For best results, do not make noise. Bring your binoculars and dress warm.

“Friends of the Kaw Point Park” will post info regarding special Eagle Day events. For more information, call 913-677-7752 or on the web at www.LewisAndClarkWyCo.org.
Solar Prayer
By Craig Wolfe ©

One of the songs from Craig Wolfe’s group Soolar

Sun of our Earth,
give us food and warmth to grow.
And Sun, for the children,
give them time, the time to know.
And Sun of our day,
light the Truth so we might learn.

And Sun of our darkest nights,
give us faith for your return.
And Sun of our soul,
give us wisdom from above.
And Sun of our hearts,
oh, fill them with your Love.
Amen
# Chapter & Group Leaders

Groups are the local body of the Kansas State Chapter

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Chapter Executive Committee</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Officers, Committee Chairs</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>*Elected ExCom member; **Appointed ExCom member,</td>
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<tr>
<td>***Group Representative to Chapter, ****Officer/Committee Chair</td>
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| Kanza Group (Kansas City) |  |
| Craig Lubow* | Chair, Conservation Co-Chair, (913) 299-6620, craig.lubow@kansas.sierraclub.org |
| Richard Voss* | Treasurer, (913) 888-8517, vossrico@everestkc.net |
| Elaine Giessel* | Environmental Justice |

| Winter - 2015 |  |
General Meetings

Kanza Group (Kansas City)
Tuesday, January 13, 6:45 pm
Leadership for a Sustainable Society
6:45 pm - Come early, and we will have goodies, along with good conversation followed by our program.
7:00 pm - The Northwest Earth Institute offers ten courses for small groups to collectively move from saying what we believe to doing what we believe. Over 140,000 people have bridged this gap through one of the NWE Institute's classes. Let's lead in being the change together with Sierra Club members, friends, and family.
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

Kanz Group (Kansas City)
Tuesday, February 10, 6:45 pm
Johnson County Sustainability Program
6:45 pm - Come early, and we will have goodies, along with good conversation followed by our program.
7:00 - Jasmin Moore, Sustainability Program Manager, will present on the Johnson County Sustainability Program, its goals and efforts to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in all departments.
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, March 10, 6:45 pm
A Narrative of This Place,
6:45 pm - Doors open.
7:00 pm - Randy Kidd will discuss. Who are we Kansans? How did we get here? Who and what were the ancestors - animal, vegetable, mineral -- that brought us here? Where do we go from here? These are the questions that will be discussed in this photographic walk through the beginnings of Kansas as a vast sea, through the prairie and woodlands growth phases, and finally with its additions of animals … including the human animal. “Where do we go from here?” seems to be the most appropriate question we should be asking today.
Where - Overland Park Lutheran Church, 7810 W. 79th St. 8 blocks west of Metcalf at Lowell. Park on north side.
Contact - Bob Sommer, (913) 681-5211, rsonmer@kc.rr.com

Southwind Group (Wichita)
Friday, January 13, 6:30 pm
Neil Marcus: The Beauty of Kansas
6:30 - Social Hour. Dinner & Drinks will be available. Please bring your own place setting. Program starts at 7:30 pm.
7:30 - Neil Marcus, long time Sierra Club member and photographer, will give a program on the beauty of Kansas.
Where - Great Plains Nature Center, 29th Street North & Woodlawn
Contact - Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Southwind Group (Wichita)
Friday, March 13, 6:30 pm (Time Tentative)
Southwind’s Annual Banquet
Artist, Wichita Eagle cartoonist, blue grass banjo player, KMUW commentator, environmentalist, public education supporter, and renaissance man, Richard Crowson is loved by educators, environmentalists, and enlightened thinkers and is feared by obtuse, far-right politicians, and people who are unkind to dogs. $25/person.
Where - Unity Church of Wichita, 2160 N. Oliver, Wichita.
Contact - Deborah Gafvert 316-733-5102 dsgafvert@cox.net

Topeka Group
Tuesday, January 27, 6:30 pm
Jeffrey Geuther, Nuclear Reactor Fac Mgr - KSU
6:30 pm - “Meet and Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Jeffrey Geuther, Nuclear Facilities Mgr. at KSU will discuss how nuclear power currently represents the largest source of non-fossil fuel electrical power in the US. These reactors are designed to produce large amounts of baseload electricity. However, they are not readily adaptable to many other potential uses of nuclear power, such as the production of hydrogen, burning of long-lived nuclear waste, or the breeding of new fuel. He will discuss how next generation (Gen-IV) reactors are being designed. Six candidate Gen-IV technologies will be summarized, along with the specific potential capabilities of each.
Where - Topeka-Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Topeka, KS
Contact - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@hotmail.com

Topeka Group
Tuesday, February 24, 6:30 pm
Zack Pistora, Legislative Dir., Annual Update on KS Legislature
6:30 pm - “Meet and Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Zack Pistora, Legislative Director and our Sierra Club Lobbyist will give us his annual update on what is going on in the KS legislature. Zack can give us the status of all the important environmental issues that we care about, answer questions and give us advice as to any actions we can take that would help key legislation. We know that we will have a large number of controversial issues to address during 2015.
Where - Topeka-Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Marvin Auditorium 101C, Topeka, KS
Contact - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@hotmail.com

Topeka Group
Tuesday, March 24, 7:00 pm
The Waters of Kansas
6:30 pm - “Meet and Greet and Gather”
7:00 pm - Sharon Ashworth, KS Natural Resource Council Program Manager, will screen the first film in a series of short documentaries on water in KS. “The Waters of Kansas - Cheyenne Bottoms” is meant to prompt discussion of Kansans' relationship with water as the state struggles to deal with water quality and quantity issues. Following the film will be time for discussion. Sharon will also share info about KNRC and other upcoming documentaries to be filmed. KNRC is a nonprofit organization whose mission is to promote environmentally responsible practices and sustainable natural resource policies to ensure the quality and abundance of these resources for future generation of Kansans.
Where - Topeka-Shawnee County Public Library, 1515 SW 10th Ave., Marvin Auditorium 101B, Topeka, KS
Contact - Gary Anderson at (785) 246-3229; gjanderson1963@hotmail.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/.

Jan 01. 12:00 am (Time Tentative). New Year's Day Hike at Lake Jacomo, Blue Springs, MO
Hike some ravines & woodlands trails, hopefully with snow on the ground! We'll plan on hiking 3-5 miles, depending on the weather. Bring lunch, and we'll provide the hot cocoa. Well-behaved dogs and their masters are welcome with pre-approval of the leader. $5 donation requested. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Jan 03. 1:00 pm. Winter Tree ID Part 1, Discovery Center, Kansas City, MO
Urban Forester Wendy Sangster will explain the basics of leaf shapes, arrangements, buds, twig, fruit, bark, form, position in the landscape, and other characteristics of native deciduous trees in their “leaf-off” or dormant condition. We will walk around the grounds of the Discovery Center to ID trees. Missouri winter tree key can be purchased in the gift shop for $3. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileen4250@sbcglobal.net

Jan 17. 10:00 am. Rockhaven Trails Hike at Clinton Lake, Lawrence, KS
We'll explore the three parallel trails on the scenic & rugged south shore of Clinton Lake that transverse the Rockhaven Public Use area. Connecting passes between the trails allow us to tailor hike length to the day's conditions. Bring lunch, snacks, water. $3 donation requested. Kanza. Steve Hassler, (913) 707-3296, hassler@planetkc.com

Jan 23. to Jan 25. Backpack the White Rock Mountain/Shores Lake Loop, Fern, AR
With the Rim Trail, it's about a 16-mile hike. Amazing views of the Boston Mountains after a 1400' climb. $10 donation requested. Kanza. Michael Reed, mereed@runbox.com

Jan 31. 12:00 am (Time Tentative). Winter Hike at Perry Lake - Part 1, Ozawkie, KS
We will be hiking the Section 2 East Trail heading west from the Old Military Trailhead. This is a 7.0 mile out-and-back hike. Most of the terrain is mostly up and down of moderate difficulty with nice views of the lake. Dress appropriately for weather and bring snacks, lunch, and water. $3 donation requested. Kanza. Tim Cross 785-330-3655 tecross3@gmail.com

Feb 01. 12:00 pm (Time Tentative). Winter Tree ID Part 2, Loose Park, Kansas City, MO
We will walk about a mile around the park and see if we can identify trees in their “leaf off” or dormant season. $3 donation requested. Missouri winter tree key can be purchased in the gift shop for $3. Kanza. Eileen McManus, (816) 523-7823, eileen4250@sbcglobal.net

Feb 07. 10:00 am (Time Tentative). Outdoor Leadership Training 201, Burr Oaks Nature Center, Blue Springs, MO
Eileen McManus 816-523-7823 eileen4250@sbcglobal.net. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Feb 14. 9:00 am. Southwind's Annual Valentine's Day Hike
We will meet at the Great Plains Nature Center. We will then take a hike around Chisholm Creek park to study the wildlife. Please wear appropriate clothes for the weather. Please include gloves as we will be picking up trash as we hike. We ask for a $5 donation to be used to further our outings program. Southwind. Stuart Bolt, (316) 682-4722, stuart.bolt@kansas.sierraclub.org

Feb 15. 1:00 pm. Blue River Parkway Trails, Kansas City, MO
This will be our first of several Sunday afternoon hikes on the trails along the Blue River south of Minor Park in south Kansas City. Specific route to be determined later. Bring snacks, water. $3 donation requested. Kanza. Steve Hassler, (913) 707-3296, hassler@planetkc.com
Sierra Club Outings

General public is welcome to participate

date is Mar. 21. Kanza. Steve Hassler, (913) 707-3296, hassler@planetkc.com

Mar 20. to Mar 22. Car Camping at Lake Scott State Park, Scott City, KS
In 1995, the National Geographic Society’s Travel magazine ranked this state park as one of the top 50 in America. We will camp Fri. night and day hike approx. 7 miles over rough terrain and explore “Suicide Bluffs” and the Indian Ruins of the Taos Pueblo. There will also be a demonstration of various fire starting techniques (including without matches. All will be invited to participate in a Sat. night Hobo Dinner over hot coals. A $3 donation is requested. Kanza. John Haynes, (913) 742-0100, jhaynes5018@everestkc.net

Mar 28. 10:00 am. Prairie Village Earth Fair

Feb 21. 12:00 am (Time Tentative). Winter Hike at Perry Lake - Part 2, Ozawkie, KS
Following up on our hike of Section 2 in Jan, we’ll hike Section 3 east to Kiowa Rd. as it winds along Little Slough Creek. Dress appropriately for weather and bring snacks, lunch, and water. $3 donation requested. Kanza. Tim Cross 785-330-3655 tecross3@gmail.com

Feb 21. 10:00 am (Time Tentative). Backpacking 101 Series: Class 1, Kansas City, MO
Have you wanted to try backpacking or at least learn more about it? We’ll cover gear from head to foot and everything in between. This is the first 5-hour classroom session. Participation in this and the second class on 3/7 ensures a place on the backpacking trip 4/3-4/5 near Columbia, MO. Cost for the series is $50 per person with participation limited to 25 people. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Mar 07. to Mar 08. Backpacking Trip on the Elk River Trail, Elk City, KS
The scenic Elk River Trail has been designated as a National Recreation Trail. On the edge of the Chautauqua Hills region, it threads through river-carved rocky bluffs and has been rated the best hike in the state. We will explore its unique features on an overnight winter backpacking trip. $10 donation requested. Kanza. Tim Cross 785-330-3655 tecross3@gmail.com

Mar 07. 10:00 am (Time Tentative). Backpacking 101 Series: Class 2, Kansas City, MO
This is the second 5-hour classroom session for those who completed the first class on 2/21. Completing both ensures a place on the backpacking trip 4/3-4/5 near Columbia, MO. Cost for the series is $50 per person with participation limited to 25 people. Kanza. Paul Gross, (816)228-6563, wildwoodp@hotmail.com

Mar 14. 9:15 am. Perry Lake Hiking Trail Maintenance, Perry, KS
Come along for our semianual trail maintenance adventure on this 28-mile loop trail halfway between Lawrence and Topeka. Bring lunch, water, snacks, work gloves, and if you have them, a lopper or bow saw. Weather postponement

Go Digital
See the Planet Kansas in Color
Save Trees. Save Us Money.
It’s the Smart Thing To Do!!
Send us your email to
info@kansas.SierraClub.org
Tell us you’re Going Digital
We’ll send you the PK online.

Winter - 2015
Calendar of Events

Summary of all Kansas Chapter Events

Below is a listing of all General Meetings, Outings, and Committee Meetings for the Kansas Chapter and Groups. For specific information, see General Meetings page 13 and Outings page 14. For the latest update on events, go to http://kansas.sierraclub.org/calendar/