

SIERRA CLUB CRIER

GREATER FORT WORTH GROUP • 817/588-1167

ONE EARTH, ONE CHANCE

JUNE 2004

Surprise, surprise: Sierra Club backs Kerry

■ Club believes the senator is the best choice to ensure the protection of America's health and heritage

The Sierra Club – the nation's oldest, largest and most influential environmental group – has endorsed Senator John Kerry for President of the United States, citing his outstanding leadership in safe-guarding America's air, water, and public lands.

"John Kerry will provide the environmental leadership that has been sorely missing in the Bush White House," said Sierra Club President Larry Fahn.

"His commitment to environmental progress stands in stark contrast to the Bush administration's all-out assault on the environment and its record of putting polluting corporations before the American public's health and safety.

"John Kerry has spent his entire career promoting real solutions aimed at ensuring that America's air, water, and natural resources are protected for future generations."

Kerry has demonstrated environmental leadership throughout his career in public service, from helping organize Massachusetts' first Earth Day in 1970 to opposing the Bush administration's efforts to dismantle environmental gains made over the last century.

Highlights of Kerry's environmental record include:

–Advocated strict enforcement of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act, and opposed Bush administration efforts to weaken the laws in order to let polluters put more dangerous toxics into our air and water.

–Advocated restoration of the Superfund Act's "polluter pays" trust fund to clean up hazardous waste sites that will be orphaned by the Bush administration's refusal to make polluters responsible for cleaning up their messes.

–Led the charge against the Bush administration's attempts to allow oil

drilling in the pristine Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

–Championed an energy plan that increases fuel economy to reduce the nation's dependence on oil and supports the development of clean, energy-saving technologies and renewable energy to reduce our dependence on other polluting sources of energy.

Please see KERRY, Page 3

Formal apology given

Fort Worth Group cited for a policy violation during recent club election

A press release inadvertently placed on the web site of the Fort Worth Group of the Sierra Club was in violation of the Club's national election policies.

The article, from GroundSwell Sierra, concerned candidates running for the national Sierra Club Board of Directors and was not intended for publication in Sierra Club publications.

According to Club fairness doctrine election policies, individual or groups of candidates cannot receive preferential treatment over other candidates.

A Group or Chapter is prohibited from favoring one candidate over the other at meetings, in newsletters, on web sites, or on Sierra Club list serves for mass email distribution of messages.

The elections committee also heard a complaint of an election violation over a locally written article that appeared in the Fort Worth Group newsletter, *The Crier*. Election judges rejected

that assertion, however, finding that the newsletter was not in violation of any policy.

The article that did violate club policy was not on the web site when election judges notified *Crier* Editor James Moody of the possible infractions. Neither he nor ExCom Chair Dan Smith was aware at that time of any such article being posted on the web site.

It took over a week to unravel the mystery of just how the offending article (or even IF the offending article) got there. Smith was eventually able to ascertain that it had, indeed, been posted there by someone who was not familiar with Club election policies.

The Fort Worth Group was requested to issue a formal apology to the offended parties and to run that apology on its web site for 30 days.

The ExCom agreed to develop more stringent policies and safeguards for content uploaded to its web site.

Program Notes

June Program: A multi media presentation from Africa will be presented by Bob Liles. The area of travel is Kenya and Tanzania with the diving at Pemba Island, which is at the top of the Zanzibar chain. We will safari in the Serengeti and see lions, elephants, zebras, wildebeest. I was able to get close to the lions because they were well fed on the migrating wildebeest. For the diving, we will see mantra rays plus Spanish dancers and star fish. The show is only 16 minutes long, so it is too short for someone to fall asleep, according to Liles.

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Sierra Club National Hotline 202-675-2394

Web Pages

Fort Worth Group <http://sierraclub.org/chapters/tx/fortworth/index.html>

National www.sierraclub.org

Lone Star Chapter www.texas.sierraclub.org

The Planet www.sierraclub.org/planet

Bush Administration fails to address rising gasoline prices

Higher fuel economy would save consumers money and help curb our dependence on foreign oil

With increasing regularity, oil prices have reached new highs this spring. A report was issued late last month by the Energy Information Administration predicting that gasoline prices in the United States will stay above \$2 per gallon throughout the entire summer.

Despite these announcements, the Bush administration has failed to articulate an effective strategy to protect consumers and cut America's oil dependence.

The most effective way to save consumers money at the gas pump is to increase the fuel economy of our nation's vehicles. The technology exists today to make all new cars, trucks, and SUVs average 40 miles per gallon within 10 years.

If all new vehicles average 40 mpg, the average consumer would save over

\$2,200 in net savings at the gas pump over the life of their vehicle.

"The single biggest step to saving consumer's money at the gas pump is to make our cars and trucks go farther on a gallon of gas," said Dan Becker, Washington Director, Sierra Club Global Warming program. "Taking this step would also curb global warming and save more oil than we currently import from the entire Persian Gulf."

Raising Corporate Average Fuel Economy (CAFE) standards to 40 miles per gallon would also cut America's dangerous dependence on oil, saving nearly 4 million barrels of oil per day by 2020, which is more oil than we currently import from the entire Persian Gulf or could ever take out of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, combined.

Stronger fuel economy standards would also curb global warming emissions from our nation's vehicles and clean up the air. With rising gas prices and a deteriorating situation in Iraq,

Please see ENERGY, Page 4

WHERE THE DINOSAURS GO TO DIE ?



The Greater Fort Worth Group of the Sierra Club

Greater Fort Worth Group Sierra Club Outings

Fort Worth Sierra Club outings are open to members and nonmembers. Trip leaders serve in a volunteer capacity and assume no responsibility above that of organizing the trip. If you have special needs or medical requirements, notify the leader prior to the trip. All outings officially begin at the trailhead. Leaders cannot assign carpools, but may help coordinate ride sharing. Many outings require advance reservations at the trip designation as well as from the participant. Notify the trip leader promptly if you must cancel. Donations of \$3 per person and \$5/family are requested for overnight trips to be used for conservation efforts of the club. Any park and/or camping fees are the responsibility of the participant. In order to participate on one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms> or call 415-977-5630.

June 10 & July 2 (Sierra Singles)

Wine tasting nights at Tony's Wine Warehouse at 6:30 p.m. Come taste and learn about 12 to 15 wonderful red and white wines in a fun class. Tony's is located near the Melrose Hotel at 2904 Oak Lawn Ave. in Dallas. Reservations required. \$20 per person/\$35 per couple per night. Non-Sierrans welcome. Make checks payable to Dallas Sierra Club (indicate which night the check covers and your email address on the check) and mail the check to Chris Fader at 4932 Harvest Hill Rd., Dallas 75244-6519. Reservations will be confirmed upon receipt of your check. For additional info, call or email Chris at 972-387-2302, chris17431332@aol.com or Don at 817-275-7531, don.callaway@comcast.net.

June 21, Monday (Sierra Singles)

Enjoy dinner and The Nature Photography Of Thomas D. Mangelsen at Images Of Nature in Plano. We will meet there at 6 p.m. to enjoy a little wine and cheese as we browse the gallery. Thomas Mangelsen has some really fabulous nature shots that everyone can appreciate. Afterwards we will dine at NAAN's Korean/Sushi restaurant. If you prefer something a little Americana, there is also a Half Shell's seafood restaurant available. Contact Bob Brandhorst, outings leader, to indicate your preference, 817-271-7181 or b.brandhorst@sbcglobal.net

June 25-27, Friday-Sunday

Camp and water fun on South Llano River near Junction, Texas. This is a

June 2004

spring-fed river, flowing over limestone rocks with great scenery. If water is available, canoeing may be an option, but the river is still great for swimming, tubing or for just keeping cool. We will camp on Friday and Sat. nights at South Llano River State Park in the walk-in area camping area. You need to reserve your campsite immediately in advance by calling the Texas State Parks and Wildlife office at 512-389-8900 or visit their website for campsite reservations. The park is 250 miles from Ft. Worth via Hwy 377 and takes about 4-5 hours each way. Two good websites: tpwd.state.tx to access the South Llano River SP site, and Canoeman.com for great information on the river. Contact

Marilyn Turnage at 817-491-2382 or marilynturnage@msn.com to sign up and for outfitter info.

Non-Sierra Club Outing

Sailing Evening(s) with Bob Liles on Lake Grapevine. Only 4 "sailors" per trip so first come first served. Dates and times in June and July subject to change with the weather, and Bob's discretion. First outing, Thursday evening June 3 (full moon). Other dates available depending on interest from our "sailors." Contact Bob Liles at rgliles@worldnet.att.net to sign up and for additional details and specifics.

Mining companies freed of clean-up responsibility

More weight has been added to the assertion that under the Bush Administration, the Department of Interior has become a wholly owned subsidiary of the mining industry and other special interests.

Nowhere is that more apparent than in the administration's eagerness to eliminate regulations, 20 years in the making, designed to protect public lands from environmental damage caused by mining.

Under a 1976 federal law, Interior was required to prevent "unnecessary or undue degradation" of public lands, including damage from "hardrock"

mining to extract gold, copper, and zinc.

But until 2001 the government had ignored this provision. Instead, unfailingly, the Interior Department gave mining companies open access to public lands. Finally, in the closing months on the Clinton Administration, Interior issued regulations to enforce the law.

The regulations gave Interior officials clear authority to deny permits for mines on public lands that would pose "substantial irreparable harm" to environmental, scientific or cultural resources.

Kerry environmental record impressive CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

—Advocated for the United States to take the lead in international efforts to cut global warming pollution, reverse ozone depletion, protect tropical rain forests, preserve biological diversity and press for sustainable development.

"John Kerry's record on the environment is impressive by any measure and reveals a sincere personal passion for the issue," Sierra Club Executive Director Carl Pope said. "He understands that there is a better way than the Bush administration's alliance with corporate polluters. With Kerry as President, we could be sure that America's health and heritage are protected."

The endorsement was decided by volunteer members who serve on the Club's political committee and Board

of Directors. Following the announcement, the Sierra Club will mobilize more than 700,000 members to talk to their friends and neighbors about supporting Kerry in November.

"One of our biggest challenges is to educate the American public about the Bush administration's dismal environmental record," Fahn said. "Now, thousands of Sierra Club members in every state will be volunteering their efforts to tell voters about the clear choice in this election. They will be encouraging all Americans who care about the environment to vote for John Kerry in November."

To learn more about why the Sierra Club endorsed John Kerry, visit the club website at: <http://www.sierraclub.org>

Coming Events

June 8 Tuesday, 7 p.m.

The Conservation Committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. For meeting location, contact: Chair Glenn Ford, 469-6540 or Earl Burnam, 244-2328 or Bob Scott, 282-1372.

June 16, Wednesday, 7 p.m.

Fort Worth Sierra Club General Meeting.

Newsletter deadline. Submit articles, ads, letters, or other information in writing. Articles may be submitted by

General Meeting

Wednesday, June 16

Program: See bottom of Page 1 for description of the June Program.

7:00 Main Auditorium, University of North Texas Health Science Center, Camp Bowie at Montgomery (exit Montgomery off I-30, go north about a mile to Camp Bowie).

mail, email, or on Iomega Zip disks accompanied by hard copy. B&W or color nature photos and electronic images (150dpi or greater) will be accepted (prints returned if submitted with SASE). Photographs of outings

or other club activities are particularly encouraged. Identify subject of photo and state photographer's name. Please do not write on the back of photos. Mail submissions to Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 1925, Fort Worth 76101, bring to the ExCom meeting, the general meeting, or email jmoody166@aol.com.

July 5, Monday

Newsletter folding party at Burger King, I-30 and Oakland. Call Steve Turner, 457-7131.

June 8 & July 13, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Fort Worth Sierra Club ExCom Meeting, 6:30 p.m., at Panera Bread, 1700 S. University Dr. in Fort Worth. For more information, contact Dan Smith, 410-2955.

George loves our parks (especially for photo ops)

By JIM HIGHTOWER

Minuteman Media News Service

See George. See George in our national parks. George knows parks are popular.

George likes to go to parks and have the media take his picture there. See George run for president.

In his 2000 presidential run, George W dressed up in khakis and held a photo-op in a national park, where he decried the \$5 billion backlog in making essential repairs to America's deteriorating park system.

It's shameful, he said, promising to fix our parks. He didn't. Four years later, the parks' maintenance need is \$6 billion.

Speaking of deterioration, the National Park Service announced this February that it would allow BNP Pe-

troleum Corporation to drill for natural gas on Padre Island National Seashore. This will put pipelines, heavy equipment, and large trucks on the longest undeveloped beach in America. Just what you want to see when you go to the solace of the seashore: A drilling rig in your face. It will hurt tourism, the ecosystem, wildlife, and local businesses – all so one oil corporation can plunder a minor gas deposit that amounts to only one day's worth of fuel for America.

Then there's George's effort to "improve" Eisenhower Public Park in Nassau County, New York. Though it's a mere county park, the White House directed county officials to make an essential addition to Eisenhower Park prior to Bush's visit there in March.

He was going for a fundraiser in a restaurant in the park, then he was to

walk to a building to meet with some families of 9/11 victims, then proceed to a groundbreaking ceremony for a 9/11 memorial to be built in the park.

The new addition demanded by the president's minions? Sidewalks along every step of his trek. "Newsday" columnist Jimmy Breslin reports that the word came down from on high: "The President's feet are not to touch the dirt."

Thus, concrete and asphalt were poured so George's feet would not touch the ground – as they rarely have any time in his life.

Jim Hightower is the best-selling author of "Thieves In High Places: They've Stolen Our Country and It's Time to Take It Back," on sale now from Viking Press.

For more information, visit: www.jim-hightower.com.

Energy policy threatens national heritage

CONTINUED

FROM PAGE 2

it is more important than ever for the United States to increase the fuel economy of its vehicles.

Nevertheless, the Bush administration has opposed repeated efforts to raise fuel economy standards in Congress and has recently issued a proposal that would actually weaken existing fuel economy standards.

While it has opposed these efforts, the administration has failed to articulate an effective policy to address rising gas prices and America's oil de-

pendence.

In response to rising gas prices, the Bush administration has only made ambiguous references to increasing pressure on OPEC while advocating its flawed and polluting energy policy.

The Bush administration's energy policy proposes to open up more of our public lands to oil and gas drilling, including the precious Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. However, the United States cannot drill its way to energy independence.

The U.S. consumes 25 percent of the world's oil, yet sits on just 3 percent of the known reserves. According to the Department of Energy, even if the United States drilled for oil in the Arctic Refuge, we would still need to import over two-thirds of our oil.

"Saving money at the gas pump isn't about drilling our natural heritage," said Becker. "It's about using existing technology to drill under Detroit to make our vehicles get better fuel economy."

The Greater Fort Worth Group of the Sierra Club

Bush's intention always to roll back regulations

But the new Bush Administration quickly set a new agenda. The Senate Government Affairs Committee has uncovered thousands of pages of internal administration documents and emails showing that from its first days in office, the Bush Administration was determined to roll back the regulations.

Just 13 days into the new administration, the governor of Nevada petitioned Interior Secretary Gale Norton to suspend the regulations. Notes from multiple meetings and emails between government officials reveal the White House's keen interest in overturning the regulations: "Ann Klee at Interior has coordinated with the White House... Apparently, WH is eager for this to get out," says one e-mail exchanged between Interior and Bush administration budget officials.

In March 2001, three months after President Bush took office, Interior formally proposed to suspend the regulations. Even though 95 percent of the 49,000 public comments received by the department opposed the reversal, Interior issued a new final rule in October 2001. It called the regulations

"unduly burdensome."

The term "substantial irreparable harm" was stripped from the criteria government officials would use in deciding if mine operations will be allowed. Explaining Interior's position, the department's solicitor actually argued that Interior lacked the authority to stop a legal mining operation.

In ensuing litigation over the roll-back, a court overturned this decision.

It ruled that federal law "vests the Secretary of the Interior with the authority -- and indeed the obligation -- to disapprove of ... mining operation because the operation...would unduly harm or degrade the public land."

Advocates for protection of America's public lands agree, regretfully, that under the current administration there is little risk that this authority will ever be exercised.

Membership

Yes, I want to join the Sierra Club! My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Individual (\$35) Joint (\$43)

Annual dues include subscription to Sierra (\$7.50) and chapter publications (\$1.00). Dues are not tax deductible.

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Mission statement

The purposes of the Sierra Club are: To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human

. . . dedicated to the conservation and appreciation of our natural world.