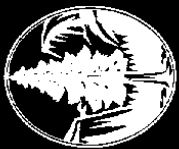


# Fresh Air

SIERRA CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892



## April Meeting on Wind Power

Join us on April 24<sup>th</sup> at 7 p.m. at the Unitarian Universalist Fellowship Church, 1309 W. Boyd in Norman to hear Tim Hughes, director of the Oklahoma Wind Power Initiative, a program sponsored by the US Department of Energy, Oklahoma Department of Commerce, OU, and OSU, to investigate and promote economic development opportunities through wind power studies and outreach. Tim will provide a brief history of wind power development since the 1800's. He will also discuss the future of wind power, how Oklahoma can benefit from this new technology and pending legislation that will help promote renewable energy development in Oklahoma. We'll socialize from 7 to 7:30, then hear Tim. See you there!

## Blue River Outing Report

Sunshine and temperatures in the 80's greeted over 40 participants in the Devil's Den/Blue River outing on April 12. The cool waters of Pennington Creek and the Blue River soothed our feet after hours of hiking down paths through forests and over granite rock formations. We squeezed through a 20-foot deep, 18-inch wide slot through solid granite, sat in a granite cave, drank spring water from Horsethief Spring, admired the Oklahoma Seaside Alder and witnessed numerous other natural wonders of Johnson County. We thank John Bruno, Earl and Jeannie Brewer and the Citizens for the Protection of the Arbuckle Simpson Aquifer for providing us this opportunity to see these stunning landscape features and feeding us lunch.

The highlight of the trip was the water which emerges clear and cold from the aquifer and creates Pennington Creek, the Blue River and many other springs, streams and lakes we did not see. That water is currently threatened by a few ranchers north of Tishomingo who have been solicited by PESA, LLC, an Oklahoma City consortium, to pump a huge amount of water from the aquifer and deliver it to Yukon, Mustang and other eastern Canadian County cities through a \$200 million pipeline (to be financed at taxpayer expense). Under PESA's original proposal, the total amount of water to be removed annually from the aquifer exceeds the combined flow of the Blue River and Pennington Creek. Some hydrologists believe the project, if approved will severely reduce the flow of Pennington Creek and the Blue River. The National Park Service, the Chickasaw Nation and the cities of Ada, Ardmore, Davis, Durant, Sulphur, Wynnewood and Tishomingo have protested the pending application for permission to pump water from the aquifer for sale to eastern Canadian County.

The Citizens for Protection of the Arbuckle Simpson Aquifer refuse to allow PESA to devastate the environment of south central Oklahoma. Current legislation in the Oklahoma House and Senate would place a moratorium on temporary permits to pump water from the Arbuckle Simpson aquifer until a study is completed to determine the effect of such pumping on the quality of water in the aquifer and the flows of streams and springs. The bills are Senate Bill 288 (Gumm/Roan) and House Bill 1083 (Hilliard). The proposed moratorium is limited to sole source aquifers as defined by the Environmental Protection Organization. The Arbuckle Simpson is the only such aquifer in Oklahoma. The proposed legislation will not affect the ability of the City of Norman or other cities in Oklahoma to obtain temporary permits to drill wells into aquifers other than the Arbuckle Simpson.

As I write this article, SB 288 and HB1083 are in a conference committee and one version of the bill is expected to be voted on by early May. Please help protect the streams and springs of south central Oklahoma by calling your representative and senator and asking them to vote yes on SB288/HB1083. For more information on the aquifer, current legislation and what you can do to help, see the extensive website of the Citizens for Protection of the Arbuckle Simpson Aquifer ([www.arbsimaquifer.net](http://www.arbsimaquifer.net)).



*Rock Formation at Devil's Den*

## Arbor & Recycling Day Celebration

Learn about composting, gardening, recycling and green business practices at the City of Norman's Arbor Day/Recycling Day event from 10 a.m. till 2 p.m. at Reeves Park in Norman. The Sierra Club, Little River Zoo, Norman Area Land Conservancy, Oklahoma Conservation Commission, Oklahoma Department of Agriculture-Forestry Services, Oklahoma Department of Environmental Quality, Oklahoma Native Plan Society and numerous other organizations will have informational displays at the event and representatives available to answer questions. Door prizes from Wild Birds Unlimited, The Greenhouse, Marcum's Nursery, Satterlee Landscape Nursery, Norman Park Foundation, Inc., All-American Waste Control, Corrugated Services, LP and the Norman Park Foundation, Inc. will be awarded. There will be special activities for kids, who can meet Moriah the Talking Tree, Smokey the Bear and other odd characters from the woods. For more information on speakers and topics or anything else, call 292-9731 or 366-5473.

## Sutton Wilderness Clean-up

The spring flowers should be starting to bloom! That alone is a good excuse to visit this urban wilderness located in Norman at the SW corner of NE 12<sup>th</sup> and Rock Creek. Through Norman Parks' Adopt a Park Program, the Red Earth Group has "adopted" this reserve that serves as habitat for many animals native to this area.

This is our first clean-up of the year to clear away any trash accumulated over the winter. Of course, it serves as a wonderful stroll through the woods as well. The Parks Department will provide a dumpster and trash bags. Bring gloves and join us in preserving this gem. Saturday, May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 9:00 a.m. - 11:00 a.m. Rain date - May 17<sup>th</sup>.

## OKLAHOMANS WALK FOR WATER

**SATURDAY, APRIL 26th 2003**

**Reeves Park Noon — Catered picnic 4:30pm  
(in Norman at Jenkins and Timberdell Rd.)**



**OKLAHOMA WATER IS UNDER SIEGE  
BY POLLUTERS AND MONEY GRABBERS**

***Our streams and lakes need your help!***

Oklahoma streams, lakes and groundwater aquifers are threatened today as never before. Something must be done now to protect our water. First, the state must develop cleanup plans for waters that are polluted or threatened by pollution. Second, we must have a better process for deciding how we will use water. Our decisions on water use affect the environment, other Oklahomans, and future generations. We must demand a better Statewide Water Plan.

On Saturday, April 26th citizens who want to volunteer take better care of our water will be talking with neighbors about the threats we face. We will gather at Reeves Park in Norman for a rally and some will walk through local neighborhoods encouraging people to sign a post card to the Governor. The cards ask Gov. Henry to give priority to a new Water Plan and to make cleaning up pollution a priority. Postcards will also be available for participants to take home and share with family, friends and/or neighbors. Starting at 4:30pm, we will have a catered picnic with entertainment for all who sign-up at the noon rally.

Oklahomans can take charge of protecting our water - we don't have to leave ourselves at the mercy of polluters and profit-seekers who want to sell it out of state, or others who would blindly allow our streams and groundwater resources to be depleted over the next 20 years. We must inform others and ourselves about alternatives, evaluate our options and plan ahead to avoid water shortages and make sure that all Oklahomans have clean water.

**Oklahoma Streams and Water  
Resources Need You!  
Please Join Us in Our Walk for Water**

**Sponsored by  
Oklahoma Sierra Club  
Save the Illinois River  
Southeastern Oklahoma Water Alliance**

For more information visit <[www.oklahoma.sierraclub.org](http://www.oklahoma.sierraclub.org)>  
Contacts: Jeannine Hale—[Jeannine.Hale@att.net](mailto:Jeannine.Hale@att.net) or (918) 227-2790  
Susie Shields—[sshields@cox.net](mailto:sshields@cox.net) or (405) 297-0179



## In Case You Were Wondering...

Now that the Holiday decorations have been packed away for several months, many of you may be thinking "I wonder just how much we raised at the Holiday Auction?"

Well wonder no more! With the combined effort of our seasoned and skillful auctioneers Barbara Neas and David Miller, our generous hosts Susan and Larry Steele, our enthusiastic bidders, and our generous donors, the club raised \$2,600!!

As tradition would have it we experienced another great evening with friends, great food (it gets better every year!) and drink (including Dave's homemade brew) and many auction items.

Thanks to all of you for making this another successful fundraiser. A very special thank you goes to Barbara and David for their hard work and to Susan and Larry for allowing us into their home for yet another year.

Hope to see you the first Saturday in December for HolidayAuction 2003!

## We Hope the Spring's Eternal!

Yesterday (April 12) Ranger Rick (Poland, the competent Group Co-chair) led a few dozen of us down to the Tishomingo area for an outing at Devil's Den and to the Blue River. We all bent over to take a drink of pure water gushing out of the ground. Twelve men who own land above the Arbuckle-Simpson Aquifer applied to the Oklahoma Water Resources Board for permission to sell the water to some towns and cities in the Chickasha area. While it is within their legal right to do that, expert hydrologists say that it WILL (not MAY) dry up the aquifer even without a predicted drought, given the quantities of water they have proposed to withdraw and sell.

(For the sake of argument, let us not bring up the issue that once the permits are issued to withdraw the water, and the cities involved learn that they will be expected to front the \$300,000,000 or so needed to purchase the right-of-way, build the pipelines, pumping stations, etc., that the eventual purchasers are going to be Dallas and Ft. Worth, instead.)

The tragedy is that when the springs dry up that feed the Blue River and other area rivers, a number of southern Oklahoma towns and cities will lose their water supply. Many thousands of citizens will be adversely affected, the economies of their towns and cities devastated.

The problem is that aquifer water is legally separate from surface waters, even though modern hydrology shows they are not independent. Clearly, Oklahoma law is wrong if it insists that the greed of the few outweighs the needs of the many.

The situation at Lake Altus is analogous to that. Three hundred farmers have the legal right to drain the lake completely dry, to the detriment of all the other users of the lake, including the state lodge, businesses associated with tourism around the lake, and the City of Altus, for whom the lake is a supplemental water source. The situations are morally equivalent, even though the differential between people harmed versus people helped is smaller in southwest Oklahoma.

Clearly the issue has to be addressed by lawmakers for Justice to be served.

David Miller

## Big Tree Contest

Here's a chance to get some publicity for your favorite trees in Norman. The Norman Park Foundation is holding its first Big Tree Contest. The only requirements for entry are that the tree be located in the Norman city limits and be accessible for verification. Circumference of the tree's trunk is the determining factor and the categories are: 1) evergreen tree nominated by a person 12 or younger, 2) evergreen tree nominated by a person 13 or older; 3) deciduous tree nominated by a person 12 or younger; 4) deciduous tree nominated by a person 13 or older. A great chance to get your kids out to see lots of beautiful trees! Nominations must be post-marked no later than May 15<sup>th</sup>. For more information or an entry form, call Suzanne of the Norman Park Foundation, Inc., at 366-5473.

**Fresh Air**

## Outings

**April 27: DAY HIKE** - Baldy Point Natural Area, Quartz Mountain. Meet at the Quartz Mountain lodge at ten A.M. to caravan a very short distance to the trail. The park has recently acquired an additional sixty acres to bring the total property up to 280 acres of wilderness-like land abounding in wildflowers and a variety of trails. Marion Hutchison who has been instrumental in securing land for the Baldy Point Natural Area will guide the hike sharing his extensive knowledge of the trails. The park has camping facilities and a very nice lodge for anyone who wishes to go early or stay late, but the hike is a day hike. Bring water and a lunch. Car-pooling is very Sierra. No fees, no pets, moderate to easy. Leader Suzette McDowell (405) 364-2617 or [szttlac@aol.com](mailto:szttlac@aol.com).

## Hazardous Waste Collection

On May 3, 2003, the City of Norman will hold its hazardous waste collection event, co-sponsored by the University of Oklahoma, Compton's Air Quality Experts, Tri-City Metals and Tony Marbell's Cantina. From 9:00 to 2:00, bring paint, used oil, insecticides, batteries, metal appliances car tires (no rims) or other potentially hazardous items you wish to dispose. Radioactive waste, explosives, business generated waste (businesses can contact MSE Environmental prior to the event at 281-227-0075 to discuss disposal of such waste), compressed gas containers, biomedical waste, PCB's, large truck or farm tires, household trash and yard waste are not accepted.

Lots of citizen volunteers are needed to direct traffic, survey the persons disposing of waste and unload waste from vehicles. Each year the Sierra Club has provided lots of volunteers to make this event possible. Please help continue that tradition and volunteer by calling 292-9731.



“Earth provides enough to satisfy every man’s need, but not every man’s greed.”

— **Mohandas K Gandhi**

### Red Earth Group Officers

<b>Co-Chair:</b>	David Miller*	321-4140	bneasm31@telepath.com
<b>Co-Chair:</b>	Rick Poland*	360-5001	gpoland@swbell.net
<b>Secretary:</b>	Walter Kelley*	329-6059	wkelley@math.ou.edu
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<b>Programs chair:</b>	David Miller*	321-4140	bneasm31@telepath.com
<b>Legislative chair:</b>	Sandra Rose	321-7639	msrose@cox.net
<b>Political chair:</b>	Sandra Rose	321-7639	msrose@cox.net
<b>Membership chair:</b>	Suzette McDowell*	364-2617	sztlac@aol.com
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<b>Newsletter editor:</b>	Jim Long *	579-9924	jim_long@swbell.net

\* indicates Executive Committee member

*“Only in the last moment in history has the delusion arisen that people can flourish apart from the rest of the living world.”*

— **E.O. Wilson, Harvard entomologist**

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**Red Earth Group**  
**447 College**  
**Norman, OK 73069**

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