

Fresh Air



Saxion, Smith to Present February Program

The Red Earth Group of the Sierra Club will meet at 7:00 p.m. Thursday, February 24, at its state office above Harold's Outlet at 575 University Boulevard.

The meeting will begin with a social gathering from 7:00 to 7:30 p.m. Howard Saxion, Chairman of Norman's Environmental Control Advisory Board, will discuss the activities of this citizens advisory Board. Also, Keith Smith, Lobbyist for the Oklahoma Chapter of the Sierra Club, will update us on the activity of the current Oklahoma legislative session. This will be a great opportunity to become informed about issues.

The Group meets monthly at the state office. Access to the office is from the blue door to the right of the back entrance to the Outlet. It is handicapped accessible. Parking is available behind the Outlet or in the lot across the street off University Boulevard. Guests are welcome.

Americans Oppose Drilling in ANWR

Washington, DC -- A bipartisan national survey has found that by a margin of 53 percent to 35 percent, Americans oppose proposals to drill for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. The bipartisan telephone poll of 1,003 registered voters was conducted January 13-17, 2005, by Republican firm Bellwether Research and Democratic pollsters Lake, Snell, Perry and Associates for the Alaska Coalition, an alliance of national and local groups who favor protection for the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Question: Should oil drilling be allowed in America's Arctic National Wildlife Refuge?

53% Do Not Allow Oil Drilling

38% Allow Oil Drilling

The poll found a remarkable gap in intensity of feeling about drilling: 44% of respondents strongly oppose drilling, while just 25% strongly support it. Only about 10% were undecided on this issue.

"Voters believe there are some places that should simply be off-limits to oil drilling and the Arctic Refuge is one of them," said Celinda Lake of Lake, Snell, Perry and Associates, the Democratic polling firm that co-authored the bipartisan survey. "They believe we have a moral responsibility to protect this unique area, and the abundant birds and wildlife that live there, for future generations."

"One of the most striking findings from this poll is the degree to which voter opinion on the issue of drilling in the Arctic Refuge has solidified, moving from the realm of public policy issue to value," said Christine Matthews, of Bellwether Research & Consulting, the Republican polling firm that co-authored the bipartisan survey. "Only about 10 percent of Americans are undecided on this issue -- most people know where they stand when it comes to drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge."

In a finding that is particularly relevant in the current debate over the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, an overwhelming majority -- 73 percent v. 18 percent -- agreed with a statement that the issue of drilling in the Arctic Refuge is "too important to the American public and future generations to be snuck through" in the budget process, and disagreed with drilling proponents' argument in favor of allowing drilling as part of the budget. Senate Energy Committee Chairman Sen. Pete Domenici (R, NM) has announced his desire to attach a drilling proposal to the Senate budget resolution to circumvent the Senate's normal process for contentious legislation.

Question: In the next few months, Congress is likely to vote on allowing oil drilling within the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

Some Members of Congress say that drilling for oil in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge should be included as part of the budget bill because it is the best way to get it approved by

(continued on page 2)

(continued from page 1)

Congress and that the royalties generated from drilling rights would be important for our federal budget, our economy, and our future. (18 percent agree)

Other Members of Congress say that the issue of oil drilling in the Arctic Refuge is too important to the American public and future generations to be snuck through in the budget bill in an attempt to circumvent the established process. It should be discussed and brought to a vote on its own merits. (73 percent agree)

Even among those who support drilling in the Refuge, a majority opposes inserting the issue in the budget bill. Opposition to this plan is strong and consistent across age, gender, party and other demographic groups. Even among Republicans and those who voted for President Bush in 2004, a majority opposes using the budget process to open the Arctic refuge to oil drilling.

Reflecting the Arctic issue's shift from policy debate to settled value in voters' minds, opposition to drilling remains intense (58% to 33%), even when both sides of the debate are presented to voters.

Question: Which view comes closer to your own? [Statements A and B were rotated]

33% (A) Some/Other people say we should allow oil drilling in a small part of the Arctic Refuge because the oil there could replace 30 years of imports from Saudi Arabia. With ongoing instability in Iraq and the Middle East, we need to reduce our dependence on oil from that region and maximize our domestic oil resources for our country's energy needs and national security. The Arctic Refuge represents America's best chance for a major discovery.

58% (B) Other/Some people say oil drilling in the Arctic Wildlife Refuge will do little or nothing to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil. The U.S. Geological Survey says there is less oil there than the U.S. would use in 6 months and oil companies admit that none of the oil would reach the market for at least ten years. Energy experts agree that making cars more fuel-efficient is the single most effective thing the U.S. can do right now to decrease dependence on foreign oil and increase national security.

Given the choice, voters -- by a margin of more than three to one -- choose an energy policy based on greater efficiency and wasting less, and investments in clean renewable sources of energy over more drilling in the US.

Question: Which of the following do you think is the best way to reduce U.S. dependence on foreign oil?

18% Drill for more oil and gas in the U.S., including areas within wildlife refuges and other protected areas to increase our domestic energy supply.

34% Conserve more, waste less, and develop more fuel-efficient cars so we use less oil and gas.

39% Rely less on oil and gas and expand development of alternative forms of energy like wind, solar, and ethanol.

9% No opinion

"Polls consistently show that Americans want the oil companies to keep their drills out of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge," said Carl Pope, Sierra Club Executive Director. "Americans are concerned about the irreparable damage to wildlife from drilling, and they know there are places like the Arctic Refuge that are too special to sacrifice."

Outings

Brookhaven Creek Service Outings

The spring service trips at Brookhaven Creek will be in February, March and April. Meet at Morgan Park. Wear shoes or boots that do not mind getting muddy or wet. This spring we will be picking up trash and clearing brush from the creek channel. Questions or directions call John Raeside at 321-4518.

This outing needs more volunteers!

Service Outing dates are as follows:

February 26th and 27th from 12:30 to 3:30.

March 5th and 6th from 12:30 to 3:30.

April 16th and 17th from 12:30 to 3:30.

Lake Thunderbird Dayhike

Saturday, March 12th.

If you want to car pool meet at 8:30 am in the Target parking lot by the recycling center. Alternatively, meet at 9:00 am in the parking lot across the road from the Thunderbird Riding Stables. Take Highway 9 east to the Lake Thunderbird State Park sign (if you see the sign for the dam you have gone too far), turn left and you will see the riding stables. Bring something to drink and a snack for this two and one-half hour hike. Questions, call John Raeside 321-4518,

Rating-easy.

Fee-none.

This ad will run in *The Washington Post*, *Roll Call*, *The New York Times*, and *National Journal*.

We Need New Energy to Set America Free



I **Imagine an America** where we are free to light and heat our homes with safer, cleaner wind or solar power, where our children are free from the air pollution that spews from cars and power plants and the asthma and global warming it causes. Imagine a future free from threats to drill our coasts and the wild lands left to us for safekeeping, precious places like the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge.

We don't have to imagine. We know how to end our dependence on oil and coal. We can free ourselves from dangerous nuclear power and the polluting industries of the past by investing now in 21st Century solutions.

PRESIDENT BUSH AND MEMBERS OF CONGRESS: Use modern technology to set us free. Put Americans to work building wind turbines, solar panels, hybrids and other energy-saving cars and buildings. And keep our soldiers safe, at home, instead of risking their lives in the oil fields. We don't need to sacrifice Americans' lives, health or lands to meet our nation's energy needs.



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

A message from your neighbors at the Sierra Club • www.sierraclub.org

But the basic value of a sustainable society, the ecological equivalent of the Golden Rule, is simple: each generation should meet its needs without jeopardizing the prospects for future generations to meet their own needs.

-from World Commission on Environment and Development,
Our Common Future, 1987

Red Earth Group Officers

Chair:	John Raeside	321-4518	raesidej@aol.com
Vice-Chair:	David Miller*	321-4140	bneasm31@sbcglobal.net
Secretary:	Nancy Smart *		
Treasurer:	Nicolette Nicar*	366-8056	nnicar@ou.edu
Outings:	John Raeside*	321-4518	raesidej@aol.com
Program Chair:	Gloria Long	579-9924	gjmsl@swbell.net
Political Chair:	Mike Bergey*		
Membership Chair:	Dick Gunn*		
Newsletter Editor:	Jim Long *	579-9924	jim_long@swbell.net

* indicates Executive Committee member

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

**Non-Profit
Organization
U.S.Postage
Paid
Permit # 63
Norman, OK**