

DCEC Newsletter

Environmental News for Door County



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SPRING 2009

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Summer Events Off to A Running Start!—Rachel Carson Film Set for May 13th

BILL MOYERS SAID “You cannot walk away unmoved” from *A Sense of Wonder*, a film about the life of author/activist Rachel Carson. The Door County Environmental Council (DCEC) will be hosting the Door County premiere screening of the film on Wednesday, May 13 at 7:00 pm at Crossroads at Big Creek, Sturgeon Bay. There is no admission charge.

Rachel Carson has been called the “patron saint” of the modern environmental movement. Praising Carson for her work, Al Gore wrote, “without [Silent Spring] the environmental movement might have been long delayed or never developed at all.” As an activist, Carson fought government negligence and unbridled corporate interest.

In 1962 she published her seminal work, *Silent Spring*, which alerted the world to the dangers of chemical pesticides and launched the modern environmental movement. The chemical industry fought “that hysterical woman” to suppress the book’s publication with lawsuits and personal attacks. Carson, terminally ill with breast cancer, refused to be cowed. The book was on the bestseller list for 86 weeks and has been translated into 30 languages. The film focuses on the last year of Carson’s life, 1963-64.

Carson’s legacy lives on. She was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom, the highest honor awarded by the government to a US citizen. Her work with Congress led directly to the passage of such important laws as the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act and the Federal Insecticide, Fungicide and Rodenticide Act. These laws remain pillars of US environmental law.

A Sense of Wonder is a documentary-style film of a play written and starring Kaiulani Lee, an Obie Award-winning actress from New York. Lee has been performing the play over the last 16 years at hundreds of colleges, universities, the Smithsonian Institute, the Albert Schweitzer Conference at the United Nations, the Sierra Club’s centennial, and in Canada, England and Italy. Lee’s play also opened the 2005 World Expo in Japan and in May of 2007 she performed it on Capitol Hill in Washington, DC.

The film runs 55 minutes and was shot in high definition video by Oscar Award-winning cinematographer Haskell Wexler (*One Flew Over the Cuckoo’s Nest*, *Who’s Afraid of Virginia Woolf?*) Direction is by Christopher Monger (*The Englishman Who Went Up A Hill But Came Down A Mountain*, starring Hugh Grant, *Waiting for the Light*, starring Shirley McLaine and *Girl From Rio*, best film, Hollywood Film Festival.) The musical score relies heavily on the works of Beethoven. (cont.)



Kaiulani Lee portrays Rachel Carson

Please see “EVENTS” page five



DCEC Incorporated in 1971 under the laws of Wisconsin as a nonprofit, tax-exempt corporation

Schauer Park: Safe Harbor or Environmental Nightmare?

A FEASIBILITY STUDY FOR an anticipated safe harbor at the Schauer Park location in south Jacksonport Town should soon be available for public examination. The study was completed by STS/AECOM, a Green Bay engineering firm.

This detailed study produced four conceptual visions of the proposed harbor of refuge and a requested “preferred” evaluation of the proposal from the engineers involved in the project study. All of these conceptual plans involve northeast exposure, with no natural sheltering effect for major storm events coming from the north or east.

All four concepts require a blasted and dredged channel 100 feet wide and extending at least 540+ feet (east/west) to create access to the harbor of refuge from the deeper lake water. This channel would need to be cleared and maintained at +571.0 low water datum that would provide 6.5 feet of water in the dredged channel. In the event of continuing lake level drop, the channel would have to be deepened accordingly. This channel would be marked with 2 or 3 sets of illuminated buoys to enable safe entry/exit.

Concepts C and D would utilize *an interior harbor* constructed within the land area of Schauer Park with dual or triple boat ramps, and extending nearly to the roadway with the largest being 17,400 SF. There are no break walls indicated for these two concepts. Both would require additional land purchases for parking, etc. Existing park land would be used for the harbor and launch ramps. Land parcels south of the park and/or directly across the road would be needed.

Concept A and B would create a harbor off land and would need

extensive break walls to protect the harbor and launch ramps. Both concepts have a passage opening to the north and connecting with the access channel. Concept B would require additional land as the launch ramps extend into present park areas.

The engineer-preferred Concept (E) has some advantages. It changes the opening in the break wall to face directly east and moves the launch ramps partly out into the sheltered area. This plan would also require an additional land parcel for parking, etc. It would gradually widen the channel to *two hundred feet* at the mouth of the channel.

The anticipated costs for these various concepts range from \$2.35 million to \$3.1 million.

Additional studies and engineering recommended by the report include a wave transformation study (creation of a model), a sediment survey/transport study, and a final design using all of the acquired information at an estimated additional cost of \$90,000.

Conspicuously absent from all of the information is identification of natural effects that would be incurred during the disturbing of the lake bed which consists of dolostone fragments in assorted dimensions lying over bedrock strata. This type of lake bottom is the “location by choice” of spawning whitefish. This part of Lake Michigan has been designated as one of the major spawning areas for the lake’s *entire whitefish population*.

There are reports from commercial fishers that whitefish have nearly disappeared from their catches in the last years. Whitefish are an important asset to Door County. We need to have our whitefish population maintained, and that need is paramount.

~JMV

New Maps and Information to Help You Identify Wetlands

SINCE THEIR LAUNCH IN October, 2008, *Waking Up to Wetlands: Know Before You Buy or Build*, a set of new online informational tools, has helped thousands of Wisconsin property owners learn whether they have wetlands on property they want to build on or buy.

The DNR collaborated on the tools with the *Wisconsin REALTORS® Association*, the *Wisconsin Wetland Association* and government organizations. They were developed under grant funding from *the Wisconsin Coastal Management Program*, *the Great Lakes Protection Fund* and the *Natural Resources Foundation*.

The project was supported and informed by the *Wisconsin County Code Administrators*, *the Wisconsin Towns Association*, *The League of Wisconsin Municipalities* and the *Wisconsin Builders Association*.

<http://dnr.wi.gov/wetlands/locating.html> is the gateway to these new informational tools.

These new informational tools seek to help people “Wake Up to Wetlands” before they buy land or build upon it. A UW survey commissioned as part of this project revealed that Wisconsin residents are concerned about the destruction of remaining wetlands, but knew less about the state’s drier type of wetlands.

DNR wetland biologists developed a checklist of plants, soils and other clues that landowners can look for while walking a

property. The checklist can be downloaded from the DNR website where you can also find photographs of the tree and plant species and other wetland clues.

An interactive online map shows wetlands that have been officially mapped through the *Wisconsin Wetland Inventory* process and areas that may be wetlands based on the soils found in federal soil maps.

Officially mapped wetlands are outlined in yellow and potential wetlands are shaded in pink. You can go to the DNR website shown earlier or contact any of these individuals:

Wetland Ecology and Functions
Pat Trochlell - (608) 267-2453
patricia.trochlell@wisconsin.gov

Wetland Regulations
Dale Simon (608) 267-9868
byron.simon@wisconsin.gov

General Information
Lisa Gaumnitz, DNR (608) 264-8942
lisa.gaumnitz@wisconsin.gov

~JMV



Lake Michigan: Trouble Just Starting?

ON THE SURFACE, LAKE MICHIGAN remains one of the world's biggest and wildest bodies of freshwater and one of its most popular fishing destinations. But under water, it is largely a **man-made production**. Lake Michigan has been *engineered* into a system focused on producing a **maximum amount of sport fish**, most of which are not native to its waters. About 13 million exotic salmon and trout are planted yearly, creating what experts call a "sportsman's paradise." But today, it is a paradise in big trouble.

This year the salmon are biting on just about anything, and commercial fishermen say they know why: The fish are starving. Salmon stomachs are normally packed with alewives. This year, the lake's biggest fish are swimming on empty. Preliminary numbers from an alewife survey last fall back up what the commercial fishers have reported. The lake's population has dropped from 25% to 50% in just the past year.

Some theories for the decline include overstocking of salmon and trout, and natural alewife population fluctuations. But most ominous, is mounting evidence that the lake could be on the brink of a food chain collapse caused by a non-stop invasion of foreign species. Salmon might be something of a sentinel for the lake. If the king of the food chain is in trouble, the rest of the kingdom probably is too.

Lake Michigan salmon are shrinking and the problem may be linked to zebra mussels imported to the Great Lakes from Eastern Europe's Caspian Sea in the ballast water of freighters. Zebra mussels have spent the past twenty years disrupting the normal food

chain by feasting on tiny creatures making up the base of the lake's food chain. The results of those changes are now becoming very evident in Lake Michigan.

The alewife population in Lake Huron has crashed and is dropping like a rock in Lake Michigan, scientists say. That's bad news for salmon, which feast almost exclusively on alewives. Experts indicate that salmon are not growing as large as in years past because there are fewer and **skinnier**, alewife in Lake Michigan. Zebra mussels are at least partially responsible for the changes. These finger-nail-sized mollusks have been linked to the decline of Lake Michigan's diporeia, tiny shrimp-like creatures that alewife eat.

The Lake Michigan alewife population has decreased by at least half over the past two years. This comes on the heels of a 30 percent drop in the lake's alewife population in 2003. The alewife loss could reach crisis proportions if Lake Michigan follows the same pattern of changes as Lake Huron, where alewife have all but disappeared.

The two lakes are essentially one body of water and have many ecological similarities. It is possible that alewife could stage a comeback in Lake Michigan, but changes caused by zebra mussels will make that more difficult than in the past. Anglers are justifiably concerned about the shrinking size of Lake Michigan salmon. Charter boat captains reported catching large numbers of salmon this year, but they were much smaller than in the past.

Condensed from *Great Lakes Newsletter* ~JMV



Are Catches Like This Now History?

Round Gobies a Big Problem, too.

FIFTY YEARS AGO, ALEWIVES INVADED Great Lakes fisheries and destroyed the ecology of our beaches. Now, another invasive fish is creating a biological disaster in the world's largest freshwater system. The **round goby** is taking over large areas of the Great Lakes and their connecting waters. Gobies breed like rabbits and consume the tiny organisms that other fish species need to survive. This is causing major changes in the food chain that has supported the Great Lakes sport and commercial fishery for countless years.

There are about 10 million pounds of gobies in Lake Michigan according to government estimates. That is one quarter of the total of all baitfish in the lake. These invaders are native to the waters of Eastern Europe and likely came into the Great Lakes along with all the other invasive species that arrived in ballast water from ocean-going vessels.

These nasty invaders are extending their range into the deeper waters of the Lakes and infesting rivers and inland lakes across the region that flow into all of the Great Lakes.

The only known benefit of these bug-eyed invaders is that they devour zebra and quagga mussels, that are also problem invaders. In doing so they convert these dreissenids (zebra and quagga mussels)

into useable food for top predator fish. When the dreissenids are not available, gobies will feast on and demolish the population of insects present in the waters in and around harbors and bays of the Great Lakes.

By consuming the mussels, they absorb the amount of toxins present in the mussels they feed on, toxins that cause botulism and food poisoning. Man-made chemicals are transferred directly from the mussels, to the gobies and on up the food chain.

By consuming the gobies large fish-eating birds are killed by the toxins—numbers estimated at 70,000 birds over the last decade in the Great Lakes region. Gobies are food for some of the larger fish species, including bass and walleye. Some experts believe that gobies may become a new food source for salmon, passing their toxins into these major game fish.

All of these effects were brought on by lack of proper ballast water control factors through the years. There still is *no effective way* to enforce any regulations that limit discharges of ballast water. How long will we accept these invasive creatures before the public demands some firm action to stop future discharge of ballast water into our Great Lakes?

~JMV



Round Goby: a BIG troublemaker

A COMBINATION OF FEDERAL

government, state utility ratepayer incentives and utility buy-in tariff incentives are economically encouraging you to use renewable energy.

There's been a renewal and revitalization of the federal government financial incentives aimed at increasing the use of renewable energy for our homes and businesses. Here's a brief listing of them:

- **Solar Tax Credit:** The 30% Investment Tax Credit for residential and commercial solar installations was extended through 2016.
- **Solar Tax Credit Cap:** The tax credit cap for solar-electric and solar-thermal residential installations was eliminated (prior to 2009 limited to \$2000).
- **Small Wind:** Residential "small wind" now has a new 30% Investment Tax Credit (with a \$4,000 limit for 2008).
- **Geothermal Heat Pumps:** Investment Tax Credit of 30% for 2009 (maximum \$2000 for 2008.)
- **Fuel Cells:** \$500 Tax Credit per 0.5kW.
- **Hybrid electric vehicles:** A new tax credit up to \$7,500 for plug-in hybrid electric vehicles.
- **Energy efficiency:** Extension of one year for energy efficiency Investment Tax Credit for new and existing residences.
- **Excess credit:** may be carried forward to the succeeding tax year.

Wisconsin *Focus on Energy* is a utility ratepayer fund that



offers financial incentives and grants to offset costs of installing or investigating renewable energy systems. Your home, business or organization must purchase electricity or natural gas from a Wisconsin utility participating in the *Focus on Energy* program. (www.focusonenergy.com)

Rewards for up to 25 percent of the project cost are available for the cost of residential solar systems. This is limited to a maximum reward of \$35,000 for solar electric systems. For solar hot water systems the maximum reward is \$2,500.

Wisconsin Public Service, one of our local electrical energy utilities, has started a premium *feed-in tariff rate* for residential solar electric production. This buy-back rate, starting in January 2009, would **pay** \$0.25 for all solar generated electricity, while we are paying \$0.118 to **buy** that same kilowatt-hour. Total size of this program is limited and additional fees apply. (www.wisconsinpublicservice.com)

Starting in July of 2009, Wisconsin will have a 100% exemption from sales and use tax for renewable energy systems. Wisconsin also has a Property Tax Exemption for solar and wind energy systems. (See www.dsireusa.org for federal and state incentives.)

Federal tax credits of 30% coupled with up to 25% in rewards from *Focus on Energy* with a premium of more than 200% paid for solar electric energy generation and other renewable systems, now add up to making renewable energy a cleaner, greener, healthier, and wiser investment choice.

~Guy S. Fortin

Sturgeon Bay Township Stands Up to "Progress"

IN A TOWN THAT HAS MORE open operating and abandoned non-metallic mineral mining sites than almost any other town in the state of Wisconsin, it is easy to understand why the residents oppose any proposals for new locations.

Sturgeon Bay Township, with its underlying gravelly strata, has historically been a source of desirable construction material for the last century.

Anyone traveling through the town will encounter gravel pits/mines on nearly every town road. Some are active, others have been abandoned, with evidence of normal vegetation lacking at most locations.

It is also easy to understand why the citizens that *will be affected* by the new planned location at 1786 Tagge Road (East) are adamant in opposing Premier Concrete's proposal to mine at this new location. This has been agricultural land since the initial clearing more than a century ago. While some farm owners have chosen to let their property be decimated by mining activities for profit, most insist on keeping the agricultural character intact.

The Town Board is to be commended for taking a position endorsed by constituents in opposition to this project through the Resource Planning Committee, which supported the Town's position



A Typical Abandoned Gravel Pit /Mine

after the Zoning Board of Appeals reversed the initial ruling. The town has challenged the Zoning Board decision and is headed to court. The town board can change the zoning to *prime agricultural land*. That would prevent the mining operation. If this zoning change was approved, it would prevent all future mining operations on that 100-acre parcel and surrounding like-zoned lands.

It is not often that a town board will take a position on an issue and stand by that decision in the best interests of the town through the long legal processes that wear down most town

boards. This is unique in Door County, where issues involving land use are often leaning favorably toward a permit applicant and not very frequently favoring the people impacted by the project.

It would be a benefit for all towns/municipalities to put in place an impact or depletion fee requirement to provide compensation for landowners impacted by a development or projects such as this proposal. Impact is always present for the surrounding community, whether it is visual, audible or causing degradation of air/water quality. Towns having village powers are enabled to create ordinances to put these regulations in place and enforce them to compensate property owners for action detrimental to their quality of environmental assets: tranquility of place and property.

~JMV

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What You Can Do for Our Earth

DCEC HAS RECEIVED MORE eco-friendly suggestions from our readers who are doing their part to conserve energy and reduce waste.

Bill U. suggested turning off your 2nd refrigerator. Many people have a 2nd fridge in the basement from when they had a house full of kids and still use it primarily for entertaining when the gang comes over for special occasions. It will save a lot of energy if you turn off the fridge between parties and then turn it back on a couple of days before to chill soda, beer and the fruit salad. Then unplug it again until the next party.

Henry A. found a free, postage-paid envelope to recycle ink jet cartridges on the table in the lobby of the Sturgeon Bay post office.

Kathleen M. said that the boxes in the lobby of grocery and other stores, that accept plastic shopping bags for recycling, also accept plastic wrappers that cover toilet paper and paper



towels.

Patrick B. sends his worn out athletic shoes to be recycled into playground equipment and flooring. Go to <http://www.nikereuse-a-shoe.com> to see how.

Frank M. found a place to donate old cell phones to our military personnel. See <http://www.cellphonesforsoldiers.com> to help our soldiers keep in touch

with loved ones.

Audrey E. said that she's always on the lookout to save energy even on little things like NOT using the electric door but using the manual door at the stores that have both. She also continues to reuse the same envelope in the drive-through lane at the bank for two years running now! That has saved at least 52 envelopes so far.

Thank you to all of you for your great suggestions that we can all incorporate into our Eco-friendly lives to make a difference.

Eileen Andera DCEC President

Events-cont.

This screening of the film marks the first of four events to be sponsored by DCEC this summer.

Vicki Elkin, Gathering Waters Conservancy, in June

Next will be a seminar on *Purchase of Development Rights* as a tool for preserving wild spaces, on June 17th, 7 pm, also at *Crossroads*. The featured speaker will be Vicki Elkin, policy director of the *Gathering Waters Conservancy*, Madison, Wisconsin.

Vicki is a former executive director at *Gathering Waters*, and now heads up the policy division for the state-wide organization that provides programs, advice, consultation and training for local land trusts and land owners alike. Formerly, Vicki administered the Purchase Development Rights program for the Town of Dunn, Wisconsin. She has also worked as a senior legislative assistant in Washington DC, where she was responsible for drafting legislation on environmental issues.

Her presentation will focus on ways property owners and others can utilize Purchase Development Rights as a means of preserving natural spaces in their community.

Virge Temme, Architect, in July

Following Vicki will be the return of architect and sustainable living expert, Virge Temme. Virge will present *The Race to Zero*, where she will compare and contrast net-zero building techniques being utilized in Europe and the US.

She'll be pointing out how, in some ways, Europe is leading the US in net-zero building. This will also be held at *Crossroads at Big Creek* during the month of July.

Then, in August, we'll be holding our Annual Summer Program at the Baileys Harbor Town Hall, Baileys Harbor. The



Vicki Elkin & son Alex

topic and speaker for that event will be announced in your August DCEC newsletter. So, watch your mailbox!

~Ralph Valatka

Governor Doyle Takes Lead on Manure Digestion

WISCONSIN GOVERNOR JIM DOYLE recently announced state financial support for two new farm animal waste digesters in northern Dane County. The concept of manure digesters was proposed by Dane County Executive, Kathy Falk, and supported by the governor. These digesters will contribute to improved water quality while creating a new, renewable source of energy. It is proposed that \$6.6 million allocated in the state budget be used to *help* fund the project.

Dane County lakes are extremely valuable community assets. The proposed manure digesters are vital to remove the most obvious threat of excessive nutrients in Dane lake waters: run off from farm fields where winter-spread manure is not unusual.

Digesters turn cow manure into energy and remove phosphorus from the wastewater stream. They will help protect area lakes and turn a pollution problem into an energy and money making solution. Cleaner water supports higher waterfront property values, improving opportunities for fishing and recreation, and is an all around benefit for the environment.

The two *anaerobic* (without supplementary oxygen) manure digesters will provide major positive impacts for the people of Dane County. They help protect clean water and fish by eliminating phosphorus run off, the major pollutant responsible for *algae growth and cladophora* in our surface waters.

They will also produce *clean, renewable on-farm energy* and provide *fertilizer and bedding* for farm animals. Add to that the removal of the threat to local groundwater from the

contamination by animal waste in the annual spring thaw and the resultant run-off that occurs.



A Manure Digester in China!

Some other benefits from these two planned digesters would be the elimination of 8,000 to 20,000 pounds of phosphorus per year/per digester, reduce 12,000 tons of greenhouse gases each year per digester, and generate \$900,000 in annual revenue from renewable energy

and create new jobs. These two facilities may be operating on a communal basis utilizing animal waste from several nearby operating dairy and livestock farms, solving several waste disposal problems for the betterment of the entire local community.

There are infinite opportunities for use of animal waste digester systems here in Door County. It may take a cooperative effort, on the behalf of several farmers, to implement and finance a cooperative facility that would serve several farmers in a neighborhood.

While the initial cost is prohibitive, the long-range benefits will be far in excess of the initial costs in saved nutrients, preserved groundwater quality and the income produced from use of the gases for electrical generation.

This would *break with tradition* and require thinking “out of the conventional box,” with each farmer having his own individually owned and operated setup for whatever reason. It could work with some real sincere planning and cooperative effort on behalf of several farm owners. ~ JMV

Welcome Back, Rebecca!

WE ARE VERY GLAD TO SEE that Becky Katers is back and working hard to keep the *Clean Water Action Council* (CWAC) of northeast Wisconsin a leader in environmental crusades affecting all of us. DCEC has shared a long relationship with this effective Green Bay based group. They have been the instrumental force in the Fox River PCB cleanup effort for many years.

It appears that the Fox River PCB issue may be finally addressed with a dredging program, even though there are shortfalls and inherent problems in this procedure related to trying to cut remediation costs. PCB's that will remain in the bay sediment will be released and relocated by every major storm event that occurs, much to the dismay of people who use and

enjoy the Bay waters.

Becky went through a long series of cancer treatments during the past year with a positive prognosis. but the treatments left her without her usual energy, and she is back again, actively leading her group as effective and forceful as ever.

CWAC is currently engaged in new legal battles to clean up a polluting Wisconsin ethanol plant. They are also challenging a recent EPA decree, the “Water Transfers Rule,” which exempts water transfers from one body of water to another under the federal *Clean Water Act*.

We're glad to have Becky back in the environmental battle forefront and wish her well and good health into the future. It has been a pleasure to work with her through the years on issues important to northeast Wisconsin and we will continue.

~ JMV

Your Membership Will Support:

A Sense of Wonder
film on Rachel Carson
Wed, May 13, 7 pm
Crossroads at Big Creek

Vicki Elkins, Policy Dir.
Gathering Waters Consvcy.
**Purchase of
Development Rights**
Wed, June 17, 7 pm
Crossroads at Big Creek

Virge Temme, Architect
Virge Temme Architecture
The Race to Zero
during the month of July
Crossroads at Big Creek

dcec membership application

() \$25 Individual () \$35 Family () \$50 Sustaining
() \$100 Donor () \$_____ Other () \$15 Student/Limited

This amount would really help! Thanks!

Name(s) _____

Address: _____

City: _____ State: _____ Zip: _____

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Township or Municipality: _____

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Please mail to: DCEC, P.O. Box 114, Fish Creek, WI 54212

REMINDER: A gift membership to DCEC is a great way to do a favor for a friend or relative. It's also a great way to enlighten newcomers to Door County about our fragile environment. Use the form above, in any membership amount, and mark it "GIFT." Make sure your mailing label is attached on the back or send us your name and address separately. Enclose payment and we'll do the rest!

DCEC'S Leadership

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(202) 225-5665

http://kagen.house.gov/IMA/issue_subscribe.htm

[Ed. Note: visit <http://www.vote-smart.org> if you don't vote in Door County. Just enter your zip code and they'll display all of your elected representatives with links to detailed fact sheets and contact information about each one.]



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DCEC Premieres Film on Rachel Carson, May 13th!

0509

Beginning of the End for Coal Fired Electricity in Wisconsin?

WISCONSIN REGULATORS RECENTLY rejected a proposal to build a conventional coal power plant for the *first time in history* when the *Public Service Commission rejected Alliant Energy's* controversial \$1.26 billion coal plant on the Mississippi River at Cassville. This decision helps move our state toward a strong and clean energy economy. It also stops the expansive use of dirty coal. This is critical in the effort to reduce global warming and to create jobs by paving the way for alternative energy sources. A recent national report demonstrated that Wisconsin could create 37,000 family-supporting jobs in the future by investing in clean energy technologies and energy efficiency.

In Kansas, Governor Kathleen Sebelius recently vetoed legislation that would have allowed construction of two 700-megawatt plants in the southwestern part of that state.

The legislation's sponsors are hoping they can muster enough votes (two-thirds) to override the veto and allow a Colorado-based utility to begin construction.

The *Sunflower Electric Power Corp* and *Tri-State Generation and Transmission*, key players in the conflict, are reviewing their plans for coal-based power. They now plan to work more on renewable energy, natural gas and energy efficiency. They are exploring their options by contracting 220 megawatts of natural gas capacity in eastern Colorado and developing a

30-megawatt solar plant in New Mexico.



A Typical Coal Fired Power Plant

Conservation groups have filed suit alleging that South Carolina government regulators illegally gave *Santee Cooper Power Company* a green light to build a new coal power plant on the Great PeeDee River that would emit 31 times more mercury than the legal limit. The suit could also generate debate over carbon dioxide, the main cause of global warming. Citing a 2007 U. S. Supreme Court case that said carbon dioxide was an air pollutant under the Clean Air Act, the suit also alleges that the proposed plant would add mercury pollution to an already contaminated region of South Carolina.

Back in Wisconsin, the rejection of *Alliant's* coal power plant by the *Wisconsin Public Service Commission* illustrates the changing atmosphere of energy policy in our state. The project met with unprecedented opposition. The public opposed the project by a 10-to-1 margin. *The Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group*, the *Wisconsin Paper Council* and *RENEW Wisconsin*, all joined *Clean Wisconsin* and the *Citizens Utility Board (CUB)* in opposing the construction plans. When there are cleaner alternatives that would save ratepayers \$800 million, the prospect of more coal generation loses its appeal very quickly. Wisconsin can become a leader in clean generation by continuing alternative generation promotion.

~JMV

...and, after you read this newsletter, please pass it along to a friend.



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Environmental News for Door County

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PLEASE TAKE HOME!**

Beginning of the End for Coal Fired Electricity in Wisconsin?

WISCONSIN REGULATORS RECENTLY rejected a proposal to build a conventional coal power plant for the *first time in history* when the *Public Service Commission rejected Alliant Energy's* controversial \$1.26 billion coal plant on the Mississippi River at Cassville. This decision helps move our state toward a strong and clean energy economy. It also stops the expansive use of dirty coal. This is critical in the effort to reduce global warming and to create jobs by paving the way for alternative energy sources. A recent national report demonstrated that Wisconsin could create 37,000 family-supporting jobs in the future by investing in clean energy technologies and energy efficiency.

In Kansas, Governor Kathleen Sebelius recently vetoed legislation that would have allowed construction of two 700-megawatt plants in the southwestern part of that state.

The legislation's sponsors are hoping they can muster enough votes (two-thirds) to override the veto and allow a Colorado-based utility to begin construction.

The *Sunflower Electric Power Corp* and *Tri-State Generation and Transmission*, key players in the conflict, are reviewing their plans for coal-based power. They now plan to work more on renewable energy, natural gas and energy efficiency. They are exploring their options by contracting 220 megawatts of natural gas capacity in eastern Colorado and developing a

30-megawatt solar plant in New Mexico.



A Typical Coal Fired Power Plant

Conservation groups have filed suit alleging that South Carolina government regulators illegally gave *Santee Cooper Power Company* a green light to build a new coal power plant on the Great PeeDee River that would emit 31 times more mercury than the legal limit. The suit could also generate debate over carbon dioxide, the main cause of global warming. Citing a 2007 U. S. Supreme Court case that said carbon dioxide was an air pollutant under the Clean Air Act, the suit also alleges that the proposed plant

would add mercury pollution to an already contaminated region of South Carolina.

Back in Wisconsin, the rejection of *Alliant's* coal power plant by the *Wisconsin Public Service Commission* illustrates the changing atmosphere of energy policy in our state. The project met with unprecedented opposition. The public opposed the project by a 10-to-1 margin. *The Wisconsin Industrial Energy Group*, the *Wisconsin Paper Council* and *RENEW Wisconsin*, all joined *Clean Wisconsin* and the *Citizens Utility Board (CUB)* in opposing the construction plans. When there are cleaner alternatives that would save ratepayers \$800 million, the prospect of more coal generation loses its appeal very quickly. Wisconsin can become a leader in clean generation by continuing alternative generation promotion.

~JMV

...and, after you read this newsletter, please pass it along to a friend.