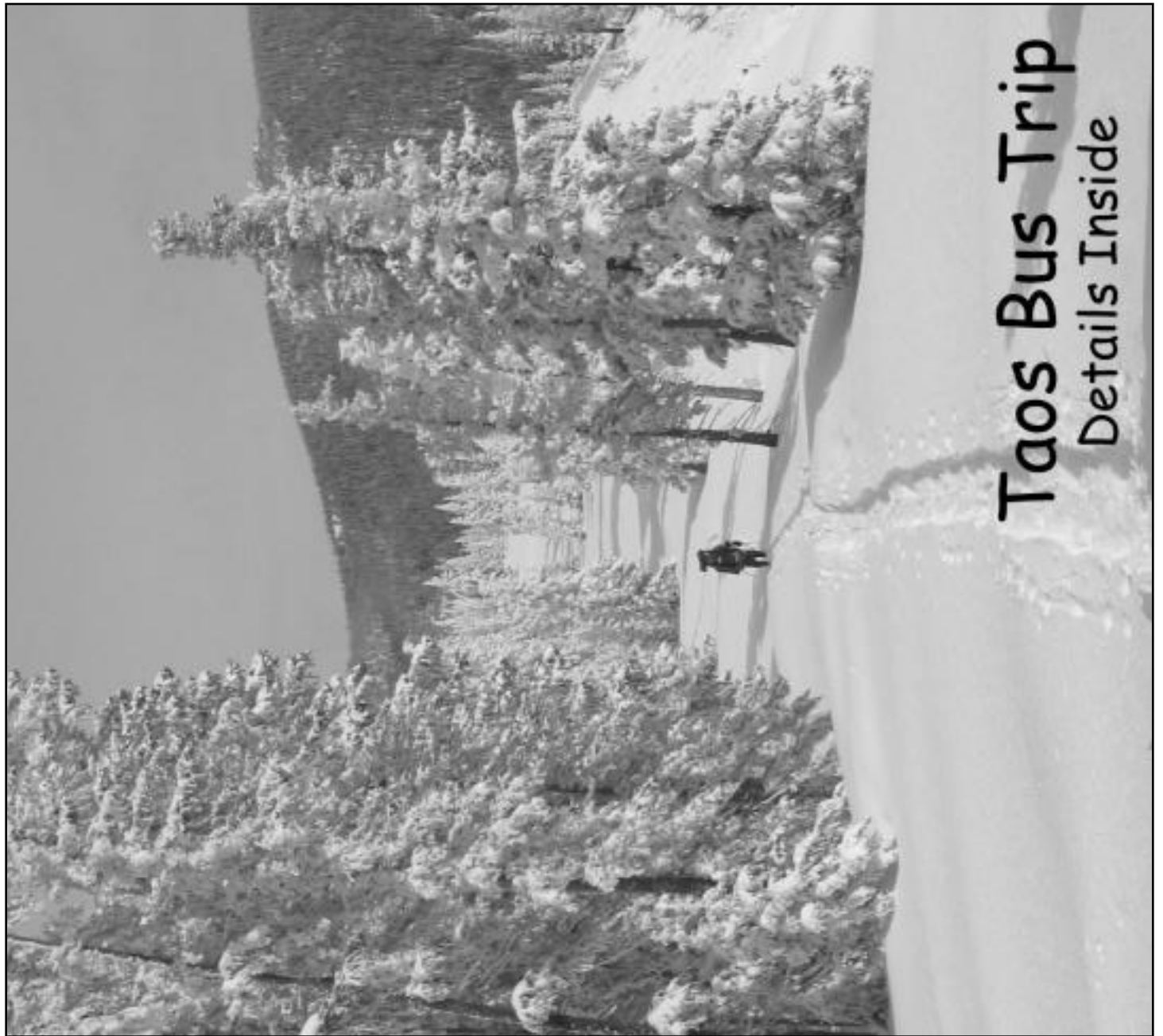




**DALLAS SIERRA CLUB  
THE COMPASS**

WWW.DALLASSIERRACLUB.ORG



**Taos Bus Trip  
Details Inside**

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## **Killing Two Birds with One Stone: *Energy Efficiency to Clean the Air and Cool the Climate***

by Ann Drumm

The science on global warming seems to raise the sense of urgency on a daily basis, yet resistance to action is powerful and persistent.

In a parallel development, science is also telling us that the current air pollution limits that North Texas is struggling to meet don't protect public health and need to be lowered even further.

The EPA regulates air pollutants like ozone but doesn't yet regulate CO<sub>2</sub>. Because the DFW area is out of compliance with federal air pollution requirements, efforts are already in place to address air pollution. Although some clean air programs focus on reducing pollutants that have no effect on climate, others promote energy efficiency as a strategy for reducing air pollution. Our Cool Cities campaign dovetails nicely with local clean air efforts because our energy efficiency message resonates with local leaders who are under federal mandate to clean up the air even if they are not yet convinced of the need to address global warming.

### **The State Light Bulb of Texas**

We know that changing light bulbs alone won't avert catastrophic global warming, but there's a large segment of the public that is still not focused on the problem and the role that their personal choices play the solution. Compact fluorescents only make up about 6% of the light bulb market in the U.S., a significantly lower share than in some other countries. So changing light bulbs is still a place for many people to start, a simple act whose collective impact is significant.

The mayors of Texas' largest cities recently launched a campaign to ask the state's residents to switch their light bulbs to the energy-saving compact fluorescent variety. At a press event in Austin they unofficially named the CFL the "State Bulb of Texas," promoted the money-saving benefits of the bulbs, and declared that they would "rather spend money on conservation than spend money on building power plants." We couldn't agree more.

### **The Biggest Bang for the Buck: Greening up the Building Codes**

Buildings account for approximately 48% of CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in the United States, according to the American Institute of Architects' Architecture 2030 initiative.

This includes the energy used to heat, cool and light buildings – much of it generated from coal and natural gas – and the embedded energy of building materials like carpet, tile, glass, and concrete.

Several factors are propelling the green building movement around the country.

One is the concern about global warming and the need for local action in the absence of federal leadership. Another is the urgent need to clean the air to avoid looming federal penalties for non-compliance with Clean Air Act requirements. A third is the need for cities to trim energy costs to fit strained city budgets.

The landmark standard for green building in the commercial sector is the LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standard administered by the U.S. Green Building Council. The first new construction that the City of Dallas built to LEED specifications is its Jack Evans Police Headquarters south of downtown. The city estimates that the efficiencies in that building are saving the city approximately \$246,000 each year on electricity costs, and council was so pleased with the result that it mandated in 2003 that all city-owned projects over 10,000 square feet would be built to that same high efficiency standard.

Last spring the city convened a Green Building Task Force to evaluate whether the residential and commercial construction sectors were ready for the city to change the building code to mandate similar high standards in private construction, and the answer came back as "yes". In October the council directed that task force to bring specific recommendations to the council on March 12, 2008.

Zaida Basora, the city staff member leading this task force, says there have been conversations among representatives of other North Texas cities about greening building codes to require greater efficiency but that she expects Dallas to be the

*Continued on Page 4*

## **Genetically Engineered Crops In the United States**

by Susan Horn, guest speaker at the January General Meeting

It is common knowledge in the food industry that genetically engineered (GE) food crops are prevalent in the U.S. food supply. Genetically modified organisms (GMO's) are another common term used for genetically modified food crops. The latest GE contamination has occurred in our long grain rice from unauthorized rice, LLRICE601, developed by German company Bayer Crop Science, and tested on U.S. farms between 1998 and 2001. In January 2006, it was discovered that U.S. rice export stocks had been contaminated. The U.S. rice exports total approximately \$1 billion dollars. Arkansas based Riceland, which sells and processes over one third of the U.S. rice supply, has confirmed that the contaminated rice was geographically dispersed and random throughout Riceland's rice growing area. This was determined through their sample testing of several storage locations. The European Union will only accept rice shipments that have been tested to be GE free. Japan previously suspended U.S. rice imports when they learned of the contamination. U.S. rice farmers in Texas, California, Arkansas, Missouri, Mississippi and Louisiana are suing Bayer. Now Bayer wants to go ahead and get

*Continued on Page 6*

## **Cars, Cattle and Chainsaw**

by Terry Jensen, Lonestar Chapter

James Lovelock, who with Lynn Margulis developed the Gaia theory, writes in his book Gaia: The Practical Science of Planetary Medicine that there are three deadly C's in the world: "Cars, Cattle, and Chainsaws."

We know that the loss of trees is a major problem for the earth. Yet, I have always considered cars to be considerably more deadly to this planet than cattle.

Surprise!

According to a report published by the United Nations Food and Agriculture Organization, the livestock sector generates more greenhouse gas emissions as measured in CO<sub>2</sub> equivalent – 18%– than transport--13.5%. Plus clearing forests to grow feed for or graze cattle is a major reason earthlings use chainsaws.

Says Henning Steinfeld, Chief of FAO's Livestock Information and Policy Branch and senior author of the report: "Livestock are one of the most significant contributors to today's most serious environmental problems. Urgent action is required to remedy the situation."

With increased prosperity, people are consuming more meat and dairy products every year. Global meat production is projected to more than double from 229 million tons in 1999/2001 to 465 million tons in 2050, while milk output is set to climb from 580 to 1043 million tons.

In the United States alone, cheese consumption is soaring. In 1970 Americans consumed 11 pounds of cheese annually per person. By 2003, we were eating 31 pounds per person, a distinct problem for our planet and for our waistlines.

The UN report warns, "The environmental costs per unit of livestock production must be cut by one half, just to avoid the level of damage worsening beyond its present level."

Cutting personal consumption of beef and dairy by one half can easily accomplish that.



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Submissions: Article and photograph submissions are always welcome. Please send submissions by the deadlines given in the General Calendar. Send submissions to the newsletter editor at the e-mail address listed on the back fold.

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## NOTES FROM THE CHAIR

### A SPECIAL THANK YOU

As my first six months as Chair come to an end, I want to express my appreciation to former chair Ann Drumm for her tireless dedication to the Dallas Group and the entire environmental community. The transition was made significantly easier and we can set higher goals because Ann's four years of personal effort created a strong core of new leaders which I have the good fortune to inherit. We all thank you and wish you the best.

### "GET IN THE BUCKET"

With these spirited words, veteran actor Lee Stetson, portraying John Muir at our November meeting, challenged a full house of Sierra Club members and guests to get out of the well, out of the poison air, and join the fight to save the wilderness. In two inspirational and entertaining performances, the spirit of John Muir reminded us that we are the protectors of our natural heritage and that we must all do our part. So what is your part? Where do your talents fit in? What contribution will you make in 2008 that will make a difference?

Frankly, I don't know all the challenges we will face, but I do know it will be exciting and you will not be disappointed when you join the dedicated members of this club at any level of participation in the future of the Dallas Sierra Club. So dear members, what can you do? Here are some ideas for New Year's Resolutions:

### RESOLUTIONS FOR THE NEW YEAR

1. Be proud of your membership in The Sierra Club. Recent events have proved our position on many many environmental issues to be absolutely correct. Don't apologize for being a "tree lover" and members of this great organization.
2. Years of environmental damage have created a nasty mess, so the plans for clean-up and restoration must start now. Be a catalyst for solutions and positive action. The public perception and reality of the Sierra Club must be as the organization with the answers, not just the complaints.
3. Fight Back America. Don't let the polluters and their allies convince you that individual action is doomed. The voice of one individual can start an avalanche of public opinion and the economic power of the American consumer is a force which can change the policies of even the biggest corporation. Whether it's saving energy, saving trees or saving our health by refusing to buy dangerous products, the time to make a stand is now.
4. "GET IN THE BUCKET." Join the spirit of John Muir and your fellow Sierra Club members. The journey will not always be easy, but together, it will be fun and meaningful. Doing the right thing is what our club is all about.

So, Happy New Year Tree-Lovers. Long Live the Wilderness.

Wendel Withrow

### Thank You

We cannot sufficiently thank our supporters whose generosity allows our volunteers to focus their time and energy on the club's conservation mission. Your gifts make up approximately half of our annual operating budget. The following list of donors reflects gifts received as of December 14, 2007. Thank you for your continued support!

#### ENVIRONMENTALIST (\$1,000+)

Ann Drumm  
Patricia Hutcheson  
George Zimmerman

#### CONSERVATIONIST (\$500- \$999)

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## JANUARY/FEBRUARY PROGRAMS

### January General Meeting - "Think Globally, But Eat Locally!"

The Sierra Club has long been an advocate of organic agriculture and gardening methods that eliminate synthetic chemical fertilizers, pesticides and herbicides from our agricultural food production processes. We have all seen the harmful effects of chemicals such as DDT and other pesticides that lead to the creation of some of our toughest environmental laws. We have also been a big proponent of buying locally produced produce in an effort to minimize the massive carbon footprint associated with global food transportation.

The importance of local food sources continues to be come more visible as contaminated foods continue to be recalled globally. It becomes of even greater importance when ongoing research on genetically modified food crops and organisms are showing serious health hazards in test animals (such as lung disease from mice eating genetically engineered peas, rats getting liver cancer from eating genetically engineered potatoes, etc.).

So to further educate our group on some of the MANY benefits of locally produced, organic produce and livestock, we have the following people from the Texas Organic Farmers and Gardeners Association (TOFGA) coming to our January meeting:

**Robert Hutchins:** Robert and his family own Rehoboth Ranch northeast of Dallas. They raise their livestock and poultry in open pastures or using 'chicken tractors that are moveable pens along fields. 'Free range' is the term used for this sustainable system and how livestock and poultry were intended to grow. They also participate in multiple farmers markets, including Dallas and Coppell markets. Their production system works with nature and thus healthier for all life. Robert is the Community Leader for TOFGA in his county. [www.rehobothranch.com](http://www.rehobothranch.com) is their website.

**Jackie King:** Jackie and her husband own P.O.P. Acres in Corsicana. Jackie is also a Community Leader for TOFGA and former Regional Director for TOFGA. Her Farmer and Rancher alliance in Navarro & the surrounding counties has brought local foods up to Eden's Organics in Balch Springs. She is working on networking as many producers as possible to encourage the 'know your producer' food system for the metroplex.

**Susan Horn:** Susan has been active with TOFGA for the past 4 years. She is also President of the Organic Garden Club of Fort Worth. She was raised in San Diego before it was developed, living in the country and participating in all aspects of agriculture. She was active in 4-H, and has worked with a conventional food broker for the past 12 years so she knows what is in our food supply. And she says "It ain't pretty." She also writes articles for a statewide magazine on the environment.

### February General Meeting – Photos by Dan Leffel



In February, the Dallas Sierra Club is excited to present the photographs of Dan Leffel. Dan has been an avid photographer for over 40 years, and has been pursuing photography full time since he retired 8 years ago from EDS. His passion for photography includes shooting fine art, scenic landscapes as well as commissioned portraits in his studio. Dan's photography has taken him on two 12 day rafting trips through the Grand Canyon, an 11 day rafting trip through the Alaskan wilderness, and on trips spanning North America. He frequently photographs New England, the Colorado Plateau, the four corners area, all parts of California, the Canadian

Rockies, and the Northwest. In January, 2008, Dan will be photographing Antarctica and Northern Argentina.

He has earned first place awards in the Dallas Sierra Club photography contest and the Heard Museum national contest, as well as at many Plano Photography club competitions. He is a frequent presenter to local camera clubs and organizations in the DFW area. Dan's fine art, scenic landscape prints have been on long term display in galleries in the Dallas area and Springdale, Utah. His photography is also marketed globally by the ageFotoStock company, based in Spain. Dan also won "Photographer of the Year" honors with the Plano Photography Club for the last two years.

## Renewable Energy and Green Home Programs

The Mid-Suburban Sierra Club, a satellite group of the Dallas and Fort Worth Sierra Clubs, will meet on the 4th Tuesday of each month at Healthy Approach Market in Colleyville, beginning in January of 2008.

Tuesday, January 22, Jim Duncan will present a program on The Updated Scoop on Solar and Wind Power for 2008. Jim Duncan is the founder and president of North Texas Renewable Energy Inc, a Fort Worth Based solar PV installation company. He started his first PV business, Solar Source, in Fort Worth in 1994. Over the years he has grown that company into the premier solar PV design and installation company in North Texas.

With the steady growth of utility electric rates in Texas, renewable energy alternatives are looking more promising every day. Solar and wind energy installations are growing at a furious rate

in Europe, Asia and most of the rest of the world. Why does the US lag so far behind in acceptance of this fully mature technology? Find out the latest information and dis-information about solar and wind power.

Tuesday, February 26, Jim Sargent will present a program on Green Building and Remodeling for an Energy-Efficient Home. Earth-friendly building does not have to be mysterious or expensive. Jim Sargent unravels the web of green building and makes it easy to understand the measures needed to lower home utility bills and power usage through energy-efficient building or remodeling.

AndersonSargent, recognized as a leader in green building in Texas and beyond, builds or remodels homes in the Dallas-Fort Worth area for energy-efficiency. In December, CATEE (Clean Air through Energy Efficiency) chose this firm

as the leading construction company for the enhancement of air quality in Texas.

Meet in the community room of Healthy Approach Market (see directions below) from 7 pm until approximately 8:15, followed by optional drink and/or food at Rio Mambo's across the parking lot.

Directions: Healthy Approach Market, 817-399-9100, 5100 State Hwy 121, Colleyville, 76034 is located on the west side of the freeway between Hall-Johnson and Glade Roads. Exit Hall-Johnson and go south on the Hwy 121 access road. Turn right into the Healthy Approach parking lot immediately after passing the restaurants Rio Mambo and Mac's

For further information, contact Terry Jensen at 972-251-1532 or 817-545-0140.



JAN 12-13 (SAT-SUN) BEGINNER CAR CAMPING AT LAKE MINERAL WELLS STATE PARK We will take some walks around both the lake and rock areas in this very special State Park. Saturday evening we will cook dinner on a shared grill. Sunday morning walk the Nature Trails and local park trails. Lunch in Weatherford on Sunday where we will end. The park is West of Fort Worth approximately within 2 hours of the Dallas Metroplex. If there is interest we will rent a screened in shelter and put up tarps rather than tent camp. This is a beginning car camping trip where we will discuss car camping, equipment, conservation and other related topics. This should be a very interesting time to visit this park with the trees getting ready to produce their spring leaves with cool nights. Leader: Robert Gates 972-678-1221(H) or gates.rr@verizon.net

FEB 7-11 (THU-MON) 2008 ANNUAL TAOS BUS TRIP Join us on this very popular bus trip to enjoy the scenic beauty and winter magic of northern New Mexico. This trip offers a variety of activities including skiing, daily snowshoeing while staying in the lodge in Taos, snowshoeing while staying in the cozy yurt or winter camping. This outing is a great opportunity for people just beginning to experience the wonder of nature in the winter and those wanting to expand their winter hiking skills. Our convenient sleeper bus will leave Dallas late afternoon of Feb. 7 and return early morning of Feb. 11. Visit [www.dallassierraclub.org/outings](http://www.dallassierraclub.org/outings) for complete trip details. Bus trip leader: Liz Wheelan 214-368-2306(H) or Liz@dallassierraclub.org

FEB 16 (SAT) BEGINNER BACKPACKING CLASS. Aimed at beginners, this class is an ideal way to learn about backpacking. Topics include: wilderness ethics, outdoor clothing, boots, backpacks, tents, sleeping bags, cookware, food, and preparing for a trip. Instructors are experienced Dallas Sierra Club leaders. There will be time for questions and a hands-on look at outdoor gear. Lunch of backpacking food is included. You will also have the opportunity to learn about, and sign up for, several beginner backpacking trips. The fee is \$20 for Sierra Club members and \$30 for non-members (cash or check) You can sign up to be a Sierra Club member at the class. No reservations are necessary, just

## IT'S TIME TO PLAY IN THE SNOW!

### ANNUAL TAOS BUS TRIP

Depart Thursday, February 7 (6:30 PM)

Return Monday, February 11 (early AM)

This trip offers many fun ways to experience the winter charm of Taos, NM and beautiful surrounding mountains. You may enjoy alpine snowshoeing, downhill skiing, strolling Taos village, or some of each. Relax at our pleasant Taos hotel with its large rooms, hot tub and heated pool. Snowshoe and ski rental available. This trip usually sells out so sign up soon.

For complete details go to [www.dallassierraclub.org](http://www.dallassierraclub.org) and follow the links.

show up. The class will be held at REI, 4515 LBJ Freeway, Farmers Branch, TX 75244 (north side of LBJ between Midway and Welch). The class will start at 10:30 AM and end at about 5:00 PM. Coordinator: Arthur Kuehne 214-902-9260(H) or 214-608-3210(C) or arthur@dallassierraclub.org

### Young Sierrans Outings

JAN 26 (SAT) SMU EMBREY ENGINEERING BLDG TOUR & LUNCH Please join us for a tour of the LEED Gold Certified, SMU Embrey Engineering Building. The Embrey, opened in Sept 2006, is one of the very first academic buildings in this country to be designed and constructed to LEED Gold Standards (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design). The Embrey Engineering Building is a living laboratory for students and faculty as well as a showpiece for design and construction in our region. (1) Date: Saturday 1/26 - may change. (2) Time: \*TBD\* (3) Cost: Food is individual responsibility. Tour is FREE! (4) Details: You are welcome to come to one or both of these activities. All 20s/30s are welcome; you need not be a Sierra Club member to attend. Please RSVP to the Evite or email [youngsierrans@dallassierraclub.org](mailto:youngsierrans@dallassierraclub.org). We hope to see you there! Contact: Peter Wilson [youngsierrans@dallassierraclub.org](mailto:youngsierrans@dallassierraclub.org)

## HOW THE OUTING PROGRAM WORKS

Dallas Sierra Club Outings are open to members and non-members. Some trips may require special qualifications and capabilities. The leaders of Sierra Club outings are serving in a volunteer capacity and assume no responsibility above that of trip organizer. If you have a medical problem, it is your responsibility to inform the leader before the outing. Outing leaders are encouraged to participate in training and classes to increase their skills, but they are not paid professionals. They will assist you within their limitations. It is the responsibility of the participant to be aware of any personal limitations before going on an outing.

Radios and firearms are prohibited from all outings. Pets are not allowed unless specifically stated. All outings officially begin at the trail head or outing start point. Leaders cannot assign carpools, but may help coordinate ride sharing for energy conservation and to promote fellowship. All non-commercial transportation is the responsibility of the individual. Car-pooling

is SOLELY voluntary, but the costs are shared. The usual method of sharing transportation cost is for all riders in the car, including the driver, to divide the cost of transportation equally. Before leaving, be sure this or some other method is agreed upon. Reservations are necessary for outings unless otherwise noted in the outing description. To participate in an outing, contact the leader. The leader will decide if the trip you are interested in is suitable for you based on your capabilities and the demands of the trip. There is usually a limit to the number of people allowed on a given outing. If you must cancel, inform the leader as soon as possible so that someone else can go in your place. Please respect the wishes of your leader who has volunteered his / her free time to allow you to go on the trip of your choice. If you have any questions, or if you are interested in becoming a leader, contact either the Outings Chair or the appropriate Outings Committee Coordinator listed on the newsletter back page.

*Notice: to receive the outings list monthly via email, visit [www.dallassierraclub.org/subscribe](http://www.dallassierraclub.org/subscribe)*

### Killing Two Birds - Continued from Page 1

first to actually adopt a green code for commercial construction. She hopes other cities in the region will follow suit. She says over 120 projects in the DFW area are now seeking LEED certification and 22 of them are City of Dallas projects.

### Need a Cleaner Car or Truck? Texas Wants to Help

Not all clean air efforts have the effect of reducing CO2, but they are important steps in protecting public health. In this year's session, the Legislature authorized financial incentives for replacement of the dirtiest vehicles in areas that are under federal mandate to clean their air. Since DFW is one of those areas, you might qualify for some of that money.

If you have a car that has failed an emissions inspection, or if it has passed the emissions inspection but is at least 10 years old, you may be eligible for a grant from the state to help you replace it with a newer, cleaner car. You can read the details at [www.DriveACleanMachine.org](http://www.DriveACleanMachine.org). Eligibility is subject to income limits – for example, a family of 4

with income up to \$61,950 qualifies. If you and your car qualify, you can get a \$3,000 grant toward the purchase of a new or late-model car or truck (\$3,500 for a hybrid). Your old car will get crushed so it doesn't go back on the resale market.

As an alternative, vehicles that would pass the emissions test with a few repairs may qualify for a grant of up to \$600 toward the repair bill.

### Turn In the Polluters

What do you do when you're out driving and the smoke from the tailpipe in front of you almost chokes you? Report it! North Texas drivers can now report smoking vehicles by dialing #SMOKE on their cell phones. You'll be asked for the car's license plate and the location where the vehicle was sighted, but you remain anonymous.

Don't feel guilty about reporting the vehicle. By making that call, you're helping the state get word of repair and replacement incentives to drivers who might not know about them. The car owner will receive a letter that notifies them that their vehicle was reported and tells them about the incentives for repair or replacement of the vehicle. They get a bet-

ter-running car, and we get cleaner air. It's a classic win-win situation.

### Dallas Cool Cities Campaign: Under New Management

Since we launched our Dallas area Cool Cities campaign in June 2006, our teams have persuaded the mayors of six cities - Carrollton, Coppell, Fairview, Plano, Richardson and Westlake - to sign the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement, making a public commitment to address global warming by making city operations more energy-efficient. We have teams working to get other North Texas cities on the bandwagon.

I am handing leadership of the Dallas area Cool Cities campaign over to a capable group of volunteers as I step into my new role as the Sierra Club's Lone Star Chapter Energy Chair, where I will be providing support to Cool Cities campaigns around the state. For announcements about upcoming Cool Cities trainings and volunteer opportunities, subscribe to the Conservation email list (go to [www.dallassierraclub.org](http://www.dallassierraclub.org) and choose the "stay informed" link).



## Staying Dry In The Wilderness - Part 1: Rain Gear

by Bill Greer

Storms are just as much a part of the wilderness as sunny weather is. Even so, staying warm and happy when the weather turns wet can be one of the most difficult parts of traveling in the wilderness. This is the first in a series of articles that I hope will help you master the fine art of staying warm and dry when the weather is anything but. This time we'll take a look at choosing and using rain gear.

Your rain gear is just about the most important equipment you will take into the wilderness with you. Getting just a little wet when the weather is cold is a sure way to get hypothermia. Strong wind is just about as sure a way to get seriously chilled. Combine the two and you will be in real trouble if your rain gear doesn't do its job. Even on a day that is just cold and windy your rain gear can be a vital part of your defense against the cold. It's the most warmth you'll find for the bulk and weight. I have worn mine more often for wind than rain. This is your first layer of defense against the elements. Good rain gear will keep the wind and rain off of you. You'll layer under it any additional insulation you need to keep warm.

Unfortunately rain gear is something that can't be rented so even if you're just starting out it's something you'll probably have to buy or borrow. If you're shopping for rain gear take any magazine reviews you see with a grain of salt. They may mean well but magazines depend on ad revenue for their existence and it's not unreasonable to think that this might affect what and how they review things. Even if it didn't the item that fits a writer just perfectly might not fit you well at all.

The first thing to talk about is the difference between "water repellant" or "water resistant" and "water proof". The first two offer some protection from mist and more protection from wind. They are not what you need in your rain gear. You need a "water proof" outer layer.

Your rain gear must be made from a durable fabric. You will often see garments made from welded PVC plastic that are very inexpensive. They are completely useless because they disintegrate at the first thorn they see. This usually happens just before it really starts pouring. Don't waste your time or risk your life with this junk. Some expensive ultra light gear isn't much better. I've seen such equipment held together by large amounts of duct tape after only a few stormy days on the trail.

There are two basic types of rain gear I'll talk about. The first is the good ol' poncho. The poncho is a baggy garment with sleeves and a long hem rather like a shirt that's long enough to reach your ankles. Some are cut roomy enough to cover your pack. It has a few advantages and several disadvantages. They are inexpensive and due to the open bottom and loose fit they ventilate well. This can keep you from sweating in a warm rain and reduces the need for expensive breathable fabrics (more on these later). One of their disadvantages is that all that fabric can be heavy and bulky. It can also snag on cactus and trees on a narrow trail. The worst disadvantage is that in the mountains where you can be exposed to wind your rain gear can turn into an out of control flapping sail that doesn't do much to protect you from wind or rain. There are some new versions that feature lots of snaps to control this to some extent. Never the less, so far they are seldom seen in the mountains and are pretty much restricted to sheltered eastern trails where trees and valleys mean the rain mostly comes straight down.

Your other choice is the by far more popular rain suit consisting of a jacket and pants. No, they don't have to match. I find I wear the jacket much more often than the pants. A good rain suit will keep you dry in amazingly bad weather. On an Arctic trip a few years ago I paddled a boat all day for several days in a row with steady rain in the low 40s. At the end of the day when I took the stuff off I was completely dry under it.

The first choice you have to make is what your rain gear will be made of. It must be some sort of fabric. Don't for a moment consider the inexpensive "welded PVC" stuff. Your choice is really what kind of coating you want on the inside of this fabric and you have two choices: breathable or impervious.

A breathable coating will allow some water vapor to pass out through the fabric. It won't be as much as uncoated fabric would allow, but you're not sealed in a plastic bag. The other choice is an impervious coating, usually urethane. The breathable coating will seem drier and more comfortable. It may require a bit more maintenance. The breathable coating will be \$25 to \$50 more expensive for a similar garment. The breathable garments tend to have more features and be more stylish which runs the cost up even more. Personally I think Gore-Tex is the best breathable coating but it's getting harder to find and it's expensive.

The features you should look for in a rain jacket are pretty much the same whether it's breathable or not. The nice things will be easier to find in a breathable jacket. First, you want an uninsulated "shell" jacket. If it's cold you can put stuff on under it. If it's warm you can wear the jacket alone. You want the jacket to be roomy so that you can add stuff when needed. I take my down parka along when I'm trying on jackets. The sleeves should be plenty long enough to cover the tops of your gloves. The back should be long enough to not cause gappiness when you bend over. Women really need to watch this since short jackets seem to be stylish. If you're buying it for hiking you want the jacket to be light in weight, but watch out for ultra light stuff that's too flimsy to depend on for a long trip. Sealed seams are required and most will have them. "Pit zips", zippers in the arm pits that help ventilate, are really nice in warmer weather. Your jacket will be worn more than the pants so if the budget is tight go for a good jacket and maybe less expensive pants.

The features you look for in rain pants are similar. You want them roomy and long enough to cover the tops of your boots. Watch for "low rise" pants. Put your jacket and pants on and bend over. Now imagine someone pouring slush onto the small of your back. Is your butt going to stay dry? It doesn't take much freezing rain down there to give you a real thrill. Be sure you can put your rain pants on without taking your boots off. "Side zip" pants that have full length zippers are nice but practice putting them together. I usually leave the waist band assembled to avoid having to figure the things out in a sudden downpour. Breathable fabric is less important for pants than jacket but still nice.

Rain gear will come with a water repellant coating on the outside in addition to the membrane on the inside. This should make any rain bead up instead of wetting out the fabric. For breathable fabrics it's very important to keep this coating in good shape. If the fabric becomes coated with a film of water it will no longer be able to breath. Your expensive breathable jacket just became impervious. You can find various spray on or wash-in potions to renew the coating. I prefer the spray on type. If you think your rain gear is leaking it could just be condensation caused by repellant coating that needs to be renewed.

It's important to stay cool if you want to stay dry. You can get just as wet from sweat as you can from rain and the rain smells better. Open as many zippers as you need to. If it's a warm, light rain consider just getting wet and changing in to dry stuff when you're through hiking. If you have a 75 degree mist falling, you're carrying a heavy pack up a hill, and you put on rain gear you'll probably get wetter from sweat than you would from the rain. Heavy rain is usually pretty cold.

If you wear glasses rain with little or no wind will make them fog up. Get one of the various potions ski shops sell to prevent this. Hiking blind can get you in real trouble.

I hope this helps you choose and use rain gear that suits your needs. I would have to confess that I much prefer a sunny day to a rainy one. But if you're going to travel in the wilderness you have to be ready for the rain.



## GE Crops - Continued from Page 1

this rice approved, perhaps in an attempt to head off this lawsuit by having the GE crop "approved" by the USDA. We must speak to our legislators and the USDA immediately on this issue.

Are GMO's limited to our food supply? Nope, GE Bentgrass is migrating to the Crooked River National Grassland area northeast of Eugene Oregon. The Union of Concerned Scientists sent in comments to the USDA in 2004 on the Commercialization of GE Bentgrass and UCS had great concern about this proposal. Bentgrass is a perennial with at least a dozen close relatives that are susceptible to cross-pollination. Who knows what will result or even where it is now? Birds do eat seeds and fly to other areas to 'relieve' themselves. This adds another way that the spread of these GE/GMO crops and grasses are occurring. Oregon grows 70% of the commercial grass seed supply, and the prevalence of these GE/GMO cultivars may end up contaminating all of it.

Kirk Azevedo, who has an undergraduate degree in biochemistry, resigned from his position as a sales facilitator in California and Arizona for Genetically Modified cotton, and has gone public with his concerns. A process utilized for genetic engineering of certain plants uses a gun-like apparatus to bombard plant tissue with genes. This process may cause unpredictable mutations in DNA resulting in new types of proteins known as prions. These kinds of proteins can have toxic and allergic affects. To Mr. Azevedo's great dismay, the GE cotton, from test plots run by his former employer, were being fed to cattle, entering the food chain! And this was in 1997! In April of 2006, more than 70 Indian shepherds lost 25% of their herds within 5 to 7 days of their animals eating the GE cotton. Mad cow disease is associated with prions, and prion related diseases in humans can appear anywhere from 10 to 30 years after ingestion.

Both the GE rice and cotton strains mentioned above, now in our food supply chain, are genetically engineered to be glyphosate resistant. Glyphosate is a chemical herbicide found in many common weed control products. Glyphosate reduces the activity of nitrogen-fixing bacteria in soils. These bacteria transform nitrogen, an essential plant nutrient, into a form that plants can use. Glyphosate reduces the growth of mycorrhizal fungi, a beneficial fungi, that help plants absorb water and nutrients. Again, it inhibits beneficial soil bacteria and fungi, especially those that fix nitrogen. Glyphosate also in-

creases the susceptibility of plants to diseases, including Rhizoctonia root rot, take-all disease, and anthracnose. This chemical herbicide is applied by helicopter with 41 to 82% of this toxin drifting away from where it had been intended to be placed. Broad leaf plants are becoming resistant to this toxin so an additional highly toxic chemical atrazine is now also being sprayed on GE maize-corn crops. Pesticide Action Network is an excellent source of information and has an excellent article at <http://www.panna.org/resources/pestis/PESTIS.1996.129.html>. Another website with great information is [http://www.mercola.com/2003/jul/2/gm\\_crops.htm](http://www.mercola.com/2003/jul/2/gm_crops.htm).

Broad-spectrum herbicides are highly toxic to humans and other species, including glufosinate ammonium and glyphosate. Both chemical herbicides are used with GE crops and currently account for 75 percent of all GMO crops globally. Both are systemic metabolic poisons with the following health issues confirmed in studies.

Glufosinate ammonium is linked to neurological, respiratory, gastrointestinal and hematological i.e. blood-related toxicities, and birth defects in humans and mammals. It is toxic to many beneficial insects including butterflies, to clam and oyster larvae, Daphnia and some freshwater fish, in particular the rainbow trout. In the U.K., glyphosate is the most frequent cause of toxicity related complaints and poisoning. Disturbances of many body functions have been reported after exposures at normal use levels. Glyphosate exposure nearly doubled the risk of late spontaneous abortion, and children born to glyphosate users had elevated neurobehavioral defects. Glyphosate caused retarded fetal skeleton development in laboratory rats. Glyphosate is genotoxic in mammals, (humans fall in this category), fish and frogs. Field dose exposure to earthworms caused at least a 50 percent mortality rate and significant intestinal damage among surviving worms. Glyphosate caused cell division dysfunction that may be linked to human cancers.

The negative biological impacts of glufosinate ammonium and glyphosate are serious and this product is put on food crops? READ LABELS ON ALL PRODUCTS to ensure that you know what you are using on your crops and yards. Did you know that 61% of all corn and 80% of the soy crops planted in the U.S. in 2006 were GE/GMO crops? This is yet another reason to compost, and buy/use only organic products from known reliable suppliers and/or to grow our own food.

Does it make sense to create a food plant, or any plant for that matter, more resistant to the effects of a toxic chemical that

carries grave health risks, and risks the viability/fertility of soil, plant and animal life? Let us continue insisting that our food labels accurately reflect if GE/GMO ingredients are contained in products.

The Center for Food Safety is actively seeking a moratorium (halt) to GE crops with their website being <http://www.centerforfoodsafety.org/> and The Center for Food Safety located at 660 Pennsylvania Ave, SE, #302, Washington DC 20003, P: (202)547-9359 F: (202)547-9429 email at [office@centerforfoodsafety.org](mailto:office@centerforfoodsafety.org). A Federal Judge in Honolulu Hawaii ruled that the USDA violated the Endangered Species Act (ESA) and 'acted in utter disregard' of the ESA in allowing the cultivation of drug-producing GE crops throughout Hawaii. And the USDA was also ruled in violation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) through their failure to conduct preliminary investigations prior to their approval of these GE plantings.

Genetically Modified or Genetically Engineered foods have shown grave negative impacts on our natural life cycles. Why create plants to be more resistant to chemical toxins - many of which are known cancer causing agents - that kill off the natural ecosystem and pollute the waterways creating algae blooms that kill needed food habitats? Initial research shows that human gut bacteria can take up DNA from GE foods; GM peas caused lung damage in mice and GM potatoes may cause cancer in rats. There is a 75% chance that if you pick up a conventional food in a supermarket that you are getting genetically engineered ingredients in that food. And since restaurants purchase foods from the conventional suppliers, GM foods are invading our bodies there too. Additionally, using genetic engineering on food plants to create 'pharma' or 'industria' crops that most likely will cross pollinate with food crops is extremely risky. In order to retain our food supply's integrity, GE/GMO crops open field production must be stopped completely to prevent contamination. To use treaties or financial loan conditions to force the planting of GE crops is unacceptable. Watch The Future of Food on [www.mercola.com](http://www.mercola.com) - it's a must to learn what is happening to our food supply.

Let us join others in preventing the complete contamination of our food supply by GE/GMO's crops. The efforts we make are well worth it for ours and future generations. We can and are making a difference by our actions and economic (buying) choices. Let's do it for LIFE.

# CALENDAR

[WWW.DALLASSIERRACLUB.ORG](http://WWW.DALLASSIERRACLUB.ORG)



**1/3 • 2/6 First Wednesday. The Executive Committee (or Excom - the elected governing body of the Dallas Sierra Club) and other Club leaders meet to discuss Club business and plan for the future. See [www.dallassierraclub.org/calendar](http://www.dallassierraclub.org/calendar) for details, or contact the Group Chair.**

**2/11 Monday before General Meeting. Deadline for submitting material for The Compass. Send to [editor@dallassierraclub.org](mailto:editor@dallassierraclub.org).**

**1/8 • 2/12 Second Tuesday. Sierra Club General Meeting 7:00 – 8:30 PM. Come to the Center for Spiritual Living located at International Place Business Center, 4801 Spring Valley Rd., Suite 115. Check [www.dallassierraclub.org](http://www.dallassierraclub.org) for directions. Come at 6:00 PM for pizza and socializing and to pick up activity materials.**

**1/16 • 2/20 Third Wednesday. Outings Committee meeting at 7:00 PM at REI (Mapsco 14Q). Discuss schedules and issues. All outings leaders, future outings leaders, and interested Sierrans are welcome.**

**1/22 • 2/16 Fourth Tuesday. Inner City Outings Committee meeting at 7:00 PM at REI (Mapsco 14Q). All outings leaders, future outings leaders, and interested Sierrans are welcome.**

**2/27 Fourth Wednesday every other month. Newsletter Mailing Party at 7:00 PM at the Churchill Recreation Center at Hillcrest and Churchill Way (Mapsco 15V). Help sort, bundle and label the newsletter. Just show up.**



The Dallas Sierra Club's general meeting is held the second Tuesday of each month at 7:00 p.m. Meetings are open to all interested persons. The meetings are held at The Center for Spiritual Living located at International Place Business Center, 4801 Spring Valley Rd., Suite 115.

Check [www.dallassierraclub.org](http://www.dallassierraclub.org) for directions. (Mapsco 14L)



## Inner City Outings News

by Liz Wheelan, Dallas ICO

Dear ICO,  
 thank you for taking us to hike and to look at the lake and all the other places we went to look at. And thank you for the snacks. I wish I could go again.

Sincerely,  
 Kenia Vilchis  
 (4th grader, Sam Houston Elementary School)



A simple note, but it says and means so much. It was written by an ICO participant after an outing to Cedar Ridge Preserve this fall. The preserve is only a few miles from Dallas but thanks to ICO she was able to explore its woods for the first time. Before we leave 2007 too far behind I wanted to let you enjoy a look back at an amazing year for our outreach program and say a huge thanks to everyone who made it possible.

### Our outings included:

- Over 140 disadvantaged kids from grades 4 – 9
- kids from Cummings Recreation Center (Jimmy Miller, Coordinator)
- kids from Pegasus Charter School (Teachers Jennifer Hoag, Michael Hooten, Noel Navarrete and Ben Frey, Coordinators)
- kids from Sam Houston Elementary School, new to ICO this fall (Lynn Brink and Catherine Wallace, Coordinators)
- day hikes/env'l education outings to Cedar Ridge Preserve, Cedar Hill State Park, Fort Worth Nature Center, Lewisville Lake Environmental Education Area ("LLELA") and Texas Freshwater Fisheries (Tx. Dept. of Parks & Wildlife facility)
- camping at Tyler State Park
- kayaking at LLELA
- teaching outdoor camping skills
- conservation service project (native flower rescue/replanting) at LLELA

### Our volunteers:

Like every great effort, ICO truly does take a village, so heartfelt thanks to all the dedicated, hard working and most wonderful volunteers who coordinated and supported these outings. They include Greg Andress, Giri Akkaraju, Kayci Barnett, Kyle Cotton (new Certified Leader – way to go, Kyle!), Jim Cunliffe, Dale Edelbaum, Lisa Gewax, Cheryl Lehmborg, Bobbie Liu, Dean Liu, David McCalib (Certified Leader and Treasurer), Lorin McGuire, Justin Meyer, Anna Miller, Katharine Reeves, Glenn Squire, Caroline Vornberg, and Teresa Wilkin.

### Our supporters:

In addition to the support of the club and its members, we are truly grateful for the tremendous help from:

- KayakPower.com for kayak equipment and volunteers, Mike Swope, Coordinator
- LLELA staff for service project opportunity and guidance
- REI (Dallas store) for grant nomination, PEAK program presentation (teaching Leave No Trace), meeting room, holiday donation project, equipment advice... so much!
- REI (national) for Recreation Grant award
- Sam Houston Elementary, 3rd grade for choosing Dallas ICO as recipient of school's Common Cents donation
- Starbuck's Make Your Mark grant program, Violette Barrett, event partner

Now, time to look forward to a great 2008 and ICO kids getting more chances to "explore, enjoy, and protect" our natural world!

To find out more about becoming involved in Dallas ICO, go to [www.dallasieraclub.org](http://www.dallasieraclub.org) and sign up for ICO list serve (bottom of home page.) Our next meeting is January 22nd.



## Don't Get Left Out In the Cold...

## Join Us!

**Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag**

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Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible, they support our effective citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.



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