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Planet

Sierra Sentinel

The Greater
Fort Worth
Group of the
Sierra Club
Sept.-Oct.
2008

SC endorses Obama for president

No surprise here as the Club believes Democratic nominee more likely to bring long-term solutions to energy, economic woes

The Sierra Club has officially endorsed Senator Barack Obama for President.

We want to take this opportunity to tell you why.

Simply put, we believe Obama shares our concerns, values and vision for a clean energy future. He agrees with us that it's not time for half steps; that what America needs is bold, transformational action that will break the chokehold Big Oil has on our economy and Washington politics, provide short-term relief for American families and long-term solutions for our energy and economy problems.

Highlights of Obama's Energy strategy include:

—Providing Relief for families struggling to pay their energy bills. His plan is to provide families with a \$1,000 tax credit and stimulus checks paid for by taxing the oil companies' record profits.

—Investing \$150 billion over the next 10 years in alternative sources of energy – wind and solar power, and advanced biofuels, in the commercialization of plug-in hybrid cars, and development a new digital electricity grid. This investment will create up to 5,000,000 good-paying jobs that cannot be outsourced and will create the billions in new economic activity that will America back on the path to prosperity.

—Requiring 25% of U.S. electricity to come from renewable sources by 2025 and increases energy efficiency in the U.S. 50% by 2030

—Attacking global warming. Obama has presented a bold and comprehensive plan for addressing global warming which includes a “cap and auction” system that would cut our carbon dioxide emissions 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050.

—Rejecting drilling as the answer to our energy woes. Obama knows that drilling off of our beaches and destroying our last special places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in order to pad Big Oil's bottom line won't do anything to lower gas prices today, tomorrow, or even a decade from now

This fall, The Sierra Club hopes to engage as many members in candidate campaign activities as possible. “The Obama campaign is putting together the largest and most sophisticated field operation in presidential history, and there will be meaningful ways for Sierra Club volunteers to engage,” said Bob Bingaman, the National Field Director for the Sierra Club.

The Sierra Club will be working to

recruit team leaders and volunteers for the Obama campaign and for a number of pro-environmental races in seven target states: Colorado, Minnesota, New Hampshire, New Mexico, Nevada, Ohio, and Pennsylvania.

Members from other states will also be encouraged to get involved by traveling to our target states to volunteer.

Ken Brame, member of Sierra Club's Political Committee, adds, “I hope Club members will do as much as they can for the Obama campaign and the Sierra Club endorsed Congressional and state legislative candidates. Whether you can contribute a whole month or just an hour a week, volunteer help will make a big difference.”

For those Club members who are able to travel to other locations to help with efforts on the ground, or for members in target states who are able to help by housing out-of-town volunteers, please visit: <http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageNavigator/Obama2008>.

Thanks to our members for supporting us

To everyone who made donations in response to my March letter of request, I thank you, and all the Ex-Com members also thank you. Please be assured that the funds you donated will benefit the goals and efforts of the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club.

You may wish to know how you can help even further. If so, many volunteer and committee positions are currently empty. Please feel free to ask me or any of the Ex-Com members what you can do to further assist the Club in order to make it more effective.

You belong to the Sierra Club because you value the status and well being of our environment. You are to be commended for your thoughtfulness and willingness to focus on the challenges we face each day. We will face many surprises in the future that will test our resolve to prevent the destruction of our delicately balanced environment. Please do what you can to help the club in our efforts to protect the environment.

Again thank you,

Don Young

Chair, Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club

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Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club

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Join Texas Sierrans October 10-12 for Sierra Celebration 2008 at Caddo Lake State Park in Northeast Texas!

Make plans now to join other Sierra Club members from around Texas for our annual outdoors event – the Sierra Celebration.

This year's Celebration will be held October 10-12 in and around beautiful Caddo Lake State Park in northeast Texas on the Texas-Louisiana Border.

Fall anywhere in East Texas is always beautiful, and indeed Caddo Lake – the only “natural” lake in Texas – is beautiful anytime of the year, but especially in October.

The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club is scheduling a wide range of outdoor activities for everyone – including kids and families – on Saturday and Sunday of this October weekend.

In addition there are plenty of interesting places in the area to visit on your own either during the Celebration or on your way to or from the event.

On Saturday night (October 11), as part of Sierra Celebration, there will be an old-fashioned East Texas Catfish Fry for all attendees at the Park's Recreation Hall catered by Catfish Express of Marshall (a vegetarian option will be available as well). The Catfish Fry will be followed by story telling and music – an opportunity to learn more about the Caddo Lake area and to enjoy local entertainment.

Caddo Lake State Park

Caddo Lake State Park is located about 15 miles northeast of Marshall, Texas. The park is named after Caddo Lake, which Texas Parks and Wildlife Department describes as “a sprawling maze of bayous and sloughs covering, 26,810 acres of cypress swamp.”

The lake is considered “an angler's delight” with “71 species of fish...” Texas Parks and Wildlife Department says that the lake “is especially good for crappie and large-mouth and white bass.”

However, the area is also great for

wildlife observation (waterfowl, alligators, turtles, frogs, and many other species), canoeing and other boating, hiking, picnicking, and other outdoor activities.

Those folks who do photography will find it a great place to practice that pastime as well.

More information about Caddo Lake State Park and information about nearby attractions may be found on the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department website at http://www.tpwd.state.tx.us/spdest/findadest/parks/caddo_lake/.

Facilities

The Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club has reserved the Recreation Hall at Caddo Lake State Park for the weekend, and the Recreation Hall will serve as Sierra Celebration Headquarters.

As noted above, the Saturday night East Texas Catfish Fry will be held at the Recreation Hall. PLEASE NOTE: Sierra Celebration attendees will need to bring their own food for breakfasts and lunches (and for Friday evening dinner, if arriving Friday night).

The Chapter has reserved eight tent-only camp sites around Mill Pond at the Park for attendees who wish to tent camp. Each site reserved by the Chapter has only water provided and will accommodate a maximum of eight people in two and two cars.

Reservations for those tent sites will be handled by the Chapter.

There are other camp sites (including some with water and electricity, and some with screened shelters) and cabins available for the weekend.

These may be reserved directly by individuals through the Texas Parks & Wildlife Department reservation system.

Register Now for Sierra Celebration 2008.

Upcoming Sierra Club Events

September 7, Sunday

Sierra Club's Sustainable Sunday Lunch. Thai plant-based buffet at Thai Jasmine, 817-283-8228, 3104 Harwood at Hwy 121, SW corner, Bedford. This all-you-can-eat buffet is served from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Organizer: Terry Jensen, 817 545-0140.

September 11-14, Thursday-Sunday

Car camp and day hiking at Guadalupe Mountains NP. These will be moderate to strenuous hikes so pre-approval by leader is required for participants. National Park entrance fee, camping fees, and travel expenses will be divided between the participants. Each hiker will be responsible for their own food, water and camping supplies. We will camp at the Dog Canyon campground and day hike different trails each day. We will plan to leave early Sunday for a return trip to the Fort Worth-Dallas area. Please contact Jack Martin Jack.Martin@itexas.net or 817-573-5652(H) or 817-578-0689 (cell) or co-leader Todd Nichols at todd.c.nichols@lmco.com or 817-937-5217 cell for information to join us. Phone calls before 8 p.m. please.

September 17, Wednesday

Outings Meeting, 5:30 p.m. Join outings leaders and trip participants to discuss and plan upcoming trips and to enjoy a quick meal at Spiral Diner, Magnolia and 6th, Fort Worth. Order your food early at 5:30 p.m., and meeting will finish by 6:30 p.m. in time to attend the Sierra Club general meeting at 7 p.m. at the Botanic Gardens. For more info, contact Claudia Blalock, 817-924-6242.

September 17, Wednesday

General Meeting of the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club, 7 p.m. Brief business meeting followed by speaker. "The Diesels are Back!" For September's meeting we will explore what's new in Green transportation. VW, Toyota, Honda, BMW and Mercedes-Benz will be introducing new clean technology diesel cars and trucks within the next few months or years. VW is among the first. We'll have a presentation on VW's latest clean technology diesels: how much MPG you can expect and how little CO2 they produce. There will be at least one Jetta Diesel available for inspection and possible test-drives. These are NOT your father's diesels!

This is an all-inclusive list of activities of the Greater Fort Worth Group of the Sierra Club. Check the group website for updates. Most activities are free and open to all. No pets, firearms, or radios are allowed on Sierra Club outings. All children (17 years or less) must be accompanied by a parent on any outing. All overnight trips require pre-registration with the trip leader. A donation of \$5 per person to the Fort Worth Sierra Club is requested for all overnight trips.

Location: Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Moncrief Garden Center, 817 871-7686, 3220 Botanic Garden Boulevard at University, north of I-30.

September 18, Thursday

Arlington Daytime Sierra Club group General Meeting at 3 p.m.. By various requests we're going to a book club format. Our first book will be *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Location: Tin Cup, 1025 W Abram, Arlington. For more info, contact Bonnie Bowman 817-265-0008 or bfbg@tx.rr.com or visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SierraCT>.

September 21, Sunday

Sierra Club's Sustainable Sunday Lunch. Plant-based, all-you-can-eat buffet from 12 noon until 2 p.m. Regularly \$9, \$1 off for Sierra Club. New Start Garden, 972-243-0507) 2330 Royal Lane, ste 900, Dallas. Just west of I-35 on the south side of Royal. Organizer: James Bisby 469-371-1938.

September 22, Monday

Mid-Suburban Sierra Club meeting. "Protecting Your Property (And Probably Your Life) From the Barnett Shale." If we don't want the communities around DFW Airport riddled with gas gathering and transmission lines, even in neighborhoods like Fort Worth has (and will have more of as time goes on), we need to start now to stop it. 7 p.m., Community room at Healthy Approach Market, 817-399-9100, 5100 Hwy 121, Colleyville, on west side of freeway between Hall-Johnson and Glade Roads. Terry Jensen, 817-545-0140.

September 24, Wednesday

Conservation and Political Committees Meeting at 7 p.m. Come discuss conservation and political topics of interest to the Fort Worth Sierra Club. We are combining the two committee meetings since the memberships overlap so much. Location: Ol' South Pancake House, 1509 S University Dr, Fort Worth, TX 76107 (just south of

I-30) For more info, contact Dewayne Quertermous 214-558-1407.

October 5, Sunday

Sierra Club's Sustainable Sunday Lunch. Thai plant-based buffet at Thai Jasmine, 817-283-8228, 3104 Harwood at Hwy 121, SW corner, Bedford. This all-you-can-eat buffet is served from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Organizer: Terry Jensen, 817 545-0140

October 7, Tuesday

Sierra Club Excom Meeting, 6 p.m. Luby's Cafeteria, 2800 8th Ave, Fort Worth, just north of 8th Ave. and Berry St. All Sierra Club members and interested parties are invited to attend this meeting and help shape the policies and events of the Fort Worth Sierra Club.

October 10-12, Friday-Sunday

Sierra Celebration for whole state of Texas sponsored by the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club will be at Caddo Lake State Park, near Marshall. Join other Sierrans from across the state as we meet to hike, camp, and canoe at the loveliest state park in east Texas on our state's only natural lake. Call immediately to reserve your cabin or campsite by contacting the Texas State Park reservations office: www.tpwd.state.tx or 512-389-8900. Organizer: Tolbert Greenwood, 817-737-8698 or tol@greentol.com.

October 11-12, Saturday-Sunday

Little Missouri River Backpacking Trip We'll do a moderately easy backpack of about 6-1/2 miles over two days along one of the most scenic backpacking trails in Southwest Arkansas. Because the trail follows the upper reaches of the Little Missouri River there is minimal elevation change, but do be prepared for a couple of wet stream crossings. Drive up Friday night and return Sunday. This hike is suitable for graduates of the Beginner Backpacking Class who are in good shape. Leader: Mark Adams 972-658-1281(H) adamsmad@gmail.com

October 15, Wednesday

General Meeting of the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club, 7 p.m. Brief business meeting followed by speaker. Luke Metzger, Director of Environment Texas, will discuss "Solar in Texas: what you can do to help make Texas a world leader in solar power." By using our

Please see MORE, Page 4

More Sierra Club outings, events Continued from Page 3

technological know-how to tap into just a fraction of our solar potential, we can protect our environment and move toward a cleaner energy future. Location: Fort Worth Botanic Gardens, Moncrief Garden Center, 817 871-7686, 3220 Botanic Garden Boulevard at University, north of I-30.

October 16, Thursday

Arlington Daytime Sierra Club group - General Meeting at 3 p.m. We will be continuing in the book club format on our first book, *Last Child in the Woods: Saving Our Children from Nature-Deficit Disorder*. Location: Tin Cup, 1025 W Abram, Arlington. For more info, contact Bonnie Bowman 817-265-0008. Contact Bonnie 817-265-0008 or bfbg@tx.rr.com or visit <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/SierraCT>

October 18-19, Saturday-Sunday

Beginner Backpack Trip in the Beech Creek Scenic Area. Backpack about nine relatively flat and easy miles round trip in this beautiful area in S.E. Oklahoma. We'll make camp near a stream. As time permits, there may be an optional day hike, or we can sit in the stream. Preference will be given to the "graduates" of the Beginner Backpack Class Leaders: Marcos Jorge 972-394-2546(H) mjorge@ustgolfshaft.com and Steve Longley

October 19, Sunday

Sierra Club's Sustainable Sunday Lunch. Plant-based, all-you-can-eat buffet from 12 noon until 2 p.m. Regularly \$9, \$1 off for Sierra Club. New Start Garden, 972-243-0507, 2330 Royal Lane, Suite 900, Dallas. Just west of I-35 on the south side of Royal. Organizer:

James Bisby 469-371-1938.

October 22, Wednesday

Conservation and Political Committees Meeting at 7 p.m. Come discuss conservation and political topics of interest to the Fort Worth Sierra Club. We are combining the two committee meetings since the memberships overlap so much. Location: Ol' South Pancake House, 1509 S University Dr, Fort Worth, (just south of I-30) For more info, contact Dewayne Quertermous 214-558-1407

October 27, Monday

Mid-Suburban Sierra Club meeting. We've all heard about the latest in green-built homes, but what if you have an older home that you want to upgrade? Robin Sowton, Conservation Co-Chair of Dallas Sierra Club, gives a 60-minute presentation on "Improving Energy Efficiency in Your Home." She will talk about effectiveness in the areas of electricity, cooling, heating, and water. It is not only about making some modifications to your house, but about changing habits. Some energy efficiencies can be gained simply by changing the way we cook and refrigerate our food, and wash and dry our clothes. 7 p.m., Community room at Healthy Approach Market, 817-399-9100, 5100 Hwy 121, Colleyville, on west side of freeway between Hall-Johnson and Glade Roads. Terry Jensen, 817-545-0140.

October 28, Tuesday

Newsletter Folding Party at 6 p.m. Braum's Restaurant, 6770 Bridge St at Loop 820, Fort Worth. Have a few minutes to donate your time to the club

to label newsletters? No skill required, just a willingness to help.

November 1-2, Saturday-Sunday

Car Camping in the Winding Stairs Area in Oklahoma. On Saturday, we will day hike about eight miles to enjoy the fall colors which should be near their peak. The day hike includes about a 1500 ft elevation change. There will also be short day hike on Sunday morning before heading home. Because of the length and terrain of the day hike, this trip is rated as moderately strenuous. Note that the camp site will have no water and no restrooms. Leaders: Marcos Jorge 972-394-2546(H) mjorge@ustgolfshaft.com and Judy Cato.

November 2, Sunday

Sierra Club's Sustainable Sunday Lunch. Thai plant-based buffet at Thai Jasmine, 817-283-8228, 3104 Harwood at Hwy 121, SW corner, Bedford. This all-you-can-eat buffet is served from 11:30 a.m. to 2 p.m. Organizer: Terry Jensen, 817-545-0140.

November 8-9, Saturday-Sunday

Backpack Ouachita National Forest in Arkansas. Hike a portion of the Eagle Rock Loop Trail in the Ouachita National Forest in SW Arkansas. Camp at Albert Pike Campground on Friday night. Drive to trailhead Saturday morning and hike six miles over two mountains to camp near the Little Missouri River Saturday night. Hike out about four miles on Sunday morning. This hike is rated moderate with a few hills and stream crossings. We'll have an optional happy hour Saturday evening. Leader: Mark Adams 972-658-1281(H), adamsmad@gmail.com.

Lone Star Chapter makes political endorsements for this area

The Political Committee of the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club has made endorsements for state offices. Below are the candidates endorsed in the Greater Fort Worth area:

-Texas Senate District 10 - Wendy Davis - www.wendydavisforsenate.com/ - 817-806-4440

-Texas HD 90 - Lon Burnam - 817-924-2008 - lonburnam@gmail.com

-Texas HD 95 - Marc Veasey - www.marcveasey.com/ - 817-274-8927

-Texas HD 96 - Chris Turner

- <http://votechristurner.com/> - 817-561-4900

-Texas HD 97 - Dan Barrett - www.danbarrett.com/ - 817-832-3910

Endorsed candidates either have good environmental voting records, or have played an important part in key environmental legislation. Please help with their campaigns, tell your friends, and vote for them. These candidates need your support in the Nov. 4 elections. Remember you can vote early from Oct. 20-30. Also, remember that the last day to register to

vote is October 6. See the Secretary of State's website (<http://www.sos.state.tx.us/elections/voter/index.shtml>) for information about voter registration.

Check the website of the Political Committee (<http://sierravote.com/>) for a complete list of endorsed candidates. To support its efforts, make checks payable to:

Sierra Club Political Committee of Texas

Mail to:

Hector J. Gonzalez, 615 Willow
San Antonio, TX 78202-1247

Club stands firm on Limestone County coal plant

By **TERRY JENSEN**

In late July, the Environmental Defense Fund negotiated a deal with utility NRG Texas to end its opposition to a new coal-fired power plant in Limestone County, about 140 miles northeast of Austin. The group claimed it had won concessions that would make a dent in the global warming problem.

But the Sierra Club and Public Citizen did not agree and would not enter the deal with NRG. Both groups will continue to contest the utility's air permit application at the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality.

As far as we are concerned:

1. The proposed plant, Limestone 3, does not meet federal Clean Air Act mandates that require industries to use top-of-the-line technologies.
2. The carbon dioxide emissions from this site are huge.
3. The impact on air quality in DFW and other cities such as Austin has not been fully studied.
4. Any coal plant would contribute

to global warming.

Tom Smith, head of the Austin office of Public Citizen, said, "While Environmental Defense Fund has done great work in cutting carbon dioxide emissions at the plant by as much as

50 percent, it's not enough to assure viability of our climate."

Although the plant is scheduled to come online in 2013, TCEQ is unlikely to decide whether to issue the permit before 2009.

Fort Worth Group joins CREDO in seeking moratorium on gas well, pipeline permits

The Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club is supporting the Fort Worth Coalition for a Reformed Drilling Ordinance (CREDO). CREDO is made up of individuals and groups who are concerned that gas production in Fort Worth is proceeding without adequate consideration of long-term impacts.

CREDO believes the City is obligated to assure the safety and well being of its citizens above all other considerations

CREDO calls for a City-imposed moratorium on permits for gas wells and pipelines until:

1. Plans are in place to accommodate the total impact of urban gas production over the life of the activity
2. Post-depletion planning is in place to protect future residents
3. Planning for gas production is integrated with the city's Comprehensive Plan and other appropriate plans
4. Regulations are in place to assure safe operation of the total gas production activity

For more information about CREDO visit their website at: <http://www.gasmoratorium.org/>

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 Sierra (\$7.50) and chapter publications **F94Q W99901** Entity Code
 (\$1.00). Dues are not tax deductible.

Mail to Sierra Club Member Services, 85 Second St.
 2nd Floor, San Francisco, Calif. 94105-3441

Mission statement

The purposes of the Sierra 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 environment and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

When green building is actually a shade of brown

BY TERRY JENSEN

Although "green" is the current buzzword many in the Dallas-Fort Worth building industry use regarding their products, much of the green building in DFW is actually brown.

Single-family homes, often touted by the residential construction and real estate industries as the American dream, are fast becoming the brown American nightmare.

The green building industry is brown when:

1. It builds massive homes. Green is first and foremost small. Larger homes use proportionally more materials and other resources.

2. It contributes to urban sprawl. It is not green to replace parks and farms with concrete.

3. It builds new houses rather than remodeling existing homes.

4. It destroys an existing home to use the land for a new house, normally much larger than the structure destroyed.

5. It builds homes that barely en-

sure for a few decades rather than hundreds of years. The first law of sustainability is durability.

6. It builds homes that include large numbers of electric appliances and gadgets. Even when individual devices have increased energy efficiency, they cause an overall increase in power use.

And what about the press?

The Dallas Morning News included a 14,000 square foot home in Addison when writing about "green" homes. Journalist Stewart Lytle wrote on July 18, that this "five-bedroom, nine-bath home will consume about \$1,000 a month in electricity, which includes powering 11 plasma TVs, a large me-

dia room, and nine refrigerators."

Lytle also wrote that the builders believe the house "will be certified by the U.S. Green Building Council as a Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design (LEED) level home."

In the opinion of this environmentalist, LEED certification for this house does not fall within the realm of reason. Can a home with nine refrigerators and \$1000 utility bills actually be LEED certified?

I hope not. Many of the metroplex's builders and architects sincerely want to create earth-friendly homes. Unfortunately, they often produce homes and buildings that actually make environmental problems worse.

NCTCOG has pair of initiatives aimed at air quality

The North Central Texas Council of Governments has two initiatives aimed at improving our air quality. The first, Try Parking It, encourages transportation alternatives. Try Parking It will help you see your contributions to clean air by giving you an estimate of miles saved and emissions reduced, each time you submit your alternate commute (<http://www.tryparkingit.com/>). Second initiative is Air North Texas, a regional clean air partnership/campaign. Learn about our air quality problem and be part of the solution.