New Protections for Mountain Lions, Wolves and Black Bears in Illinois

By Marc Miller, Director, Illinois Department of Natural Resources

The Illinois General Assembly helped us take a big step towards managing large predators in Illinois this spring with the passage of legislation placing gray wolves, mountain lions and black bears under the protection of the Illinois Wildlife Code. This means these animals receive the same protections under the law as other wildlife. Also, the law will give the Illinois Department of Natural Resources authority to develop rules to manage any wolves, bears or mountain lions that find their way to Illinois.

Although there have been sightings of all three species in the past six months, I want to be clear that seeing a wolf, bear or mountain lion is an extremely rare occurrence in Illinois. Gone from Illinois since 1870, they have gradually reclaimed part of their historic range in western and a few Midwestern states thanks to conservation efforts and legal protections. Those that appear in Illinois likely are young males dispersing from populations in other states in search of females. Finding no established populations in Illinois, they eventually leave the state.

Still, IDNR biologists have been preparing for a day when populations once again could become established in the state. However, scientific research and habitat modeling efforts show few areas in the state with enough suitable habitat to support resident populations. Even so, it is important that we prepare for that possibility.

We also are surveying public attitudes on wildlife, including large predators. The Illinois Department of Natural Resources welcomes continued discussion on the management of these species. We believe there is room on our Illinois landscape for apex predators, but these species also

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About EarthCONNECT

Members of The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County receive the newsletter as a membership benefit. Basic memberships start at $50. For information, questions, comments on membership or address changes, please contact our office at (815) 338-0393 or e-mail us at mcdef@owc.net.

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Opinions expressed in EarthCONNECT do not necessarily reflect the position and/or policy of the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County. However, EARTHConnect will not directly advocate positions in opposition to those of The Defenders. We reserve the right to condense or revise articles and illustrations for space, clarity or libel. Knowledgeable local environmentalists may be consulted to check facts. Letters to the Editor can be sent to: cynthkanner@gmail.com. Letters will be published based on space and Board review. Opinions expressed do not necessarily reflect the position and/or policy of The Defenders. Letters can also be mailed to: 110 S. Johnson Street, Suite 106, Woodstock, IL 60098.

Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
Mission Statement

The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County is a citizen organization dedicated to the preservation and improvement of the environment. We are committed to building sound ecological relationships between people and the natural world that supports all life.

To achieve the aim of environmental preservation and improvement, we provide the community with educational programs and volunteer action on pollution prevention, sustainable land use and energy and natural resource conservation.

We advocate policies that protect drinking water supplies and conserve land for open space and agriculture. We demonstrate waste reduction through recycling drives and reuse centers. We encourage natural resource protection through native landscaping and stream protection programs.

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Cover border photo by Cynthia Kanner.
will require management to minimize negative human-wildlife interactions and prevent them from becoming nuisance animals. Our biologists also strive to maintain a balance in predator-prey relationships within suitable habitat areas. Placing the species under state protection is a necessary first step.

The agency is also trying to educate and inform residents about these issues, and has worked with the University of Illinois Extension to develop a useful website, “Living with Wildlife in Illinois:” http://web.extension.illinois.edu/wildlife. We recognize that there are differing views on how mountain lions, and other large predators, should be managed within the state, and we are doing our best to consider the views of a wide cross-section of Illinois residents from rural to urban areas and from north to south.

We have made significant strides in the past 100 years, bringing back populations of white-tailed deer, wild turkeys, beaver, raccoons, river otters and others that were all but eliminated from Illinois. While we believe there is room on our landscape for large predators, we realize we must balance biology with public safety and other needs. Illinois is fortunate to have so many dedicated citizens committed to learning more about nature and wildlife. We are glad you are willing to join in the discussion.

Together we can develop a better understanding and new ethics to support the future management and protection of large carnivores in Illinois.

Pioneer Tree Farm Breeding Bird Survey

By Randy Schietzelt

Every year the Environmental Defenders announce a Christmas Tree sale at Pioneer Tree Farm. They ask for volunteers to help with sales as a fundraiser for the Defenders. Have you ever wondered how the raising of an agricultural product and the harvesting of trees fit with the Defenders’ mission? Bill and Alice Howenstine, two of the founding members of The Defenders, have run this organic Christmas tree farm for several decades in McHenry. They have also dedicated over 90 acres of their property as a conservation easement to keep the farm in agriculture for the future. While helping with Christmas tree sales each year, I have been impressed with the wildlife diversity that frequently makes an appearance there. So I talked to Bill about running a breeding bird survey come summer. This would be a nice quantitative way to sample the environmental condition of this property. Is it possible to run a business using the land in this manner and also improve environmental quality?

We ran the survey on Monday, June 2, 2014. Eighteen point counts were plotted on a map of the farm to take in every habitat type. Starting at dawn to maximize bird activity, we visited each point for five minutes to look and listen for all bird species present. Forty-three bird species were detected from primarily the grassland and shrubland bird groups. Highlights were 11 bobolinks, including some on the neighboring property, a very loud pine warbler in the oldest pine plantation, and at least seven clay-colored sparrows. The sparrows were found in two to four-foot tall Christmas trees with taller grass in line with the trees and mowed grass between rows. Apparently this is an ideal habitat for this rare Illinois breeder. These three species are very habitat sensitive in northern Illinois.

This amount of breeding bird diversity is high for agricultural land and is due to the high diversity of plants on the site. The presence of many hedgerows keeps a variety of habitat available for many different species. Bill showed us plantings of American chestnut, bitternut hickory, locusts, and many other species that they have planted over the years. Young oaks and hickories are common on the property. The lack of chemicals used on this organic farm also helps keep wildlife diversity high. Bill and Alice have improved their property for wildlife while maintaining their business. At the same time they have created a wonderful legacy for the county and native species. They have succeeded in helping both the economy and the environment in a sustainable manner.

“Wildlife, which is a part of the earth’s ecosystem, functions on the basis that everything from the smallest organisms to the largest mammals is connected and operates as a unit.” Natural Resources Law. Above, a cougar sunning in New Jersey; similar to Illinois, there have been occasional sightings of the big cat, resulting in debates about balancing wildlife conservation and human activity. Photo by Sharon Brackelmanns.

From left, clay-colored sparrow, pine warbler and bobolink. The latter's populations have decreased due to the early cutting of hayfields. (Prairie Research Institute, University of Illinois at Urbana-Champaign.)
Check It Out at the Margaret Marchi Environmental Library

Summer time, and what better time to visit the Margaret Marchi Environmental Library at The Defenders’ office and check out a book about eating local. We live where farms, farmers’ markets, plus our backyard plots, offer abundant local food. Here are some titles to check out.

**County Land, County Food: McHenry County Local Food Assessment Technical Report and Recommendations**, published in October 2013, reviews what local food is available and how the land is used. It incorporates consumer feedback, farmers market and restaurant surveys, and it looks ahead to growth and employment trends. Find it at 613.23 MCCF.

**FoodMatters**, DVD 613.23 COL, says you are what you eat. It explores the current state of health, based on relationships to diet. *Fresh*, another DVD, celebrates the farmers, thinkers, and business people who are reinventing the food system. You can be sure local food will be an important part. 613.2 JOA. A short DVD in cartoon format, *The True Cost of Food*, 631.5 SRC, takes you to the grocery store and then to the farmers market to see the difference for yourself.

When you sit down to a meal, each item on your plate has traveled typically between 1500 to 2500 miles. The authors of *Plenty: One Man, One Woman, and a Raucous Year of Eating Locally* decided to eat only locally grown and produced food. Their 100-mile diet led them to consider global warming, collapsing fish stocks, the loss of family farms, and food safety. Find *Plenty* on the bookshelves at 641.5 SMI.

**Weed Wrench Rentals**

Having trouble getting rid of buckthorn on your property? This is a great time to rent a weed wrench from The Defenders’ office to tackle that problem. A weed wrench is a manually-operated, all-steel tool made to remove any woody plants by uprooting them, so no treatment with an herbicide is needed. It is a great tool to use for trunk diameters up to 2 inches, and The Defenders have two sizes available for rent. So spread the word to your family and friends to contact The Defenders at 815-338-0393 or mcdef@owc.net to rent these handy, environmentally handy tools!

**Rental Fee Schedule:**
For Defenders’ Members: 1 week for a donation plus a $50 refundable deposit
For Non-members: 1 week for $25 plus $150 refundable deposit

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**Defenders’ Recycling Drives**

**What:**
Fluorescent tubes, rechargeable batteries, car batteries, button batteries, and block white styrofoam. Packing peanuts and re-useable bubble wrap may be dropped off for no charge. We will also be accepting certain electronics, such as computers, phones, printers, toys, TVs and computer monitors for a donation to the Defenders. T/C metals in Crystal Lake has been friendly and helpful as can be when we bring aluminum or non-ferrous metals to them. With metal prices up, this has been a steady source of income. Many folks have used the McHenry drive and donated their aluminum cans.

**When:**
Second Saturday of every Month.

**Where:**
- **Woodstock:** NEW LOCATION!! The Woodstock collection takes place on the second Saturday of each EVEN numbered month and is held at 2222 South Dean Street (Soil & Water Conservation District property), from 9AM to noon.
- **McHenry:** The McHenry collection takes place on the second Saturday of ODD numbered months at the Metra Station Parking lot, 4005 Main Street in McHenry, from 9AM to noon.

**Styrofoam Drop-Off**

**Village of Algonquin:** Public Works, 110 Meyer Drive.
**Village of Lakewood:** Lakewood Village Hall, 2500 Lake Avenue, Lakewood Public Works garage, 6570 Haligus Road, Redtail Golf Course, 7900 Redtail Drive.

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**Recycling Totals for 2013**
- Batteries-7,628 pounds
- Electronics-82,267 pounds
- Fluorescent lamps-2,275 pounds
- Styrofoam-9 semi-trailers full

**Thank You!**
Update on BYOBag Campaign

On Tuesday evening, June 24th, The Defenders’ BYOBag Committee addressed the Village of Algonquin’s Board of Trustees and President on the reduction or elimination of single-use plastic grocery bags in Algonquin, which has led the way on many conservation issues in the past. The presentation, which included a slide show, a bag chain of 300 plastic bags and three young people from Eastview Elementary School’s Earth Club – Benjamin Kanner, Angelique Floress and April Leffler – was a big success! The response from Algonquin was tremendously supportive and we’ll look forward to further discussions and action in the near future.

During the presentation, Cynthia Kanner reported that The Defenders will receive financial support from the McHenry County Community Foundation to remind residents of McHenry County to use reusable bags when shopping. This will be accomplished through signage, such as banners and static-cling signs for cars and grocery store windows. This pilot program in Algonquin, if shown to have impact, could lead to further funding in the future to help The Defenders reach out to residents of other towns in McHenry County.

The BYOBag presentation, which follows Chicago’s major decision to ban plastic bags in large stores and chains within city limits, also follows in the footsteps of Illinois’ recent ban on synthetic plastic microbeads, making it the first state in the country to do so. With conservation-minded towns and precious land and water resources at our feet, we look forward to helping our county lead the way in reducing plastic pollution in our state, if not the midwest region.

At the end of the presentation, which will also make its way to other towns in the county in the near future, the committee was pleased to unveil its new logo, shown below. Created by Will Walkington, son of BYOBag committee member, Becky Walkington, the winning logo was submitted to the committee along with three other candidates. Keep your eyes open as this logo will be placed throughout the county as our campaign to eliminate plastic bag use marches on! Look for the logo and The Defenders’ very own Bag Lady at parades throughout the county this summer. To learn more about BYOBag McHenry County, please plan to attend the August 6th Green Drinks at Duke’s Alehouse!
Life-time Membership with The Defenders

You can become a Lifetime Member of The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County with a one time payment of $1,000 dollars. Why would you want to do this?

* You would no longer be concerned with writing a check every year to renew your membership.
* You would provide much needed funds for ongoing and future projects and programs.
* You would help save Defenders’ staff time for membership renewals.
* You can give the Lifetime Membership as a gift to anyone and that membership is good for that person for his or her lifetime.
* You can create a legacy for yourself by showing your loyalty and devotion to the goals and mission of The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County.

We ask you to please consider making the commitment and becoming a Lifetime Member of The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County or gifting it to a special person in your life. Thank You. The Membership Committee

Woodstock High School Graduates Receive Annual Defenders’ Scholarship

The Defenders’ scholarship is presented yearly to a high school senior who intends to pursue a major in college related to the environment. This year, The Defenders’ Board of Directors decided to award not one, but two $1,000 scholarships to deserving seniors. The scholarship selection committee chose Dylan Manke and James Sullivan, both from Woodstock High School, as the recipients of the 2014 Defenders’ scholarships.

Dylan intends to major in environmental engineering in college. In addition to his work for the environment, Dylan has also achieved the rank of Eagle Scout. His Eagle Scout Project was to repair and redo the 4-H sign at the County fairgrounds. Dylan wrote in his essay, “These past two years have been an eye-opening, transformative period. An evolving awareness as to the direction my life’s focus would take first began to emerge when, in my junior year, I enrolled in an advanced placement environmental science course. This was followed by civil engineering and architecture as a senior. These courses, and experiences nurtured by scouting, instilled in me a desire to pursue a career centered on addressing issues facing the health of our planet.”

Dylan will be attending the University of Illinois, majoring in environmental science. He wrote in his essay, “I want to be a part of the most environmentally conscious generation in history. I am studying the environment to create a more sustainable future for the planet.” James was a member of the high school Envirothon team as well as a three sport athlete and member of the National Honor Society. He also served in the PALS Mentor Program, working with first and second graders at Dean Street Elementary. James organized and implemented a recycling program for the Family Health Partnership Clinic.

The Defenders are confident that Dylan and James will be successful in whatever they choose to do in the future. Congratulations to both of them on receiving The Defenders’ Environmental Scholarships for 2014.

Sydna Becker ~ Nov. 25, 1933 to April 25, 2014

Sydna Becker was very likely the most instrumental founding member of The Defenders and a very active part of the group for almost a decade. She served as our president for more than seven years. Back then we had no office and met each month in the home of one of the members.

Under Sydna’s leadership, the first newspaper recycling program in McHenry County was begun in Crystal Lake. Others started a similar recycling program in Woodstock and then in McHenry. A short time later, all three recycling programs came together under The Defenders’ leadership and the program quickly expanded to other cities in the county.

Sydna passed away the end of April. In her obituary, which appeared in the May 7th edition of The Northwest Herald, and at her husband’s request, it was stated that if people wished to celebrate Sydna’s life with a donation to The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County or to the Hawaii Chapter of the Sierra Club, they were encouraged to do so. If you remember Sydna or appreciate her legacy, please join us in celebrating the life of this wonderful woman, who left this County stronger for the fact that The Environmental Defenders exists.
UPCOMING EVENTS

Summer Canoe/Kayak Outings

Join members of The Defenders for our annual summer canoe trips on our county’s beautiful rivers! This summer, come explore the Kishwaukee, the Rock River, and the Fox. These trips are great for solo kayakers, canoeists, and families. For those needing paddle partners, we will try to pair you up. Stand-up paddle boarders welcome, too!

Contacts for each trip are printed on calendar page. Happy paddling!!

Rock River – July 19
Kishwaukee – August 23
Fox River – September 6

July 17-19—Summer Garage Sale

The sale is located at the Algonquin Township Road District complex, 3702 U.S. Highway 14, between Crystal Lake & Cary (next to the Hollows) in the big beige garage on the right! Donations for our annual Summer garage sale can be dropped off on Saturday, July 12, from 9AM to 4PM and Monday through Wednesday, July 14-16, from 10AM to 3 PM. Sale begins on July 17, 8AM to 4PM.

July 30-August 3—County Fair

McHenry County Fairgrounds, Country Club Road, Woodstock. The Defenders will again be working for the County Fair, selling admission and event tickets. There are many days and times available and we need your volunteer help to make this a successful fundraiser for our organization! Please call The Defenders’ office at 815-338-0393 to reserve your favorite slot. Volunteers get free admission to the fair on the day they work!

Saturday, August 16—CORN ROAST

As we have for almost all of the past 33 years, we will be holding our annual Corn Roast /Pot Luck gathering at Pioneer Farm. Alice and Bill Howenstine, long-time Defenders’ members, have invited us to come out on Saturday, August 16th, for this special event. Please try to arrive by 4PM as welcomes, introductions and announcements will be made shortly after that time.

Bring a main dish, salad or dessert to share. It is helpful if you bring a labeled serving utensil along with you as well as your own non-disposable plates, cups and utensils. Roasted corn, lemonade, tea and coffee will be provided. You are welcome to bring along your own beverage if you wish. Five picnic tables are available, but bringing camp chairs and blankets to sit on is a plus! There are activities too, such as feeding the chickens, hayrides, volleyball, horseshoes, frisbee, tetherball and just sitting around visiting!

Alice and Bill will be calling folks to help with various on-going chores. If you feel inclined to volunteer for something specific, give Alice or Bill a call at 815-385-8512. See you soon!

September 16-Oct. 11—Fall Book Sale

September 14 to October 4. We are going to be VERY ambitious this year and run two sales at once; at Algonquin Township Road District in Crystal Lake and the Soil & Water District in Woodstock! Here’s the schedule: Mark you calendars and please call the office if you can help! 815-338-0393. Volunteers are needed for all of these days:

September 14 – receive books
September 15-19 – sorting and set-up of sale
September 19 evening – Member Preview Sale
September 20 – October 4 – Sale

It’s Our River Day: Explore the Outdoors Community Day Coming Together

This year, Algonquin’s Conservation Community Day will join the state-wide “It’s Our River Day” event held locally at Cornish Park in Algonquin. This is a great day to clean up the Fox River while celebrating Algonquin’s conservation efforts. Held from 1 to 4 PM at Cornish Park, located at Route 62 and S. Harrison Street, in downtown Algonquin. Groups, such as scouts, welcome! Convenient parking at downtown parking lot across from the park.

July 6 – Crystal Lake
July 20 – McHenry
July 26 – Algonquin

If you are interested or would like more information, contact Sue Jensen at: tomsuejensen@ameritech.net or call: 847-338-3708.
PAST EVENTS

Earth Day 2014

By Mary Forni

The weather could not have been better for the annual Earth Day celebration at Prairieview Education Center on April 26. Co-sponsored by the Environmental Defenders of McHenry County and the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD), this year the cooperative weather made for a great turnout of young and old(er). There were 16 exhibitors, plus four Defenders’ stations this year. Of those, we were excited to have seven new to the event! These were Becky’s Bikes, the Food Shed Co-Op, Green Lil’ Bums, Marvin’s Toy Store, McHenry County Backyard Chickens, Ohana Farms, and Ringers Landscaping. Exhibitors and vendors offered information, advice, plants, food, services, and products. Activities for children, provided by MCCD and MCSEEP (McHenry County Schools Environmental Education Program), included crafts, hikes, and a puppet show. These events were popular, as usual. New this year, The Defenders’ recycling crew accepted Styrofoam, in addition to their usual collection. Adults and children could make reusable bags from recycled t-shirts at the BYOBag McHenry County table and enjoy popcorn or a sandwich wrap lunch provided by Duke’s Alehouse and Kitchen. Music was once again provided at the big red barn by Off Square Music. And, a good-sized crowd enjoyed our featured performer Bill Kehl, with his “Earth, Music…Magic!” show. Earth Day celebration 2014 was a McHenry County success.

Bird Walk and Pancake Breakfast

By Judy Thornton & Cynthia Kanner

A year goes by quickly...there we were again enjoying a lovely morning walk through The Defenders’ property at Dean Street looking for birds. Though there weren’t as many species on display as last year (nor as many ticks, thank goodness!), we did hear some very interesting calls, such as the whinny of the secretive Sora (rail family), coming from the marsh. A complete count of birds from that morning is at right. Those arriving just for breakfast brought the group to about twenty after a dozen enjoyed the walk, and we enjoyed a pancake breakfast by Chef Ward, as well as lots of interesting dishes provided by the attendees. Nancy spoke briefly and mentioned several upcoming Defenders’ events and activities in which to participate. Ticks were not a major problem this year, as mentioned, although Randy was called upon to dispatch a few. Christy took our group photo as she was not about to leave the pavement wearing flip flops. Thanks to everyone, including our birding guide, Randy, for a great morning out on the prairie.

Canada Goose 12
Wood Duck 2
Blue-winged Teal 2
Great Egret 1
Accipiter sp. 1
Sora 1
Mourning Dove 1
Northern Flicker 1
Willow Flycatcher 1
Blue Jay 3
Northern Rough-winged Swallow 2
Tree Swallow 1
Eastern Bluebird 1
American Robin 3
Gray Catbird 1
European Starling 1
Common Yellowthroat 2
Song Sparrow 2
Northern Cardinal 1
Red-winged Blackbird 5
Eastern/Western Meadowlark 3
Common Grackle 1
Brown-headed Cowbird 2
Baltimore Oriole 1
American Goldfinch 3

The chef and the birder: above, Ward flips a mean flapjack and right, Randy always points out something interesting!
Nippersink Canoe & Kayak Trip

On June 21st, a band of eight canoeists and kayakers thoroughly enjoyed a trip on Nippersink Creek led by Dan Wilson. The rain (and threats of tornados) held off until the group had explored the stretch from Keystone Landing to Pioneer Landing. The water was flowing quickly, so the group took time to explore the backwaters leading to the McHenry County Conservation District’s remote campsite. Afterwards, Dan grilled hamburgers and hotdogs for lunch for the crew at his new home, which overlooks Glacial Park.

Our next river adventure, organized by The Defenders’ Water Resources Protection Committee, is scheduled for July 19 on the Rock River. Please see the calendar page for details and join us!!

Wine & Cheese on the Prairie

A small but happy group of Defenders enjoyed some excellent wines with cheese and crackers on our property on Sunday evening, June 22nd. A campfire helped to keep the mosquitoes away, while everyone learned a little more about each other through some lively conversation. Since a campfire doesn’t have the same appeal on a muggy June evening as it might have on a cool night in September, the Membership Committee is transitioning this event to Fall beginning this year. On Saturday, September 27th, members will be invited to come out to The “Defenders’ hill” to enjoy s’mores and hot cider around the fire. Then, all those interested in spending the night will camp under the stars. The committee is still finalizing plans for the event, so watch for updates in the eNews as the date approaches.

The Semantics of Climate Change

By Rick Johnson

In Act II, Scene II, of Shakespeare’s Romeo and Juliet, we hear the familiar words: “A rose by any other name would smell as sweet.” I recalled Juliet’s description of her lover when the Center for Climate Change Communications at George Mason University (GMU) released a report titled, “Global Warming or Climate Change: Does It Make a Difference?” Apparently it does in America.

The researchers at GMU found that the terms global warming and climate change often mean different things to Americans, activating different sets of feelings, behaviors and degrees of urgency about the need to respond. Global warming is associated with greater public understanding, emotional engagement, and support for both personal and government action than the term climate change. We are also more likely to hear the term global warming than climate change as well as more likely to use global warming than climate change in our own conversations.

Read this report and other surveys of Americans’ opinions on the topic of climate change by googling Center for Climate Change Communications.

Call it what you will, global warming, climate change, or “the planet has a fever,” the Obama administration’s release of strict new guidelines for power plants recently is a step in the right direction. Indeed, they’re one of the biggest steps the country has taken to combat climate change.

The rules, issued by the Environmental Protection Agency, aim to cut power plant emissions by 30 percent from their 2005 levels between now and 2030. Each state will have different targets to meet, but the national average will be a 20 percent reduction by 2020 and a 30 percent reduction by 2030. The following day, as if on cue, China announced that it too would cap emissions by 2016.

These U.S. regulations essentially make it impossible to build coal plants as we know them today. Not unexpected, a great wailing came from the fossil fuel industry and their business partners when these new guidelines were released. The U.S. Chamber of Commerce lamented that the new rules would devastate the economy. In response, Nobel Economist, Paul Krugman, pointed out that “the Chamber is telling us we can achieve major reductions in greenhouse gases at a cost of 0.2 percent of GDP. That’s cheap!”

These new rules affecting carbon emissions make us hopeful that the President wants to include the environment as part of his legacy when he leaves office. Perhaps this is a sign that he will at last veto the construction of the Keystone XL pipeline proposed to carry tar sands oil from Canada to the Gulf of Mexico. The President’s action is late in coming, but welcomed leadership at last.
Celebrating Nature with Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge in Every Season

By Cindy Skrukrud, Secretary, Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge

Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge was established in November 2012— It’s time to enjoy our status as the country’s 561st refuge year-round! Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge (FOHNWR) and the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS) have teamed up to provide activities throughout 2014.

Spring

Over 45 people attended the first Friends Quarterly Gathering on March 11. They celebrated the 111th birthday of the national wildlife refuge system, were updated on efforts underway to grow the refuge and explored the ways people can be involved in refuge activities.

Treasurer Penny Roehrer reported that FOHNWR articles of incorporation, by-laws and 501(c)(3) status application have all been completed.

Russ Engelke, USFWS liaison to Hackmatack NWR, reported the McHenry County Conservation District (MCCD) has agreed to manage refuge lands (currently an undisturbed 12-acre sedge meadow north of Woodstock). Attendees requested that the June Friends Gathering focus on land management and restoration.

The last weekend in April USFWS staff came from around the Midwest to celebrate International Migratory Bird Day with the Hackmatack community. Saturday and Sunday morning wildlife biologist Jessica Bolser banded birds at Lost Valley Visitors Center. In the afternoons staff also banded birds and provided kids’ activities at events at McHenry Dam and Volo Bog.

Summer

Thirty-five Friends gathered on June 10 to learn about plans for the refuge from Mike Redner of USFWS, MCCD’s Director of Land Preservation & Natural Resources, Ed Collins, and Brian Glenzinski of Ducks Unlimited (DU). Brian reported that the seed pods on the garlic mustard present on the 86-acre DU site on the northside of Genoa City had not yet opened, so the Friends quickly organized a workday for the following Saturday. A crew of six cleared garlic mustard from several acres of quality woodland at the DU site.

That same week four area teens began their ten-week, full-time, paid positions as members of the Hackmatack Youth Conservation Corps under the leadership of Crew Leader, Greg Rajsky. They will be working at MCCD, DU and Department of Natural Resources sites throughout the Hackmatack area this summer. They followed up after the volunteer crew and removed more garlic mustard from the woods at the DU site.

Plans for Fall and Winter

Friends Gatherings will be held at 6PM at Lost Valley Visitor Center at Glacial Park on September 9 and December 9. At the September gathering, Friends will be meeting in small groups to plan FOHNWR activities in the areas of land stewardship, environmental education and outreach/communications.

On October 12 USFWS and FOHNWR will be celebrating National Wildlife Refuge Week by participating in The Big Sit. The Big Sit is an international event in which people find a good spot for bird watching, sit there for 24 hours, and count all the bird species they see or hear. Plans are to sit near Powers-Walker House overlooking Lost Valley Marsh at Glacial Park but other Big Sit sites are to be arranged so check in at FOHNWR’s webpage and Facebook page for more information in early Fall.

Still in the works for December, USFWS and FOHNWR are planning a Bald Eagle Event. Stay in touch with FOHNWR activities by signing up on our email list (email info@hackmatacknwr.org) or checking in at our webpage (hackmatacknwr.org) and Facebook page (Friends of Hackmatack National Wildlife Refuge).
Membership Form

Levels of Membership

Supporting – $250.......................................................... ☐
Patron – $100............................................................. ☐
Organization – $50.................................................... ☐
Family/Basic – $50.................................................... ☐
Senior – $25.................................................................. ☐
Student – $10.................................................................. ☐
Other – Amount affordable to you at this time.............. ☐
NEW! LIFETIME MEMBERSHIP: $1,000.................... ☐

Total contribution: $___________

Name #1_________________________________________________
Name #2_________________________________________________
Address
City__________ State_______ Zip___________
Township________________________________________________
E-mail #1________________________________________________
E-mail #2________________________________________________
Phone____________________________________________________

Year moved to McHenry County:________________________
Number of individuals residing in household:______________

☐ My check is enclosed.

Please return completed form to:
Environmental Defenders of McHenry County
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Woodstock, IL 60098
(815) 338-0393
mcdef@owc.net
Please visit us at:
www.mcdef.org

Like us on Facebook!

Code: nwsltrsSUMMER2014
### JULY

- **Wednesday, July 2**
  - "Green Wednesdays" **Talk & Reception** – Duke’s Alehouse & Kitchen, Crystal Lake. 5-7 PM

- **Thurs-Sat., July 17-19**
  - **Summer Garage Sale. See page 7 for details.**

- **Saturday, July 19**
  - **Rock River Canoe Trip** – Rock River from Beloit WI to Roscoe IL. Meet at John Rose Canoe & Kayak Launch at 9:30AM. See www.visitbeloit.com/uploads/pdfs/b-beloitwatertrailmaps.pdf. Contact Trip Leader Cindy Skrukrud at cindy.skrukrud@sierrclub.org or Defenders’ office at 815-338-0393 to RSVP.

- **July 6, 20, 26**
- **July 30-August 3**
  - **March with The Defenders’ in Summer Parades. Volunteers needed! See page 7 for details.**
  - **McHenry County Fair.** Defenders’ volunteers needed. See page 7 for details.

### AUGUST

- **Wednesday, August 6**
  - "Green Wednesdays” **Talk & Reception** – Duke’s Alehouse & Kitchen, Crystal Lake. 5-7 PM

- **Saturday, August 16**
  - **Annual Corn Roast** – Pioneer Tree Farm. See page 7 for details.

- **Saturday, August 23**
  - **Kishwaukee River Canoe Trip** – Contact Trip Leader, Neill Sachs at neillsachs@gmail.com or Defenders’ office at 815-338-0393 to RSVP and for more details.

### SEPTEMBER

- **Wednesday, Sept. 3**
  - "Green Wednesdays” **Talk & Reception** – Duke’s Alehouse & Kitchen, Crystal Lake. 5-7 PM

- **Saturday, Sept. 6**
  - **Fox River Canoe Trip.** For details contact Trip Leader, Cynthia Kanner at cynthkanner@gmail.com or Defenders’ office at 815-338-0393 to RSVP.

- **Saturday, Sept. 20**
- **Saturday, Sept. 27**
- **Sept. 16 to Oct. 11**
  - **It’s Our River Day/Community Conservation Day (Algonquin). See page 7 for details.**
  - **S’Mores & Cider on the Hill. Optional campout!! Call office for details - 815-338-0393.**
  - **Fall Book Sale.** Algonquin Township Road District and Soil & Water Conservation District. See page 7 for details and volunteer information.

### CALENDAR

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<tr>
<th>SAVE THE DATES:</th>
<th>OCT. 1: “Green Wednesdays”</th>
<th>OCT. 19: Volunteer Appreciation Event</th>
<th>OCT. 25: Make A Difference Day</th>
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**Support The Environmental Defenders of McHenry County through workplace giving!**

For more information on how you can contribute to

The Defenders call us at 815-338-0393!!