Sierra Club Gets Party Status in Six TXU Coal Permit Battles

By Rita Beving

The Sierra Club achieved party status in contested case hearings on six TXU permit applications to build and operate coal-fired power plants in Central and Northeast Texas in early December.

The six locations include Monticello (Titus Co.), Martin Lake (Rusk Co.), Valley (Fannin Co.), Lake Creek and Tradinghouse (both McLennan Co.).

"Texans from all walks of life showed up to contest these permits because they know that TXU is proposing to use old-style, dirty coal technology. They know that the proposed emissions could damage their health and ruin the environment in their communities. The stakes are very high," said attorney Ilan Levin with Environmental Integrity Project, who represents the Sierra Club.

Broadening Opposition to Coal Plants

Sierra Club members at all six hearings participated in a broad-based and bi-partisan movement of individuals, city and county governments, and environmental groups citing personal and family health, quality of life, and business concerns as reasons for standing in opposition to the plants.

"We don't need these coal plants. There are safer, cleaner, and less costly energy solutions available. Our first priority should be taking advantage of energy efficiency measures that will decrease our energy demands," said Rita Beving, Dallas Sierra Club's Conservation Co-chair. "It's also time to make the transition to clean energy solutions, such as wind and solar power, which will boost the Texas economy as well as protect the environment."

Beving represented the Sierra Club at the hearing in Bonham, Fannin County, northeast of Dallas where more than 40 people requested to become individual parties in the battle over the permit sought by TXU for its Valley plant.

Other groups which also gained standing in Bonham were Environmental Defense and a newly-formed group called Citizens Organizing for Resources and Energy (CORE), an organization formed specifically to fight the proposed coal plants.

Residents and business owners near all the new proposed coal plants, and individuals with respiratory problems who had moved from large cities to escape air pollution problems, spoke of needing to relocate or risk their health, or even their lives, if the plants were built. Real estate developers were concerned they would not be able to sell their properties because of the pollution that would be emitted by the proposed plants. Ranchers and farmers were concerned about damage to livestock and crops.

"As a rancher, you're concerned with costs. Because of the acid from these coal plant emissions, I already have to buy and add limestone to my soil so the bermuda grass will grow to feed my cattle," said Glenn Brinkman. Brinkman, who lives and works with heart disease, cited health concerns as his other key reason for getting standing in the fight against the TXU application for a new coal-fired unit at its Big Brown plant. His objection to coal plant pollution reflects a growing concern among people living in rural areas with existing coal plants.

"How can we afford to add a third unit, when the two that are there are killing us?" said Brinkman.

"Many of the comments we heard from citizens in Bonham expressed real fears for their children and way of life," commented Beving. "I won't forget several mothers who testified about their children with autism -- whose children's health had improved now that they had moved from a polluted area to what they perceived was a clean rural one. These mothers now fear the impacts a polluting power plant - that would emit at least 160 pounds of mercury - would have on their children, as mercury has been directly linked with autism. They are simply terrified."

Local Governments and a Chamber of Commerce Oppose Permits

In McLennan County, four coal-burners are planned where there are currently no coal plants. The county, the City of Waco, the City of Salinasberg, and, in a surprise move, the Waco Chamber of Commerce, rejected a typical pattern of local government and business support for coal by requesting standing in the TXU Lake Creek and Tradinghouse plant hearings.

The Chamber of Commerce argued that there is no pollution monitor to analyze Waco-area air quality and that TXU has provided no modeling to determine whether or not the permits' allowable emissions would place the region in violation of federal air quality standards for human health.

County Judge Jim Lewis (Republican) who requested standing on behalf of McLennan County residents and Texas State Representative Doc Anderson (Republican) who requested standing on behalf of his 140,000 constituents, were denied standing based on having other official venues for recourse.

Important Hearing for Mayors and Cities Participation

Consideration of the McLennan County and City of Waco bids for standing was postponed to an additional preliminary hearing scheduled for December 14 in Austin (after this newsletter deadline).

During this hearing, State Office of Administrative Hearings Judge Kerry Sullivan and Judge Henry Card were to consider the request by local governments, coordinated by the Coalition of Cities begun by Dallas Mayor Laura Miller, for standing in the six hearings.

Included in the issues to be addressed on December 14 is whether the Governor's Executive Order applies to the contested case. "And if so, whether it should be followed," said State Office of Administration Judge Henry Card.

In addition to obtaining party status in the six tightly-scheduled hearings, Sierra Club filed a motion with the Texas Commission on Environmental Quality (TCEQ) objecting to the fast-tracking of the coal plant cases, a result of Governor Perry's Executive Order expediting the permitting process. Hearings scheduled simultaneously in Mount Pleasant and Henderson prohibited participation in the process by persons living in areas between the plants proposed at TXU's Monticello and Martin Lake. People in those areas would be affected by emissions from both plants but could not attend hearings happening at the same time. Fast-tracking has also resulted in a six-month contested case timeline in contrast to the year and a half more that a case would usually take.

Funds Needed for the Fight

The Lone Star Chapter needs funds to fight these six contested case hearings and also has a secondary legislative agenda to fight the coal plants in the upcoming session. Donations to help this fight can be sent to: Lone Star Chapter, Sierra Club, PO Box 1931, Austin, Texas 78767.

Take Action

To find out more and to take action, please visit www.StopTheCoalPlant.org.
Letter from the Chair

FUN WITH LEAKS

Part 2

In my last letter (Nov/Dec ’06) I described the home energy audit that was being conducted on my house. We now have the results and a decision.

My house is leakier than I realized. We have already done some good things, like replacing the original windows, buying a new front-loader washing machine, and using compact fluorescent bulbs. But there's a still lot of room for improvement.

My auditors presented me with a binder that had lots of information and three main recommendations: add more insulation and make sure all insulation is correctly installed; fix leaky ductwork; and replace my old air conditioning and heating equipment with new high-efficiency equipment.

Each recommendation came with its own cost/benefit analysis, and there was a cost/benefit analysis of all three recommendations together. They estimate that if all three items are done, I will realize a 38% reduction in my utility bills. The payback period, or the time it takes me to recoup the investment in energy savings, is estimated as 11 years for the total package. The payback calculation assumed a 10% per annum increase in energy costs.

The insulation and ductwork together are expected to provide about half of the total savings, with the equipment providing the other half.

There were some things they didn't recommend. I have lots of ceiling can lights that account for about 10% of my air leakage. But the payback period for replacing those would be 25 years, which makes replacement uneconomic. Similarly, there was not expected to be enough benefit to warrant a reflective coating on the underside of my roof.

The decision is primarily economic, but other factors enter into the analysis. The better equipment should help control humidity and make the house more comfortable. The two-speed blower should alleviate the "blast furnace in the face" feeling that makes me run to turn off the heater and leaves my family complaining that the house is too cold.

We thought the decision to install more insulation and repair the ductwork was a no-brainer. We got up in the attic and saw the areas that completely lack insulation or where insulation has been installed improperly. And it stands to reason that leaks in the ductwork should be repaired because we don't want to pay to air-condition and heat the attic.

The equipment was a harder decision, primarily because of the cost and the fact that our existing equipment is still working. But our equipment is over 10 years old and has a SEER (Seasonal Energy Efficiency Rating) of 10. The minimum that's legal to sell now is 13. Our new equipment will be in the 15 range. That's a 50% increase in efficiency over what we have.

In the end, the factors that weighed toward a decision to do the work were our desire to reduce electricity bills; our expectation of owning the house for most, if not all, of the payback period; and my desire to "walk the talk" of home energy efficiency.

This illustrates the untapped potential of energy efficiency. If we hadn't already replaced our windows and light bulbs, the analysis would have offered an even greater reduction in energy usage. If we could achieve this kind of reduction in demand system-wide, there wouldn't be any debate at all about whether we need new coal-fired power plants.

But the problem is private vs. public dollars. I'm spending private money to increase my energy efficiency. For many people this is simply not an option, and there isn't much public money available to help them. The utilities have private dollars to build power plants to serve a demand that's inflated by inefficiency. What if we could find a way to channel all of that investment into efficiency in a way that's a win/win for the public and for the utilities?

Our kids' future depends on our ability to "think out of the box" on this one.

Ann Drumm
Dallas Sierra Club Chair
Cool Cities Success

By Pryor Lawson

Richardson Mayor Gary Slagel (seated center) signs the U.S. Conference of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement as Richardson residents and members of the Dallas Group of the Sierra Club witness. Standing from left: Ann Drumm, Chair of the Dallas Group of the Sierra Club; Richardson Director of Health Tom Hatfield; Mike Rawlins, Co-Chair of the Conservation Committee of the Dallas Group of the Sierra Club; Andrew Laska; Kathryn Anderle; Van Niemela and Jennifer Laska.

The Cool Cities Campaign achieved its first local success when Richardson Mayor Gary Slagel recently signed the U.S. Council of Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. The Richardson City Council endorsed the agreement in a resolution adopted at its November 13 meeting. Richardson is now a Cool City, joining the ranks of American cities committed to stop global warming (check out www.coolcities.us for more information).

It didn’t “just happen”. Kudos to the Sierra Club team that put this victory together: Kathryn Anderle, who contacted Mayor Slagel’s office and arranged a meeting with the Mayor and the team; Jennifer Laska, who researched Richardson’s current environmental status; Andrew Laska, who presented a very effective PowerPoint presentation; and Mike Rawlins, Nancy Crowe, Bob Fusinato, and Van Niemela, Sierrans and Richardson residents all, who attended the meeting with the Mayor and let him know that his constituents cared about their city’s role in combating climate disruption.

That’s a condensed version of a case study in executing a perfect campaign. And it’s only the beginning; teams are in varying stages of preparation for future presentations in Addison, Bedford, Carrollton, Coppell, Flower Mound, Garland, Grapevine, Irving, Lewisville, and Plano. Additionally, says Ann Drumm, “We will be targeting other cities in the spring and will continue to hold trainings and recruit volunteers to be on these teams.” Mike Rawlins, Co-Chair of the Conservation Committee adds, “Signing the Mayor’s Agreement isn’t the end of the story in Richardson. This gives us an opportunity to establish what could be a very productive working relationship in pursuit of initiatives such as transit oriented development and smart growth. Strengthening ties with local governments is one of the significant benefits of the Club’s Cool Cities campaign.”

There are three areas of work in the Cool Cities campaign, says Ann: “There’s a place for all members to volunteer, whether their interest is in public speaking, lobbying, or support work.” Even simple office tasks, like photocopying, will be much appreciated. So, whatever your level of commitment, there’s a future Cool City that needs you! For more information, subscribe to the Conservation News email list (http://texas.sierraclub.org/dallas/listservsignup.asp), or simply contact Ann at 214-350-6108 or ann@dallassierraclub.org.
JAN 7 (SUN) SUSTAINABLE SUNDAY LUNCH Thai plant-based buffet at Thai Jasmine, 3104 Harwood at Hwy 121, SW corner, Bedford. This all-you-can-eat buffet is served from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm. $8 for adults, $4 for children. Separate Sierra Singles table.
Leader: Terry Jensen 972-988-8867 ext 3101(W) or ss@dfwmemail.com

FEB 2 (FRI) DEADLINE for submission of outings to be listed in the February Outings List and March newsletter.
Contact: David Van Winkle 972-562-7174(H) or davidw@dallasierrasiclub.org

FEB 4 (SUN) SUSTAINABLE SUNDAY LUNCH Thai plant-based buffet at Thai Jasmine, 817 283-8228, 3104 Harwood at Hwy 121, SW corner, Bedford. This all-you-can-eat buffet is served from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm, $8 for adults, $4 for children. Separate Sierra Singles table.
Leader: Terry Jensen 972-988-8867 ext 3101(W) or ss@dfwmemail.com

FEB 8-12 (TU-THU-MON) ANNUAL TAOS BUS TRIP. Various trips include skiing, daytime snowshoeing while staying in the lodge in Taos, an evening snowshoeing while staying in the near yurt, or winter camping. These trips are a great opportunity for people just beginning to experience the wonderful beauty of winter or for individuals wanting to expand their winter camping skills. Our convenient closer bus will leave Dallas late afternoon of February 8 and return early morning of February 12. Visit www.dallasierrasiclub.org for complete details.
Coordinator: Liz Wheelan 214-368-2306(H) or liz@dallasierrasiclub.org

FEB 17 (SAT) BEGINNING 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, cooking food, and preparing dinner. Instructors are experienced Dallas Sierra Club leaders. There will be time for field 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 (地块). You can sign up to be a Sierra Club member at the class. No reservations are necessary, just show up. The class will be held at RSJ, 4515 LBW Freeway, Farmers Branch, TX 75244 (north side of LBW 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 arthur@dallasierrasiclub.org

FEB 23-25 (FRI-SUN) PADDOCK TRIP ON THE WILD NECHES RIVER. This flat water canoe/kayak trip provides an opportunity for solitude while paddling the beautiful Neches River through the heavily wooded Big Thicket National Preserve in southeast Texas. The Neches River is considered by experts to one of the top 15 flat water rivers in the lower 48. The trip starts at 9 am on Friday at highway 1013 near Splugger and ends 42 miles downstream at high water on St. Sabina. The exact section paddled could change depending on river flow.
Leader: Arthur Kuehne 214-902-9260(H) or arthur@dallasierrasiclub.org

MAR 4 (SUN) SUSTAINABLE SUNDAY LUNCH Thai plant-based buffet at Thai Jasmine, 817 283-8228, 3104 Harwood at Hwy 121, SW corner, Bedford. This all-you-can-eat buffet is served from 11:30 am to 2:00 pm, $8 for adults, $4 for children. Separate Sierra Singles table.
Leader: Terry Jensen 972-988-8867 ext 3101(W) or ss@dfwmemail.com

FEB 25-29 (FRI-SUN) MEMORIAL DAY BUS TRIP TO THE WHITE MOUNTAINS WILDERNESS. Enjoy one of five different backpacking trips to this central New Mexico location near Ruidoso. Backpack trips range from easy to strenuous. Enjoy the great views from the rim.
Contact: David Van Winkle 972-562-7174(H) or davidw@dallasierrasiclub.org

JUN 29- JUL 5 (FRI-THU) FOURTH OF JULY BUS TRIP TO SANGRE DE CRISTO MOUNTAINS IN COLORADO. This is our summer outing to the high Rockies is for backpackers to escape the heat of Dallas. There will be five trips available rated from moderate to strenuous. Many of the trips will be in the camp above 11,000 feet. Peak bagging and high country exploration of streams, lakes, and magnificent scenery are highlights.
Contact: David Van Winkle 972-562-7174(H) or davidw@dallasierrasiclub.org

NOV 21-26 (WED-MON) THANKSGIVING BUS TRIP TO BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK. Dallas Sierra Club tradition continues with the annual bus trip to Big Bend. We’ll have a day hike/backpack trip on the Chisos Mountains, a wonderful backpack on the Outer Mountain Loop, a backpack trip on the spectacular and remote Mesa de Anguilla, plus others. If you’ve never been to Big Bend National Park, you owe it to yourself to discover this unique part of Texas. If you’ve been before, come on back and explore again.
Contact: David Van Winkle 972-562-7174(H) or davidw@dallasierrasiclub.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 relating to the trip.

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 carpooling. All non-commercial transportation is the responsibility of the individual. Carpooling 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.

More Outings on Page 7
Bus Trips for 2007

We will continue our tradition of providing an easy way to get outdoors by using chartered sleeper buses to get to great wilderness locations.

Our first trip will be to Taos, New Mexico on February 8-12. We have several options to enjoy this winter wonderland. Two years ago, I went on Trip 2 that features staying in a lodge in Taos, night life of downtown Taos, and day hiking with snowshoes to Bull of the Woods meadow and to a high country lake. This was my first experience with snowshoes and it was quite easy, just keep your feet a bit farther apart than normal. Last year, I co-led trip 4 with Whitney Taylor. Trip 4 participants stay in the cozy confines of the yurt with full cooking capabilities and Whitney did an awesome job of creating unique healthy food for us last year. This year, I am going to take Trip 2 to learn how to ski, which I have not previously done at all. The Taos ski school is rated one of the best in the country and offers an excellent package for rentals, lift tickets, and lessons. Experienced skiers rate the Taos Ski Valley very highly. Maybe in 2008, I will attempt Trip 5. This trip is true winter camping and attempts to summit the highest point in New Mexico, Wheeler Peak. Last year we had four of the five participants from Trip 5 make it to the top.

The second trip of the year will go to the White Mountain Wilderness near Ruidoso, New Mexico on the Memorial Day weekend, May 25-29. Two years ago, I led Trip 1 which is an easy backpacking trip, but we went day hiking to the rim to see the amazing views of western New Mexico. Last year, I went on Trip 5 led by Kathryn Hurn. We hiked to the top of Sierra Blanca, a 12,000 foot peak within the Ski Apache area. She led yoga classes to help us unwind after the strenuous hike up the mountain. The White Mountain trip has five trips of varying difficulty, all with great views.

Over the Fourth of the July weekend, we will go to Sangre de Cristo Mountains in Colorado. We went there two years ago, but I did not get to go on that trip. So, I am looking forward to a new experience. I am told that this is true high Rocky Mountain country, with many of the campsites over 11,000 feet. I am really looking forward to it.

The last summer trip of the year will be to the Weminuche Wilderness in southern Colorado. Two years ago, I led Trip 3 which camped in the Weminuche valley. We were supposed to move to a campsite at over 12,000 feet, but it snowed on the first day and we decided not to go higher. In 2005, I led Trip 2 up the Squaw Valley. The highlights of this trip are a day hike to Squaw Lake and an ascent to the Continental Divide Trail. We also had great gourmet food on this trip that our co-leader Faith Mauk provided for us. This past year, I led Trip 4. We had eight people in our group summit the 13,822 foot Rio Grande Pyramid. This more than doubled the total number of Dallas Sierras to summit the Pyramid on a bus trip. The next day Kathryn Hurn led another five Trip 5 participants to the top of Pyramid, while Trip 4 participants were ascending to the Window. This bus trip also features a car camp at the Rio Grande Reservoir, with highlights lake trout fishing/cooking, steaks, and dayhikes.

The last bus trip of the year is the traditional trip to Big Bend National Park at Thanksgiving. This trip features many alternatives to see different types of ecology. In 2003, I went on Trip 2 which base camps one mile from the Chisos Basin Lodge. You get to hike to the South Rim, summit of Emory Peak, and have Thanksgiving dinner at the lodge on this trip. In 2004, I led a trip to the high Chisos Mountain area. The views from the South Rim from our campground in the morning and evening were awesome. I even got to experience the humor of Arthur Kuehne, who snuck into our camp and put rocks underneath my tent. The hike out of the basin through Blue Creek looks a lot like Utah/Arizona with hoodoos along the canyon. In 2005, I led a trip to the Rancherias loop in the Big Bend State Natural Area. This is quite an interesting desert experience. Last year, I went on an awesome trip led by Zeev Saggi to Mesa de Angilla. This is a really unique trip to the western part of the park, which features viewing the truly incredible Santa Elena Canyon from the rim and finding the tinajas. This year, I led Trip 5. This trip starts in the Chisos Basin, stopping to experience the South Rim views, and then continuing on to the Outer Mountain Loop in the desert. Wow, what diversity. We also sometime offer a canoe trip on the Rio Grande River.

These are truly the best wilderness experiences that you will find within one days drive from the DFW area. The chartered sleeper bus allows you to get there easily, rested, without the hassles of airports/rental cars, etc. I hope to see you on future bus trips.
OK all of you outings enthusiasts. You’ve explored the pretty meadows, the tops of the mountains, the bottom of the canyons, and the hearts of the forests. Those places are pretty cool we admit, and they all share a couple of things in common. They are well lit and they are on the surface of the planet. But have you ever considered coming over to the dark side (of the planet that is)?

In January you can join us on a spelunking adventure, both virtually and literally, with Bill Steele. Bill will take us on a pictorial adventure of some of the hundreds of caves he has explored all around the U.S. Bill has been in over 2,000 caves. He became interested in caves as a boy when his parents took him to caves while on vacation. As a Boy Scout, he got the taste of exploration when he and another Scout squeezed between rocks in a cave in Kentucky, and discovered unexplored passages. Steele was bitten by the exploration bug that day in 1963.

At age 16 he joined the National Speleological Society. He currently serves as chairman of its U.S. Exploration Committee and is a columnist for its monthly national magazine. Bill has participated in the exploration and mapping of caves in Montana, New Mexico, Arkansas, Tennessee, Indiana, Kentucky (including Mammoth Cave, the world’s longest cave), and Alabama. He was a lead explorer and mapper of the longest caves in Texas, Oklahoma, and Georgia, as well as the two deepest caves in the Western Hemisphere located in Southern Mexico. He is the author of many chapters in books about caves and caving, he wrote the caving adventure book Yochib: The River Cave, co-authored a chapter in the recently published Encyclopedia of Caves, and has a second caving book about to be published.

And if you too are smitten by the caving bug after seeing Bill’s presentation, then you might want to consider joining him in a caving outing he is planning on January 20, 2007 (This is not a Sierra Club sponsored event. See our outings list for details).

So please join us for this fascinating program that will give you an “inside” look at this beautiful planet we so love to explore.

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**When Buying Groceries:**

**TOM THUMB**

Sign up for Reward Card and designate proceeds to #3941

**KROGER**

Obtain card (available at meeting) and scan when purchasing

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**General Calendar**

1/3 • 2/7 First Wednesday.
Executive Committee meeting at 6:30 at REI (north side I-635 between Midway Road and Welch Road, Mapsco 14Q, second floor meeting room), to discuss Club projects, policy and finances. All members are welcome to attend and participate. Call Ann Drumm at 214-350-6108.

1/8 • 2/12 Monday before General Meeting. Deadline for submitting material for The Compass. Send to editors@dallassierraclub.org.

1/9 • 2/13 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 for directions. Come early to pick up activity materials and afterwards join the socializing at Pappa’s Pizza.

1/17 • 2/21 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.

1/24 • 2/28 Fourth Wednesday.
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. Contact Charlotte Forst at 972-248-7581 or just show up.
Outings Continued from page 4

Sierra Singles Outings Continued

FEB 14 (WED) SINGLES VALENTINE'S DINNER Celebrate a Green Valentine's evening at Thai Jasmine, 817 783-6228, 3104 Harwood at Hwy 121, SW corner, Bedford. Come at 6:30 to mingle over wine. We order at 7 pm.
Leader: Terry Jensen 972-988-8667 ext 3101(W) or ss@dfwemall.com

Non-Sierra Club Outings

The following are privately sponsored and administered trips. Sierra Club takes no responsibility and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of these trips. They are published as a service because they may be of interest to readers of this list.

JAN 20 (SAT) CAVING TRIP TO JESTER CAVE IN OKLAHOMA The DFW Grtol, the caving club of Dallas, invites Sierra Club members to go caving on Saturday, January 20th at Jester Cave, Southwestern Oklahoma. Jester Cave is the longest gypsum cave in the United States. It's an excellent beginner caving trip. We will mostly be walking through the cave from one entrance to another, a distance of about a mile and a half, and taking about three hours. There will some crawling, wading in water, and slipping on mud banks. We'll see interesting bats. Along the way we will pick up any litter we might encounter, which washes in from the surface, and scratch off unsightly graffiti from the walls with wire brushes. We will only be able to take 12 Sierra Club members with us. Those interested in going caving should come to the January 9 Dallas Sierra Club General Meeting where I am the speaker. I will include photos of Jester Cave, and be available to answer questions about the trip.

The logistics of the January 20 Jester Cave trip are simple. We will rendezvous in the lobby of the Quartz Mountain State Park Lodge, north of Blair, Oklahoma. The lodge is new and beautiful, and winter rates are very reasonable. There is also camping in the state park. The driving time to the state park is around five hours from Dallas.

Leader: Bill Steele speeleste10e@comcast.net

APR 27-25 MAY 4 (FR-SU) BACKPACK TRIP TO GRAND GULCH - Backpacking trip to Grand Gulch in southeastern Utah to see Ancient Puebloan ruins and rock art. Expect a 500ft climb out at the end in moderate heat. Ride in Co-op van rental or fly to Albuquerque and rent a car. Leave after work April 27 return evening May 4. We will stay one other park on the way home.

Leader: Donald Purinton 972-985-1774(W) or dpurinton1@verizon.net

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Photo by Arthur Knox

THE COMPASS JANUARY 2007