
Mississippi Chapter Sierra Club

Golden Triangle Group

CROSSROADS

Feb 2007 – July 2007





SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

EVENTS

FEBRUARY


Saturdays, Feb. 10, 17th, and 24th, 9:00 a.m. – 2:00 p.m. *Three Work Outing Days at the Sierra Club Wilderness Trail.* Volunteers are needed to clear fallen trees from the Sierra Club Wilderness Trail in the Noxubee Wildlife Refuge. This trail took a beating from hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We've marked the entire length with pink flagging. This year we want to finish clearing it. The trail meanders through low areas so wear boots if there has been recent rain. From Starkville, take Highway 25S for about 10 miles. After the sign for Craig Springs, turn left onto Keeton Tower Rd. We will meet at the end of Keeton Tower Road where the trail begins. Call Juliet Tang at 662-338-5426 for rain dates.

Wed., Feb. 21st, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. *Tombigbee National Forest, Meeting # 2.* NFS is seeking public input to create a Motorized Vehicle Use Map. Tombigbee Ranger District Office, Highway 15 South, Ackerman, MS. Contact Steve Goodsen (662) 285-3264. Call ahead to verify meeting location. See featured article inside. 

Thurs., Feb. 22nd, 6:00 p.m. – 8:00 p.m. *Holly Springs National Forest, Meeting # 2.* NFS is seeking public input to create a Motorized Vehicle Use Map. Oxford Conference Center, 102 Ed Perry Blvd., Oxford, MS. Contact Caren Briscoe (662) 236-6550. Call ahead to verify meeting location. See featured article inside. 

APRIL

Sat., April 14th, 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. *Plant Sale Fund Raiser* at the Thompson's home, 608 Lakeview Dr., Starkville. We will have flowers, vegetables, and herbs for sale at this fun fund-raising event. Please call Frances at 662-323-7379 to volunteer your help. Follow Montgomery St. north of Highway 82, turn right on Critz St., take 1st left on

Overstreet Dr., and left again on Lakeview Dr. See our *featured article* inside for more details. 

Sat., April 21st, 9:00 a.m. – 1 p.m. *Celebrate Earth Day by Rescuing the Blackbelt Prairie from Junipers.* Bring chain saws, pruning shears, and gloves. Meet on 16th Section Road behind the cemetery, Oktibbeha County. Call the Noxubee Wildlife Refuge for directions or more details.

May

Sat., May 12th, 9 a.m. – 1 p.m. *Canoe/Kayak and Picnic Trip, Bluff Lake, Noxubee Wildlife Refuge.* We will meet at the boat ramp on Bluff Lake for the boating trip. At noon, we'll dock the boats and have our picnic on the tables by the boat ramp. Bring your lunch, drinks, frisbees, chairs, etc. You may want to stop in at the Visitor's Center, too. They've got exciting exhibits and a great gift store. If you don't have your own boat and lifejackets, please call Juliet Tang (662-338-5426) in advance so we can make arrangements for you. Gear is limited.

AUGUST

Wed., Aug 15th, 6:00 p.m. *Potluck and Planning* at David Cross and Juliet Tang's home, 211 Edgewood Dr., Starkville. Bring suggestions for fall programs, outings, and newsletter articles. From Highway 82, go north on Old West Point Rd. Take the 3rd left onto Critz St., then the 1st right onto Edgewood Dr. For more information, call Juliet Tang at 662-338-5426.

NATIONAL FOREST SERVICE MOTORIZED VEHICLE USE MAP

Unmanaged recreation, specifically unmanaged off-highway vehicle use, has been identified as one of

the top four threats facing National Forest system lands throughout the country. To curb this destruction, each National Forest must come up with a Motorized Vehicle Use Map. Open Houses have been scheduled during the months of January and February to gain public input. Once maps are developed, motorized travel will be restricted to these designated routes and areas. All other motor vehicle use will be prohibited.

Your attendance at these meetings is critical. Don't forget, National Forest is multi-use so there are many others that would like to see more motorized vehicle access on National Forest lands. Some examples cited are: motorcycle use on bike trails, ATV use in areas that have not been open to ATVs, etc.

Unless you attend these meetings or write your District Ranger, he or she will not know which routes you want closed, which routes you want left open, and which areas you want protected from any motorized vehicle travel whatsoever.

Feel free to contact me, Juliet Tang (662) 338-5426 if you need any more info. We have attended the first meeting for Tombigbee NF and have some idea of what's going on.

COAL GASIFICATION PLANT PROPOSED FOR KEMPER COUNTY

Last December, Mississippi Power announced a plan to build a \$1.8 billion 600-megawatt coal gasification plant in Kemper County, Mississippi. The plant will receive \$133 million in federal tax credits, produce enough energy for 100,000 homes, and create about 500-1000 jobs during construction and another 250 jobs after completion in 2013.

Sounds attractive but the tradeoffs are irrevocable, some of which were discussed in the mid-January public meeting.

First of all, coal gasification, although supposedly cleaner than older technologies, still pollutes and is not a clean, safe, renewable energy solution. It still emits carbon dioxide and still contributes to global warming. Note, I say supposedly cleaner because the technology is still relatively untested in the United States.

Second, coal gasification uses lignite that must be extracted locally from strip mines. Mississippi Power

is now trying to get signatures to lease the land for the strip mine from local landowners. Many, however, are reluctant to sign after being told that the strip mine would remove 182 ft of soil from the top.

After hearing that, you realize that the impacts of strip mining on the environment are truly irreversible. Entire landscapes are destroyed by the open-cast mines, dumps and pits. Constant erosion pollutes surrounding wetlands, watersheds, and downstream waterways. Sensitive wildlife is eliminated. In short, any promised restoration with pines and grass will not bring back the diversity of what was once there, at least not in our lifetimes.

If you can help, please contact Karen Wink at cleankemper@gmail.com. Karen is a local resident trying to fight this proposal. She already has many behind her but she needs all the support she can get. She has started a Fact Sheet to distribute to local residents. Many are unaware of what strip mining will do to their land and what risks they face once the gasification plant is built.

We all should follow this fight closely because more than 150 gasification plants have been proposed for the United States and not all locations have been decided. Without local opposition, more plants might follow.

COOL CITIES – MAYORS TAKE THE LEAD TO REDUCE GLOBAL WARMING

At a time when the federal government is failing to act, mayors and other local leaders are taking the lead to curb global warming. Beginning with Seattle Mayor, Greg Nickels, more than 200 mayors representing 42 million Americans in 38 states have signed the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement to reduce global warming carbon dioxide emissions to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012 (see seattle.gov/mayor/climate).

Scientists have concluded that burning fossil fuels – like oil, coal, and natural gas – to power our cars, homes, and businesses is causing global temperatures to rise. This heating of the earth poses a serious threat to our health, safety, and economy, and environment. (Just read Vice President Al Gore's book, "An Inconvenient Truth", if you want the bare facts.)

The good news is that we have the tools to reduce global warming and cities of all sizes are pursuing innovative energy solutions. While every city's energy solutions plan will be unique, there are three key common Cool City strategies: **Green Vehicle Fleets, Energy Efficiency, and Renewable Energy.**

Green Vehicle Solutions

The biggest single step we can take to curb global warming is making our cars, trucks, and SUVs go farther on a gallon of gas. Many cities are cutting their global warming emissions by purchasing gas-electric hybrid cars and SUVs for their city fleets. It's win-win solution. Hybrids use less gasoline, so they emit less carbon dioxide and save money at the gas pumps.

Energy Efficiency Solutions

Energy efficiency means using less energy through better technology to light streets and power buildings and industrial facilities. Reducing energy use is one of the most cost-effective and fastest ways to meet our energy needs. Since fossil fuel power plants account for more than one-third of U.S. global warming emissions, saving energy means less pollution. From high-tech interior and street lighting, energy efficient building standards and retrofits, to efficient combined heat-and-power, cities in every region of the country are modernizing lighting, heating, and cooling, and other systems.

Renewable Energy Solutions

Cities across the nation are investing in clean and renewable power like solar and wind energy to lower global warming emissions and create a reliable source of safe, homegrown electricity.

Many cities are adopting "renewable energy standards" that require a specific percentage of the electricity sold in a city or utility area to come from renewable sources by a specific target date.

Other cities are incorporating renewable energy technologies, such as solar photovoltaic panels, into the design of public buildings. Renewable power and energy efficiency are essential solutions for replacing electricity from dirty fossil-fuel-burning power plants.

Cool Cities: Bringing Communities Together

The most successful Cool Cities are engaging the entire community to help meet the goals of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. Local businesses, builders, faith groups, environmentalists, and labor unions are working

together to make their cities more livable and vibrant while lowering energy bills, creating good jobs, and tackling a global problem.

This article was taken from sierraclub.org/coolcities.

PLANT SALE FUND-RAISER

Buy some beautiful flowering perennials, annual, vegetable, and herb seedlings, or delicious baked goods to help raise funds for the Golden Triangle Group of the Sierra Club. This year's plant sale will be held on Sat., April 14th from 8:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m. at the Thompson's home, 608 Lakeview Dr., Starkville. If you want to donate any plants, here are some suggestions. Root cuttings now; plant annual, herb, and vegetable seeds in early March; and divide and pot crowded perennials just before the sale date.

Plants donations can be brought to the Thompson's after Thurs. April 14th. We'll also take anything else you want to donate – baked goods, yard sale items, etc. Volunteers are needed, so call Frances at 662-323-7379 to find out how you can help.

GOLDEN TRIANGLE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND COMMITTEE CHAIRS

Lois Connington** Starkville
Treasurer

lconnington@yahoo.com

David Cross** Starkville
Vice Chair, Ex Comm

dcross@entomology.msstate.edu

Katya Kovalenko** Starkville
Chapter Rep, Ex Comm

Eek6@msstate.edu

John Schneider* Starkville
Chapter Rep at Large, Ex Comm

jschneider@entomology.msstate.edu

Juliet Tang* Starkville
Chair, Ex Comm

jtang@mafes.msstate.edu

Frances Thompson* Starkville
Ex Comm

Harold Thompson** Starkville
Ex Comm

* Ex Comm, two year term, ends Dec. 2007

**Ex Comm, two year term, ends Dec. 2008



Newsletter is printed on recycled paper.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet



Sky's the limit?

Even today in 2006, over *half* of America's electricity is generated from coal-fired power plants. Consequently, we are being exposed to soot, smog, acid rain, and dangerous toxins such as mercury, which threaten people and wildlife alike. Bush's "Clear Skies" plan will allow 520% *more* mercury pollution by the year 2010, not to mention the plan delays the enforcement of public health standards for smog and soot until the *end* of 2015. The sky isn't getting any higher, and the air we breathe isn't getting any cleaner. The sky IS the limit.

JOIN Sierra Club to keep breathing easy.

Name _____
 Address _____
 City _____ State _____ Zip _____
 Phone (_____) _____
 Email _____

Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX
 Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____ Exp. Date ____/____

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
Special Offer	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

F94Q W 1

Golden Triangle Group, Sierra Club
P.O. Box 5265
Mississippi State, MS 39762-5265

Crossroads

