

Nebraska Sierran

Publication of the Sierra Club in Nebraska

March 2011

<http://sierranebraska.org>

Vol. 38, No. 1

Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet

March Program

Diligence Needed to Avert Disasters

Sierra Club Program
**Our Actions Have
Consequences:
Macondo, Athabasca,
Mingo**

with John F. Schalles,
Ph.D.

Thursday, Mar. 24, 7 p.m.
First United Methodist Church
69th & Cass streets, Omaha
Enter north door

**The public is welcome at all Sierra
Club educational programs.**

By Mary Green

MoValley Program Director

Macondo, Athabasca, and Mingo are not household words, but perhaps they should be.

Dr. John Schalles will talk about these names and what they mean in the context of environmental disasters. He will sur-

vey the damage done and impacts in the past, present, and future from these and other atrocities.

Macondo is the damaged oil well that spewed 200 million gallons of crude oil from the Deepwater Horizon drilling rig explosion in 2010 off the Louisiana coast.

Athabasca is the largest deposit of bitumen tar sands in northern Alberta.

Mingo is the West Virginia county ravaged from the consequences of blowing the tops off mountains to extract coal.

These sites, and the stories behind them, are signs of the depths of our societal appetite for natural resources and the consequences of our appetites, raising the question of who's in control, and provid-



John Schalles

See Schalles, page 6

Campaigning to Retain Mayor

By Albert Lierz

MoValley Sierra Club Political Committee

At its January 2011 meeting the Missouri Valley Sierra Club Group Excom unanimously agreed to the following "Mayor Suttle has been very pro-environment with his appointments. If he is recalled, we would likely lose those advances. MVG needs to oppose the recall. The MoValley Political Committee will work on this."

The actions discussed at the MoValley meeting centered around contacting the other Omaha conservation groups and using each others volunteers, databases, e-newsletters, and other communication devices to encourage Mayor Jim Suttle supporters to "get out the vote."

As its first action the Political Committee held an organizational meeting of interested conservation groups at Whole Foods, 10020 Regency Circle, Omaha on Thursday night, Jan. 6. The MoVal Political Committee urged Omaha area conservation groups to send representatives to this meeting so a

See Recall, page 3

Don't Waste Trees! Sign up for the Nebraska Sierra e-newsletter. Email albert_liertz@yahoo.com or call 402-551-9480



Photo by Scott R Kemper

Bill Moore at the February program.

Moore: Year of the Electric Car

By Mary Green

Mo Valley Program Director

Bill Moore of "EV World" (evworld.com) spoke to a crowd of about 40 who crowded into the meeting room of Benson Pizza Shoppe on the night of Thursday, Feb. 24, to learn the latest on electric vehicles. Bill was the guest speaker at the February Program of the MoValley Group of the Nebraska Sierra Club. This was his fourth appearance as a guest speaker for MoValley programs.

2011 is shaping up to be the "Year of the

Electric Car." What does that mean to those of us who live in Omaha? When can we expect to see electric vehicles (EVs) such as the Chevrolet Volt or the Nissan Leaf become available in our market? And are we, as a city, ready for them? What can you expect to experience when you own an electric car, be it a pure EV such as the Leaf, or electric hybrid such as the Volt, in terms of their driving qualities and operating costs?

See Electric, page 2

Sierra Club Facing Restructuring, Expansion

Michael Brune
Executive Director

[Memo to Sierra Club staff - Feb. 22, 2011]

This is an exciting time for our organization. We've celebrated the defeat of another coal plant, Pres. Obama has unveiled a new vision for community-based land protection, and our campaigns for clean energy, beyond oil, and water protection are either scaling up or will be in the weeks and months ahead.

At the same time, the House has voted to cut EPA funding to its lowest levels in 30 years, to strip its authority to fight climate change and limit toxic air and water pollution, and to decrease funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund to levels not seen in the Fund's 45-year history. Meanwhile, Gov. Walker is pacing the floor in his Wisconsin office, waiting to sign a bill that would slash critical public sector jobs and take away the rights of unions to collectively bargain. Ten other states are contemplating similar measures. To respond to these threats and opportunities requires the Club to be at the top of its game.

In order to realize our potential it is as important for us to focus on how we do our work as much as the projects on which we work. In 2011, I've asked the Executive Team to focus on three consistent themes: accountability, efficiency, and integration. To that end, we have been working over the last several months with consultants at the Monitor Institute to look at several key functional areas inside the Club. We chose to do this in response to the dynamic environment in which we are all working, namely:

- The rise of social media, rapid evolution in web-based content, and the need to adapt to an increasingly fast-paced environment, where information is available 24/7 and the public conversation is constantly shifting;

- The increase in staffing associated with the Beyond Coal campaign, which intensifies our need

to more quickly and efficiently recruit a talented, creative, and diverse candidate pool while supporting the excellent work and professional advancement of staff already on board;

- Long-term trends that make it increasingly difficult and costly to raise and preserve unrestricted revenue;

- New technologies which will enable the Club to more fully engage with its members and supporters.

- Shifting demographics in our country, with the corresponding necessity of the Club to address the issues of diversity and youth inclusion and integration.

We know that we have an incredible base on which to build - our staff, our volunteers, and our grassroots network position the Sierra Club to do great things and have a positive impact on people and the environment. Not surprisingly, we have also identified ways in which we can improve in order to increase our impact externally. Here are the top-level changes we'll make:

- We'll create a new Digital Strategies department, which will integrate IT, Online Organizing, and Social Media including the Activist Network. We will hire a Director of Digital Strategies, who will oversee all of the Club's online constituent outreach and will be tasked with aligning our online activities and technological investments with the broader strategy and success of the Club. This position will report to the executive director.

- We'll move the Outings program into Conservation. Our hope is to find the best ways in which Outings can strengthen the Club's programs and outreach, bringing more volunteers, donors and Club leaders into our work by increasing the visibility of Outings and its prioritization within the organization. We also aim to develop synergies between our national and local outings, Inner City Outings, Building Bridges to the Outdoors and Military Families in the

Outdoors. Finally, this move will also place all our youth-oriented outings in the same department as the Sierra Student Coalition and the Political Program to better coordinate our approach to youth programs.

- We will add one, and possibly two, additional staff persons to the Human Resource department. This will help to streamline the hiring process, as will further clarifying roles and responsibilities between HRD and line managers for greater clarity and efficiency. Human Resources will now report to the executive director.

- Books will be integrated into Communications. Sierra magazine production and advertising will also move into Communications, so that all elements of the magazine are located within one department.

- We will integrate our fundraising efforts by merging our two fundraising departments into one, led by Jackie Brown. By looking at our entire donor base as one, we intend to make progress moving more donors up the ladder of investment - encouraging more people to make gifts of between \$10-50,000 as well as increase our planned giving efforts and other efforts, while maintaining our broad constituent pool of members and annual giving donors.

One significant change is that Debbie Sorondo's position of Chief Operating Officer will be

assimilated into other areas as a result of this re-organization. Debbie will be working closely with me and the senior team over the next few months to help guide this transition and ensure that it's working well for everyone. Beyond the next few months, Debbie and I have agreed there will not be a longer-term role for her. I am grateful for all of Debbie's contributions during the 18 years that she has served as our COO.

We will begin recruiting immediately for someone to manage the fundraising that previously occurred under Development. This person will report to Jackie; Member Services and Licensing will also move to Jackie's department. The Office of Development is responsible for the majority of our very important C(4) income, and I want to give recognition to the talented people on that team for the work they have done and will continue to do. This team includes member recruitment and retention, annual giving, member services and licensing. Thank you for all you're doing for the Club.

The changes we are making now are about looking forward and building an even stronger Sierra Club. I realize that these are dramatic changes, and want you all to know that we will make this transition gracefully. I've attached an organizational chart to clarify the restructuring I've described.

Continued from page 1 Electric Car

These were just some of the topics discussed during Moore's "Year of the Electric Car" presentation on Thurs. Feb. 24. Bill Moore is the editor of the online journal EV World, and closely follows the development of new vehicle technologies. On an average day, the online publication serves some 13,000-user sessions and dis-

tributes up to 55,000 pages of information daily. EV World is headquartered in Omaha, Neb.

Sierra Club programs are free and open to the public. For more information, go to <http://sierranebraska.org> and click on "events", or contact Mary Green at (402) 556-1830, or mary.green@nebraska.sierra-club.org

Continued from page 1

Recall Effort for Jim Suttle Not Based on Malfeasance, Misconduct

coordinated strategy could be developed. Mayor Suttle's office, Forward Omaha, Douglas County Democrats, and other groups known to be working on the campaign to retain Mayor Suttle were also contacted to send representatives so environmental groups could conduct a coordinated effort.

* * *

The following message was developed, posted to the Nebraska Sierra club website, mailed to conservationists through the Nebraska Sierra Club e-newsletters:

"Please Vote "NO" on the Mayor Recall January 25!"

Please join us in voting "No" to keep Mayor Suttle in office in the January 25 Recall Election. Below are four reasons that we support a "NO" vote.

No. 1 - Vote "No" because you recognize Mayor Suttle's leadership in sustainability. Conservation groups such as the Sierra Club, the Nebraska League of Conservation Voters, and the Guardians of the Good Life have taken a stand against the recall.

These environmental organizations recognize that Mayor Jim Suttle has been a "green" mayor who has made considerable strides in establishing "green" initiatives within Omaha city government. He hired a

sustainability coordinator to develop these initiatives with the various city departments and attracted millions in federal dollars to retrofit buildings/homes for greater energy savings.

No. 2 - Vote "No" because you are anti-recall.

A recall should be reserved for malfeasance or misconduct. Mayor Suttle has not violated the law. As a matter of fact, the first call for Mayor Suttle's recall came minutes after he was elected. At that time, the only claim that the recallers could make was that Mr. Suttle was elected, fair and square.

Is it written in the city charter that you can only recall someone if there is malfeasance or misconduct? No, you can recall someone at any time. But is that a good idea? Let's face the facts: we can recall every elected official in Omaha, but that is not going to solve our city's problems. A recall will only lead to instability.

No. 3 - Vote "No" because of the wasted money.

Close to a million taxpayer dollars will likely be spent if the recall passes. The recall process and two additional elections could run \$300,000 or more each (Election Commissioner estimate).

And what about the money that

Omahans will spend trying to get the best candidate elected? We will be writing checks to our candidates' campaign committees on these unnecessary elections.

No. 4 - Vote "No" because you are pro-Suttle.

Mayor Suttle has moved Omaha forward since he took office in June 2009, including restoring the Omaha's AAA bond rating. In regaining the AAA bond rating, Omaha has already saved \$6 million. Additionally, since the bond rating has been restored, Omaha was able to refinance three debt obligations at the lowest rate in Omaha history.

As proof of this, Forbes.com recently named Omaha as the nation's "Most Affordable City." The article states that Omaha is a city "expected to thrive in 2011" with the promise of new jobs.

Please vote on Jan. 25. The recall is not a done deal. This election, like all others, requires Omaha's voters to do our civic duty.

Vote "No" on Jan. 25 to keep Mayor Suttle in office.

MoValley Political Committee members: Mike McClellan, Chair, mclegal1@yahoo.com; Dave Newell, danewell2@netzero.net; Albert Lierz, albert_liertz@yahoo.com

Nebraska Chapter & Missouri Valley Group Officers

Nebraska Chapter of the Sierra Club Executive Committee and Officers for 2011 (updated 01/31/2011)

Chapter Chair, Council Delegate, *Dick Boyd, dickb68506@yahoo.com
Chapter Vice-Chair, *Candy Bless, jynsweet@yahoo.com
Communications Chair, Webmaster, *Albert Lierz, albert_liertz@yahoo.com
Political Chair, Legislative Chair, Fundraising Co-Chair, *Tim Rinne, walterinne@neb.rr.com
Membership Chair, *Mark Weihe, mw10038@inetnebr.com
Chapter Secretary, Chap Lobbyist Assistant, Brittany Crawford, sier-ra.club.leg.network@gmail.com
Conservation Chair, CAFO Chair, Cottonwood Group Delegate, *Glen Murray, glen@truelllaw.com
Chapter Treasurer, Grants Chair, Listserv Administrator, MVG Delegate, *Clyde Anderson, ClydeLAnderson@cox.net
Bluestem Group Delegate, *Foster Collins, fcollins1@unl.edu
Platte Valley Group Delegate, *Tom Brown
Platte Valley Group Alt. Delegate., Platte Valley Conservation Chair, **Buffalo Bruce, buffalobruce1@gmail.com

Outings Chair, Robert J Goetschkes, bobbygoetschkes@hotmail.com
Chapter Lobbyist, Kenneth C. Winston, kwinston@inebraska.com

Missouri Valley Group of the Sierra Club Executive Committee and Officers for 2011 (updated 01/28/2011)

MVG Chair, Recycling Issues Chair, *Steve Andrews, steve.andrews20@gmail.com
Vice Chair, *Candy Bless, jynsweet@yahoo.com
Conservation Chair, Alt. Chapter Del., *Glenn Pollock, pollockg@cox.net
Newsletter Editor, *Scott Kemper, scott.kemper@gmail.com
Membership Chair, Webmaster, *Albert Lierz, albert_liertz@yahoo.com
Political Chair, Environmental Justice, *Mike McClellan, mclegal1@yahoo.com,
Treasurer, Debbie Galusha, agalusha@cox.net
Secretary, Chapter Delegate, Listserv Administrator, Urban Sprawl & Transportation Chair, Clyde Anderson, ClydeLAnderson@cox.net
Programs Chair, Phone Tree Chair, Mary Green, megreen4@cox.net
Outings Chair, Robert J Goetschkes, bobbygoetschkes@hotmail.com

New Leaders, Goals/Services, Social Networking, Adopt-a-Park

By Bob "Entity" Goetschkes

MVG/Nebraska Chapter Outings Chair

1. Introducing the Outings Team:

This is my second year as your Outings Chair, so I thought it high time to check in, introduce myself, and talk about some of the ideas your Outings Leadership has been discussing. First, John Calandra (Level Two, National Outings, James Phernetton (Level Two, National Outings), Ronda Nelson, (Level One-currently inactive) and I, (Level One, Local Outings), constitute the team that has been offering at least one outing per month to Sierra Club members and the public.

We are training three new leaders: Mr. and Mrs. Roberts and Ms. Lianne Lau. We are open to suggestions and we welcome new leaders all the time.

2. Current Outings Goals and Services:

Since taking the chair, my goal was to ensure the Sierra Club could maintain a strong presence in the outdoors community by leading at least one outing per month, sometimes two. Also, our outings choices now include cross country skiing, snow shoe hikes, camping/backpacking, mountain biking/cycling, paddling, winery walks, and "innings" to museums, environmental and historic areas, in addition to our old favorite -- day hiking.

We also have moved towards a central carpool location, Wohlner's in Aksarben Village, Center and 72nd streets, south of Elmwood Park. Wohlner's is very supportive of our using the store as a launching pad and restroom stop, and they also are open early Sunday mornings.

3. Outings Team Employs Social Networking to Expand Communications and Services

In addition to the Sierra Club email listserve, Outings has grown to include a Google Groups page and a Facebook page (Like outingsmvgsierraclub). The Sierra Club email listserve works well informing our membership, but since our outings are open to all, we leaders have expanded the way we advertise. We have more than 100 subscribers to our social networking sites, and they continue to grow. Our Google Groups page informs nonmembers of outings, and our Facebook page allows leaders to put out last-minute information and offer impromptu outings.

We are now part of an information-sharing network that includes other outdoor enthusiasts, which hopefully expands our membership. We share, for example, information with Nebraska Adventure Group, World Wide Trekking, Omaha Hiking Club, the Outdoor Venture Center at UNO, Backwoods, Recycled Fish, and Canfields.

4. Outings Team Adopts Walnut Creek

MVG Sierra Club Outings has adopted the portion of Walnut Creek near the fishing peninsula on the eastern shore of the lake. There is a huge need to police the area and remove pollution that is harmful

to wildlife, such as fishing line and Styrofoam containers. Mr. Cunningham of Papillion Parks and Recreation has made bird enthusiasts aware of the dangers to avian life, so please look for monthly clean-up days during the warmer months. For our efforts, a sign with Sierra Club contact information will be put up for all to see. I think we can have a positive impact on many levels by participating in this Adopt-A-Park program. More on this later.

See you on the trail,

Bob Goetschkes,

bobbygoetschkes@hotmail.com

National Service Outings

By Dick Boyd

Nebraska Chapter Chair

I recently went to the Sierra Club home page and located an interesting article entitled, "Volunteer Vacations." It reads in part, "Through the roughly 90 service trips we run each year, our National Outings program donates roughly 27,000 work hours to state and federal land agencies. The monetary value? Around \$405,000."

Service trips range from helping with research projects at whale calving grounds near Maui to assisting with archaeological site restoration in New Mexico.

Usually, service trip members team up with forest service rangers or park service personnel to restore wilderness areas, maintain trails, clean up trash and campsites, and remove non-native plants.

Besides the satisfaction of a job well done, service trip participants feel a sense of ownership of the area where they work. They often return year after year to work the site, either on a Sierra Club service trip or just on their own.

Service trip participants also get to meet and talk with the people who know the area best; namely forest service and park rangers. In some places, Sierra Club Outings has been working with ranger districts and park service personnel for more than a quarter century.

There is also a social aspect to serv-

ice trips. Service trip members often share a like work ethic and similar beliefs about the land and about social responsibility. Friendships form, and it's not unusual for groups to meet again on future service trips."

Here are some examples of nearly 100 Sierra Club service trips:

- Look for signs of mountain lion, record growth of saguaro cactus, and clear trails in Saguaro Dreams, Saguaro West National Park, Arizona

- Clear invasive Brazilian peppers, restore former citrus groves to wetland and hammock habitats for the benefit of wildlife in Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge, Florida

- Archaeology and rock art protection in southern Shay Canyon, Utah.

- Maintain grounds and structures on Antietam National Battlefield, Maryland

- Projects may include planting, gardening, weeding, and nursery work, as well as maintenance of patients' gardens and cleaning of garden spaces in Kalaupapa National Historical Park on the island of Molokai, Hawaii.

Some of the expenses may be tax-deductible, 501 (c)(3).

If anyone has an interest, please let me know because I am planning to volunteer sometime in the near future.

Dick Boyd can be contacted at dickb68506@yahoo.com.

Chapter Opposes LB 84: AKA Build Nebraska Act

By Clyde Anderson

Sierra Club opposes Legislative Bill 84 because it would divert Nebraska sales tax revenue that now goes to the general fund to state highway construction and maintenance.

Specifically, 83 percent of all sales tax in excess of 5 percent would be diverted from the general fund to the State Highway Capital Improvement Fund, and 17 percent would be diverted to the Highway Allocation Fund.

It's estimated that \$125 million in sales tax would be diverted the first year when the Legislature is trying to cope with a \$986 million shortfall to the state budget.

The title of the LB 84, The Build Nebraska Act, is a misnomer since Section 2 of the bill restricts its application to the state highway system. Money diverted by the bill or generated by the sale of its bonds could only be used for the state highway system. Funds could not be used for other modes of transport or for roadways outside the state highway system.

Years ago Nebraskans made the decision to fund our high-

way system, not from tolls, but from fees collected from highway users such as from taxes on motor fuel, vehicle registration fees, and state sales tax on motor vehicles. However, in recent years these fees haven't been increased to match the rate of inflation in the costs of highway construction and maintenance. Two years ago the Gov. Dave Heineman vetoed a bill that would have raised the Nebraska fuel tax.

Some people believe the myth that highway users are not subsidized. However, studies indicate this is not true. A new report, issued by the Public Interest Research Group, finds that highway users pay only 51 percent of the cost of building and maintaining highway infrastructure.

Sierra Club opposes LB 84 in its present form because:

1. Public subsidies to highway travel put other modes of surface transportation, especially freight railroads, at a competitive disadvantage. Highway users typically pay a little over half of the cost of building and maintaining highway and street infrastructure. For example, this huge subsidy for trucking could result in ton-

nage being diverted from railroads to highways that would be more efficiently handled by rail.

2. When truckers don't pay their full share of the cost to build and maintain the highways and streets they use, this usually results in artificially low trucking rates. This gives goods produced in distant locations an unfair competitive advantage over locally produced products. Thus, by subsidizing trucking, we are likely exporting Nebraska jobs.

3. LB 84 only benefits state highways and ignores other forms of ground transportation in Nebraska.

4. By increasing the public subsidy for Nebraska highway travel through diverting sales tax revenue from General Revenue to highways it creates funding problems for other public services funded by state sales tax revenues, such as education and human services.

5. When motorists don't pay their full share of the cost to use the highway network, there is no incentive to drive less. In urban areas, this encourages sprawl with its unsustainable energy-inefficient land use.

6. Use of Nebraska sales tax

revenue to subsidize highways benefits out-of-state highway users. Why should Nebraskans subsidize the movement of people and goods across our state?

In the short term, Sierra Club encourages the Nebraska Legislature to provide the increased funding needed for our state highway system by increasing the state fuel tax and other fees on highway users. Our organization doesn't support legislation that singles out transportation for special consideration over sectors such as education, health, public safety, or local government.

Since the increased use of energy-efficient engines and electric vehicles may result in no increase or even a reduction in the future consumption of motor vehicle fuel, we suggest that the Legislature establish a study committee to look at alternatives to the motor fuel tax for funding the state highway system.

For example, some states are considering a vehicle-mile tax (VMT) with rates varying with vehicle weights. With a VMT, electric vehicles would pay their fair share for using the state's highway network.

Moving Forward, Moving People

Updating Omaha's Transportation Master Plan

By Clyde Anderson

Omaha's transportation policy is part of the city's master plan, which was adopted in the mid 1990s and updated in 2003.

This policy directs all future transportation projects within the city of Omaha and guides the formation of the capital improvement plan and city budget and thus directs how our transportation dollars are spent. This policy also shapes how transportation projects are completed in private developments.

Last November Omaha launched a year-

long process to update the transportation master plan. This update will take the existing transportation policy and move it forward, creating a balanced and equitable transportation network focusing on all modes of transportation: automobile, bicycle, pedestrian, transit, air and freight (truck, rail, barge, pipeline, air).

I was one of about 30 selected to serve on the stakeholder committee for the transportation master plan update. Stakeholders attempt to represent all residents of Omaha. We are committed to participate

for approximately a year with monthly meetings during this process. I hope my expertise in rail (both freight and passenger), transit, and trails can help the project.

For more information about this project, go to <http://www.cityofomaha.org/tmpln>.

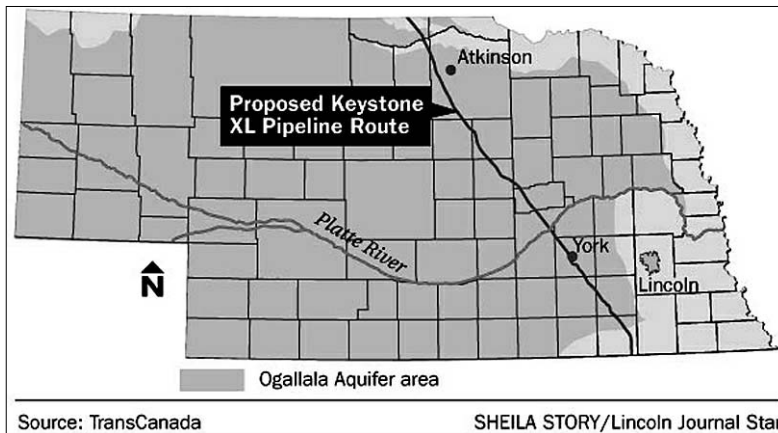
Funding for this project comes from a grant from the Centers for Disease Control (CDC) through the Communities Putting Prevention to Work (CPPW) grant program. The CDC understands how our transportation decisions affect the health of the community.

Debating Safety of the Tar Sands Pipeline

By Ken Winston
Sierra Club Policy Advocate

The report we are discussing today provides evidence that a tar sands pipeline is 16 times more likely to leak than an ordinary crude oil pipeline. This represents an unacceptable risk to America's most valuable resource, the Ogallala aquifer.

Let me explain. Water is fundamental



for all life. Humans need it for sustenance and sanitation. It is a necessary ingredient for production of food, fiber and most forms of energy. It will become increasingly more valuable as the population of the planet grows.

The Ogallala is the largest freshwater aquifer in the Western Hemisphere. The greatest concentration of water is in Nebraska's Sandhills. The level of saturation of the aquifer is more than 1,000 feet in much of the Sandhills, compared to a depth of less than 50 feet in many other areas. It provides 80 percent of the drinking water in the region as well as providing 30 per cent of the nation's groundwater for irrigation. Gov. Dave Heineman has called it the lifeblood of agriculture, Nebraska's No. 1 industry.

In contrast, the oil that these pipelines will transmit is a toxic substance. The process to obtain oil from tar sands destroys every living thing in its path.

The aquifer in the Sandhills is particularly vulnerable. Experts have said is very likely that an oil leak in the Sandhills area would reach the aquifer because "shallow water tables are common and soils are typically sandy." They have also noted that the aquifer in this area often discharges to the surface and that it would be difficult to pre-

vent pollution in these areas from reaching the surface. If this occurred it is likely there would be far wider dispersion of the pollution than a typical leak into an aquifer. TransCanada plans to run its tar sands pipeline through an area of the Sandhills where the water table is very shallow and through areas where the aquifer discharges back to the surface.

Several of Nebraska's elected leaders have raised concerns about the proposed pipeline. Sen. Mike Johanns has asked that the pipeline be moved away from the most vulnerable parts of the aquifer. He has also requested a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement. Sen. Ben Nelson also stated the need to protect the Ogallala aquifer and requested a thorough environmental review as well as comments by relevant state agencies. The Nebraska Sierra Club wishes to recognize the leadership of Sens. Johanns and Nelson on this issue. Twenty-one Nebraska state senators sent a letter to Secretary of State Hillary Clinton asking that she follow the requests of Sens. Nelson and Johanns. Nebraska state senators have also introduced legislation asking

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Dr. Schalles Leading Gulf Oil Research

ing clear evidence of the legacy of our time on Earth.

Dr. Schalles is lead scientist for geospatial analysis with the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Environmental Cooperative Science Center; an aquatic scientist with research projects on the U.S. Gulf and East coasts and Northern Plains; a college educator; former chair of biology, and the current director of environmental science at Creighton University.

Among his many research projects, Dr.

for reasonable regulation of the proposed pipeline.

TransCanada has responded like a used car salesman trying to close the deal before unsuspecting customers discovers the defects in their products. It has rejected suggestions that the pipeline be moved. They have rejected further studies of potential impacts. They have rejected an SEIS.

They have opposed any regulation by the state of Nebraska. We believe the SEIS is like sending a used car to a mechanic to get it checked out. This report is like a warning light on that used car that TransCanada wants to sell us. We need to heed this warning light. This report has revealed new issues that need to be thoroughly examined. We cannot afford to put our aquifer at risk. The more we look at the proposed pipeline, the more problems we see. In the language of used cars, TransCanada is trying to sell us a lemon.

We are asking for the following: A Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement as requested by Sen. Mike Johanns; Examination of an alternative route for the pipeline as requested by Sen. Mike Johanns; A thorough environmental review as requested by Sen. Ben Nelson.

One of the findings of the Gulf Oil Commission was that the entire issue could have been avoided by proper oversight. We need every aspect of this issue to be thoroughly examined in order to prevent this unacceptable risk to America's most valuable resource, the Ogallala aquifer.

Schalles took a group of Creighton students to the Gulf oil spill last spring to collect baseline data on habitat assessment in the Grand Bay area, and he will be taking another student group back to the same area this May to compare differences in the health and productivity of vegetation a year after the spill.

Join the Sierra Club for this free informational talk. Sierra Club programs are free and open to the public. For more info go to <http://sierranebraska.org/> and click on "Events."

Keystone XL Pipeline Happenings

By Jane Wilson

In case you hadn't heard, a company called TransCanada

in places where the water table (also known as the Ogallala Aquifer) is very near the sur-

Nebraska Wildlife Federation, Bold Nebraska, Guardians of the Good Life, Audubon

protect their land, water and people.

Jan. 29 - A Keystone XL Pipeline Education and Action Forum was held in Lincoln and attended by more than 100 concerned citizens who learned about the dangers of the pipeline and what actions we can take.

Feb. 5 - A few fun-loving Sierra Clubbers and Guardians members attended the Annual Ground Hog Prom dressed as an oil spill, where they handed out pipeline buttons and talked up the issue. Now if we'd just followed the guy around who was dressed as Tony Hayward (BP exec), the act would have been priceless!

ONGOING: Since July, Sierra Club activists and others have gathered at busy intersections in Omaha every week to spread the word about this threat to the Good Life. And there are STILL people who know nothing about the pipeline, so the human billboard rallies will continue.

BUS BENCH ADVERTISING: Anti-Keystone XL Pipeline signs on bus benches down the midtown 72nd Street corridor will soon appear. MAT bus panels are also being looked into.

A benefit concert was held March 6 at the Zoo Bar in Lincoln and more than 100 attendees gave nearly \$1,300 to the pipeline fight and enjoyed country, blues, Irish and folk music in exchange. Tons of yard signs, buttons, bumper stickers and action kits were snapped up by everyone and the enthusiasm was contagious.

Many thanks to all those who have given their time and talent to the pipeline fight -- Let's keep it up so we can beat this thing!!



Photo by Jane Wilson

Sierra Club members and fellow pipeline activists dressed as an oil spill for the 2011 Ground Hog Prom.



Photo by Mitch Paine

Opponents of the pipeline proposed to cross the Sandhills demonstrating at the Nebraska Capitol.

wants to build a pipeline carrying toxic tarsand oil from northern Alberta, Canada, down to the Gulf of Mexico, where it will be shipped to the highest bidder. And it will pass right through fragile Sand Hills

face, if not ON the surface during certain times of the year. Called the Keystone XL, there are many groups and individuals joining in the fight against this risky pipeline, including the Nebraska Sierra Club,

After the rally, volunteers delivered stuffed meadowlarks to various state senators along with flash drives containing various reports on tarsands, the dangers involved and laws that other states have in place to

Make a gesture that lasts a lifetime.

I am pleased to enroll as a Life Member of the Sierra Club.

Please enroll me as an individual Life Member.

Full payment of \$1000 is enclosed.

\$350 first annual installment is enclosed.

We are enrolling as joint Life Members.

Full payment of \$1250 is enclosed.

\$450 first annual installment is enclosed.

New Member Name(s) _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) (____) _____

Email _____

Please make your Life Member dues payable to the Sierra Club.

I prefer to charge my VISA MASTERCARD AMEX

Account number _____

Expiration date ____/____

Signature _____

F94Q **W 4204** 1

Sierra Club Life Member Program, 85 Second Street, San Francisco, CA 94105

A Sierra Club Life Membership is a gesture on behalf of all life—from our oceans to our forests, and from the tiniest insect to the largest sequoia. As a Sierra Club Life Member, you'll be helping to support programs and campaigns that protect endangered species and preserve threatened wilderness areas



photo/Luis C. Tejo

(and all the life that they support)—not only for today, but for decades to come.

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