



Sierran

To Explore, Enjoy, and Protect the Planet

Atlanta's Transit Future?



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Get Out of Traffic, Get on With Your Life

By Mark Woodall

Metro Atlanta is a great place to live, work and play. Unfortunately, traffic congestion and related air pollution are taking a toll on our quality of life. We can do better. Denver, Charlotte, Salt Lake City and other metro areas across the country are charging ahead with light rail, commuter rail and other mass transit projects.

The Georgia Legislature will consider transportation funding for the third year in row when it convenes in 2010. The first step in getting out of traffic is giving MARTA the flexibility to use its own money as needed to operate. MARTA's funding comes mainly from a 1 % sales tax paid in Fulton and DeKalb Counties. The state government should not continue to limit MARTA's ability to operate with MARTA's own funds. The second step is to pass legislation allowing a vote on a regional sales tax for mass transit and other transportation needs.

You can make a difference in 2010 by contacting your state senator and your state representative. Urge them to support SB 120, the MARTA funding flexibility bill, which is currently in the

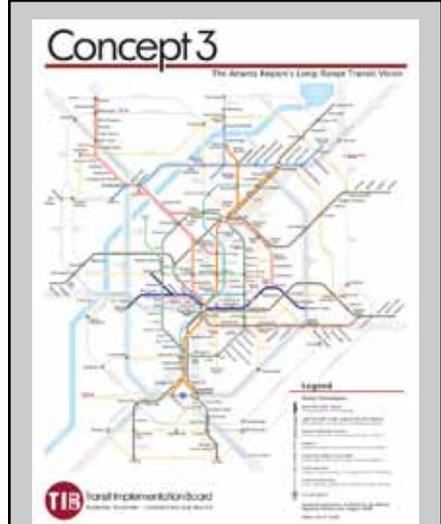


Mark Woodall

House. Ask your elected officials to support legislation allowing a regional sales tax for transit and other transportation needs.

Go to www.protectgeorgia.net to sign up for legislative alerts and updates from the Georgia Environmental Action Network. GEAN is a joint effort of many Georgia environmental groups including the Sierra Club. Go to www.gavoters.com to look over the 2009/2010 conservation briefing book as well as recent state legislative scorecards. Join the Sierra Club's RAIL campaign. Contact info at the back of this issue. You can make a difference!

ON THE COVER



Depicted on this issue's cover is a map of "Concept 3," the long-range regional transit vision developed in 2008 by the Transit Planning Board and formally adopted by several regional and statewide agencies, including the Atlanta Regional Commission, the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority, and MARTA. Despite this broad-based support, the plan remains largely unfunded due to a lack of dedicated regional or statewide funding for transit. More information on Concept 3 can be found at www.transitboard.org.

"I only went out for a walk, and finally concluded to stay out till sundown, for going out, I found, was really going in"

—John Muir, Sierra Club Founder

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Georgia Transportation Funding Crisis Worse than Ever

Will 2010 Legislature Bring Solutions?

By Neill Herring

For the past two legislative sessions, the General Assembly has tried and failed to find new ways to fund transportation improvements in the state. The need for this new funding has several different causes.

Among these are the current Great Recession which has caused a drop in economic activity that has deeply reduced the amount of revenue governments are collecting from taxes.

A second problem for Georgia is an antiquated transportation tax structure that combines an excise tax on motor fuel that is not sensitive to fuel price increases and is limited in what it can be used to fund and a sales tax on motor fuel that is divided between the state General Fund and the GA DOT.

A third problem is a current higher global cost structure for the materials used in transportation improvements; these cost rises preceded the Great Recession, but have not abated since.

A fourth factor, peculiar to the GA DOT, is the effect of a combination of quirky contract account financing laws, and Gov. Perdue's "Fast Forward" program to commit the state to a long list of rural road projects that have encountered unanticipated delays and have managed to tie up large sums in inaccessible accounts.

The fact that these problems can be analyzed is unfortunately not all that helpful in reaching remedies for them because of deep divisions among the various stakeholders in the Georgia transportation puzzle. The divisions go beyond the expected rural vs. urban, Republican vs. Democrat, business vs. labor and environment, or public vs. private disagreements. Much of the contention can be traced to historic roots; in which the solutions to yesterday's problems have become today's dilemmas.

New transportation funding and MARTA, the two largest transportation issues before the 2010 General Assembly, both have their causes in the lists cited above. They don't share all of those problems, but there are close relationships between them. It will make for simpler explanation of the politics of transportation in the 2010 Session to discuss the two matters separately.

New funding for transportation improvements

The debate over funding has gone on for over two years and has been in legislative play for two sessions already with all of the ill-will and bad faith that history implies.

In 2008 the Senate passed a measure providing for local option sales tax referenda in any region of GA that wished to vote on one. The House ultimately agreed to the Senate proposal with a slight difference in that it also took the revenue of 1% of the presently existing sales tax on motor fuel and dedicated it for use for "all transportation purposes," including public transportation, not merely "public roads and bridges." That provision was a demand of the House Democratic Caucus to provide funds for the quick operation of new public transportation such as the Griffin-Atlanta commuter rail line.

The new local option sales taxes were similarly to be dedicated to "all transportation purposes," and were designed to be collected for at least 20 years, so that they could support the finance and operation of public transport facilities and services during the period of their collection. These funds could have paid the way for Athens-Atlanta commuter rail service, "the Brain Train," to connect the with Griffin line. This would become the nucleus of an eventual new system of public transportation that could both relieve Atlanta traffic and reach out into rural GA with new, needed services.

The Senate, under the leadership of Lt. Gov. Casey Cagle, apparently yielding to the blandishments of the Highway Contractor lobby, unexpectedly rejected the proposal in the last few minutes of the 2008 Session. (This failure seems to be a critical one in the decision of Cagle to drop his bid for Governor and to hang onto his current office in the 2010 election.)

After solemn promises were made during the interim after the 2008 Session, in 2009 the expectation was that the differences would be ironed out and that the local option funding proposal could go forward. That hope was soon dashed. The previously concealed role of the paving contractors came increasingly into the open as the "Get Georgia Moving" Coalition began to fracture during the 2009 Session. Differing versions of the bill passed each Chamber but agreement proved



Severe Cuts Ahead? Insufficient funding has threatened transit service around the Atlanta region. MARTA may be forced to cut its existing rail and bus service by 30 percent or more in 2010.

Continued on p. 5

Will Legal Crisis Spur the State to Enact Real Water Policy in 2010?

By Neill Herring

Prior to a recent federal judicial ruling that called future withdrawals from Lake Lanier into question, Georgia has experienced for over two decades a string of problems related to the water supply for Metro Atlanta. Attempts to deal with that set of problems have been ventured over the period, but in such a systematically half-hearted fashion that it is hard to think that anyone was ever genuinely serious about real solutions. What seems to have been going on was a pretence at solving problems while actually promoting economic growth by delaying solutions.

The advantage to delay, for its authors, was obvious: the cause of the Metro Water supply problems, apart from waste and poor planning, was uncontrolled Metro economic and population growth. That very profitable development was occurring as if none of the resource supply problems even existed. The two main gestures at “solving the water supply problem,” which had emerged in legal disputes with the downstream states of Florida and Alabama, were the Interstate Water Compacts, and the Georgia Statewide Comprehensive Water Management Plan.

Both of these steps were deliberate half-measures, and both were apparently calculated to fail before they reached their conclusions. The Interstate Compacts were a promise among the three contending states to agree, by a date certain, on the minimum amount of water that would flow from Georgia into the other two states during the times of lowest rainfall. That date came, and went, got reset, and went again, and finally the downstream states realized that Georgia had no intention of settling, only delaying settlement, and they dissolved the Compacts.

The delay afforded by the Compacts negotiations allowed well over a million people to move into Metro Atlanta during their pendency. The policy was called “live and let live,” but it meant, “don’t look while we grow, probably at your expense.”

The Comprehensive Water Plan started out as a scheme cooked up to make the Compacts work, but only if a lot of money could be made in the process. The plan behind the Comprehensive Plan was an arrangement to buy and sell water withdrawal permits in Georgia, by people who would then be able to lease the permits back to the State, which could then send the water downstream when droughts and low flows required such action to meet the flow targets in the Compacts.

The legislature, informed by alert citizen lobbyists from all over GA, figured out the permit trading racket behind the State Water Plan, and killed it. The Compacts died with it, when there was no opportunistic money to be made from the agree-

ments. The Water Plan was then recast as an actual democratically-developed plan, and a process was commenced to realize it, when someone figured out that such a Plan could easily result in the last thing the Metro Development crowd wanted: limits on their ability to take as much water as they wanted.

At that point, the Statewide Plan was turned over to Planning Councils around the state with politically drawn boundaries, and with no legal authority, while the Planning Council for Metro Atlanta was a statutory creation with the power to make and enforce water supply decisions. Into that uneasy mixture was added the final resolution of the original lawsuits by the downstream states that had been delayed by the Compacts, and by skillful legal work for years. That resolution, just now still underway, has begun with a court ruling that says that Metro is not entitled to a major portion of the water it has been freely taking from Lake Lanier for decades.

With that news, the state has had to wheel about suddenly, and in the process has put the Statewide Water Planning Process into an unofficial, but quite real, suspension. The Environmental Protection Director closely identified with the Plan, Dr. Carol Couch, has abruptly resigned. The next thing that was announced was the creation of a Task Force to come up with new water supply solutions that assumed that the water from Lanier would never be available.

The Governor said, in the summer of 2009, when the judge announced that Lanier was going to need Congressional Authorization to be used for water supply in three years, that he would “fight to the death” against such an order. The Task Force is now designing that “fight to the death.” Congressional Authorization will require agreement among the three states, and their Congressional Delegations.

The 2010 Legislature is very likely to be asked to dramatically change GA water law for the convenience of the engineers who want to keep Metro as well watered as before, but not have to negotiate with the downstream people, in GA or in the other states. Current limits on moving water around from basin to basin are likely to be brought up for abolition. Protections of water quality and quantity in streams are up for removal as inconvenient.

A major fight over the future of GA’s water resources looms in the 2010 legislature. Going into then session, it looks as if the legislative forces are fairly evenly divided, so every citizen’s contact with their own legislator can make a major difference in the final outcome.

Ask your state legislator to support serious water conservation. Metro Atlanta must become a better steward of its water if it ever expects to negotiate in good faith with its downstream neighbors.

Legislative Update

Transportation Funding Crisis Worse Than Ever

(Continued from p. 3)

elusive and nothing passed.

The difference in the House bill of 2009 and the preceding session was that in 2009 the House proposed a statewide referendum on one cent sales tax for “all transportation purposes” and moved the 1% of current motor fuel sales tax revenue to that same purpose but the Senate stuck by its previous proposal of regional local option taxes. Determined to find new billions in tax dollars for their asphalt spreading plans, the paving contractors were the authors of the House statewide proposal. The prospects for passage of a statewide one percent increase in the state general sales tax are poorly regarded by poll results as well as most state political observers.

The general consensus at the Capitol after the failure of 2009 was “the Highway Contractors got too greedy.” 2010 offers yet another chance to “get it right.” Whether that opportunity will be taken, and the issue goes to the 2010 election ballot for voter approval remains to be seen.

Sierra Club is opposed to a statewide general sales tax for transportation for the same reasons the Highway Contractors support it. It will put way too much money into unneeded road projects with few guarantees for public transportation development. The Club supports a local option transportation sales tax for “all transportation purposes.” The Club also supports shifting the current sales tax on motor fuel to “all transportation purposes” to quickly fund commuter rail projects, even if no local sales taxes are approved.

Metropolitan Atlanta Rapid Transit Authority

MARTA is the public transport system operating today in Fulton and DeKalb Counties and in the City of Atlanta. It also provides service by contract to Clayton County, but that contract is currently subject to cancellation unless sufficient funds can be found to continue it.

MARTA, like Clayton County, currently faces a severe revenue shortfall. MARTA is funded by a 1% local option sales tax in Fulton, DeKalb and Atlanta. Collections of all sales taxes have plummeted during the Great Recession. This has hit MARTA particularly hard. Another reason MARTA is having a hard time with this recession comes from the law governing how the Authority may disburse funds.

In the 1970's the State Government feared that MARTA was going to “waste money,” so it placed a limit on the use of the sales tax funds. 50% of those funds were set aside to meet “capital” costs, while the other half of the money could be used to pay to operate the system. There is a myth that MARTA was built with the 50% capital funding, but in fact, the system was largely federally funded. The 50% capital money gave GA's congressional delegation a nice argument to show “local participation” in funding but it was not that significant in the hundreds of millions spent to build MARTA.

In years past the legislature has allowed some of the “capital” money to be used for operations, but MARTA finally Georgia Sierran 🌱 January/February 2010

convinced the State Senate, in 2009, to completely drop the requirement for division of the revenue. That provision passed the Senate, but failed in the House when the MARTA issue was used by the Majority leadership to force Metro Democrats to support various tax limitation bills that were strongly opposed by local governments. That effort failed along with the MARTA funding bill.

SB 120, the bill that the Senate passed, is still resting in the House Transportation Committee. Sierra Club strongly supports its passage so that MARTA can avoid devastating reductions in service. As it now stands, MARTA has enough money to meet its current needs but it cannot use that money because of the obsolete law.

The Metro Atlanta economy is heavily dependent on people who use MARTA to get to and from work. The idea of economic recovery without a strong transit system is far-fetched. MARTA needs to be able to manage its funds according to its needs, not according to arbitrary legislative dictates.

take action

Transit Lobby Day At the Capitol

Mark your calendars for **February 18** – Transit Lobby Day for the 2010 session. Transit advocates will descend on the Georgia State Capitol to lobby legislators for increased transit funding and greater flexibility in how transit funds are spent. Check back at www.georgia.sierraclub.org for more information.

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Getting “HOT” in Gwinnett!

By Tom Morrissey & Art Sheldon

While it seems a little odd that with winter here, we are talking about getting HOT, but this isn't cocoa that has our attention here - it's the High Occupancy Toll or HOT lanes that are proposed for 14 miles of I-85 north of the Perimeter. The HOT lanes, also known as “Lexus” lanes, have folks in Gwinnett a little hot for a number of reasons. This is in effect a pilot project with a long-range plan to expand this HOT system to all the expressways in the metro area in the future.

The proposed design involves retrofitting the existing High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lanes that currently zip commuters in vehicles with at least two occupants past the parking lot that the remaining travel lanes become each rush hour. The intent of the HOV lanes is of course to foster a change in behavior and convince leery commuters that by carpooling, traffic will move smoother and also have less impact on your wallet. However, that's all about to change.

In 2008 the Federal DOT approved a \$110 million grant, which will be combined with \$37 million of your Georgia DOT tax dollars, for this pilot HOT project in Georgia. The belief is that solo commuters frustrated that the HOV lane is moving while theirs is not, would pay any price just to get in that lane and GO ahead of the flow if late for work, appointments, picking up children from day care, etc. But while most other cities around the country were adding an additional lane for the HOT privilege rather than converting an existing HOV lane, GDOT proposed to simply take away that HOV lane that had previously rewarded conscientious 2 person carpoolers and replace it with a quicker ride along I-85 for those drivers that can pay the big bucks. In September, when US Secretary of Transportation Ray LaHood who was visiting Atlanta was asked for his position on this, he was not supportive of the plan which was authorized under the previous Secretary of Transportation under President Bush.

The price to use the HOT lane will vary depending on the traffic load at the time. The GDOT contention that “value” pricing will keep the lanes moving means that when it gets very congested, the cost of using the HOT lane will escalate and be primarily available those with the financial means....hence the nickname “Lexus lanes.” Granted, carpools with 3 persons or more (instead of the current 2 person minimum) will still ride free in the HOT lanes. According to GDOT, I-85 was selected because the HOV lanes there “are regularly overused during

peak periods”. In other words, people in Gwinnett are beginning to carpool too much, so we'll fix that...and maybe rake in some dough along the way.

An additional reason for the current congestion in the carpool lanes is due to significant design flaws. With the exception of the newly rebuilt interchange of I-85 and GA Highway 316, the absence of HOV lane exits requires carpool drivers to cross several lanes of heavy traffic in order to exit the highway. In addition, there are no HOV lanes on I-285 and no safe way for HOV travelers to transition over to I-285 in “Spaghetti Junction” although plans are currently on the drawing board as part of the Revive285 project study due to be completed in two years. Then, who knows if and when the lanes will actually be built.

This spring, several informational meetings were held in Gwinnett to answer questions and take comments from the public including some Greater Gwinnett Group members divided into two groups of meetings where first preliminary plans were presented and most recently last month when the entrances and exit designs were presented as well as pricing parameters (\$.10-\$1.00 per mile). Overwhelmingly, the responses were 4-1 opposed to the project both to the preliminary plans and the detailed plans. But as we have learned, Georgia is far from a democracy with regard to transportation decision-making. In written responses to the public's questioning of the



Going Nowhere Fast Traffic congestion is persistent in Atlanta, even in carpool lanes. Are HOT lanes the answer?

changes, the DOT was not influenced by the overwhelming negative comments and is moving ahead with the plan. Even the “enticement” of providing 36 additional commuter buses and the promise to build two more park-and-ride lots (beyond the former outer loop) was not enough to sway the sentiment.

The citizens, with a healthy dose of skepticism, contend that the lane is already paid for with our taxes, would now charge existing 2-person carpoolers, would be dangerous without left lane exits, and right now is simply not the time to be spending our precious tax dollars to benefit primarily wealthy drivers. Additionally, if this lane moves faster as the DOT promises, one could deduce that it has fewer vehicles with fewer riders and therefore, will actually increase traffic demand on the remaining travel lanes, resulting in more congestion and even poorer air quality.

We really like the proposed extra buses and park-and-ride lots, and would rather see the rest of the money go toward expanding transit options for Gwinnett and the metro area. But as usual, catering to drivers remains the primary focus.

More Deadly Pollution for Georgia?

By **Larry Winslett, Ga. Sierra Club
Waste/Recycling Issue Leader**

Just when some progress is being made on cleaning up Georgia's air from coal plants, etc., a new (well actually old) and potentially even worse problem is raising its ugly head. Elbert and Toombs Counties are planning to start burning household garbage. Georgia is lucky because we have had no Solid Waste (household garbage) incinerators in the state since the last one was closed in Savannah. We need to keep it that way.

The evidence of the dangers of all forms of waste incinerators is overwhelming. Today, incinerators are being floated as "new" or "green" technologies. They have been given fancy names like biomass, waste-to-energy, pyrolysis, plasma arc, or gasification plants. Don't be fooled. The fact is that they are the same old dangerous polluters as always. If it burns garbage, it's an incinerator.

The companies promoting them use environmental- or patriotic-sounding names like "Green First" or "Freedom Energy Recovery." Their incinerators are neither "green" or "free." Their pitch is "zero waste" and "zero cost." Sounds too good to be true? It is. Despite the claims that the new ones are totally contained and "clean," incinerators cannot defy basic physics. Matter can't be

destroyed—mercury in, mercury out. ALL incinerators pollute the air, land, and water. Their by-products have been shown to cause cancer, asthma, and birth defects. They discourage recycling and waste reduction. Incinerators always destroy property values.

There is no up side to burning household garbage. It's not even profitable unless large quantities of trash, possibly hazardous, are brought in from other locations. Surrounding counties are affected by pollution and waste trafficking, as well. This is not just an Elbert & Toombs Co. issue; the precedent affects all Georgians. The company doing the Toombs Co. operation wants to do fifty in Georgia—where's all that trash going to come from?

The trend worldwide is to shut down, and, in many countries, ban incinerators. There are much better alternatives to dealing with waste. Hopefully, Elbert and Toombs County will reconsider. The rest of Georgia needs to be on the watch for this new round of polluters.

take action

Call the Elbert County (706-283-2000) and Toombs County (912-526-3311) Board of Commissioners and urge them to not bring waste incineration back to Georgia.

New Visitor to Chattahoochee

By **Alan Toney**

For several months, a large clumsy hawk has been patrolling the skies between my house and the Johnson Ferry unit of the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area. I'm not the greatest on bird identification, and I was puzzled by its size and mottled appearance.

On Thanksgiving Day, as I worked on my deck, several Canadian geese suddenly appeared flying recklessly through the trees followed closely by my big hawk friend. As he flew directly over head, it suddenly dawned on me that this was no hawk but an immature bald eagle that hadn't yet grown his white crown.

I watched as he circled around the Marsh Creek valley in a vain attempt to score a goose dinner for Thanksgiving. There have been rumors of a juvenile Eagle on the River near the CNRA, but to have one overhead was quite a treat. My hope is he will stay and attract a mate so we can have a nesting pair in a couple of years.

As a boy I watched all the birds of prey die off when DDT was hailed as the final solution for all insect pests; unfortunately, the insects quickly developed an immunity to it but birds, especially birds of prey, blue birds and Brown pelicans weren't so lucky.

As the top predator, eagles have been the slowest to recover since DDT was banned in 1972. Their return to the CNRA points out why the Park Service must put wildness and wildlife before the other competing interests. The original idea for saving the Chattahoochee was to establish a Wilderness Area, then a National Park was considered as a compromise and finally we settled on a Recreation Area as a last resort as development pressures mounted. Everyone involved at the time agreed that there would be a higher level of protection than you normally have in a NRA. The need to maintain that level of protection today grows as more and more places where eagles could flourish disappear.

Wildlands and Wildlife Committee Needs Your Help!

This is an activist committee with no staff support and recently several of our key members either had to move out of state or retire due to the birth of new family members. We need your help! Please come join us.

This important committee works to protect National Forest Lands and Wildlife throughout Georgia including the annual Hemlock Festival in Dahlonega, as well as efforts to pass important Legislation to protect Fresh Water Turtles in Georgia. The Chattahoochee National Recreation Area and Endangered Species issues are currently handled by this committee.

Wildlands and Wildlife Committee Contacts:

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Larry Winslett, winfog@winstream.net

Letter Urges Park Service to Rethink Cumberland Plan

Coastal Group, National Join Forces on Letter to Secretary Salazar

National Sierra Club has joined with the Coastal Group to oppose the National Park Service's Transportation Plan for Cumberland Island, which will, if implemented, effectively remove the northern half of the island sanctuary from wilderness protection. A letter from Carl Pope to Interior Secretary Ken Salazar is reproduced below in its entirety.

Secretary Kenneth Salazar
United States Department of the Interior,
Washington, D.C.

RE: Cumberland Island National Seashore Wilderness Area

October 25, 2009

Dear Secretary Salazar,

On behalf of Sierra Club's more than 1.3 million members and supporters, I am writing to urge you to review and reconsider the National Park Service Transportation Plan for Cumberland Island, which was approved in July, 2009. This plan jeopardizes the future of the Cumberland Island Wilderness Area (CIWA) and undermines the letter and spirit of the Wilderness Act, which applies to most of the northern half of Cumberland Island.

The Park Service developed this transportation plan as required by the "Cumberland Island Wilderness Boundary Adjustment Act of 2004," a rider now contained in P.L. 108-447. The "Cumberland Island Wilderness Boundary Adjustment Act of 2004" was the work of Georgia Congressman Jack Kingston, who slipped it into an omnibus spending bill at the 11th hour. This rider removed many trails through the Cumberland Island Wilderness Area (CIWA) from wilderness designation. This unprecedented legislation required tours through the wilderness area and erased 30 years of public participation in planning for the National Seashore without public debate or opportunities for public comment.

The National Park Service (NPS) has stated that it is required to provide a minimum of five and a maximum of eight round trip tours a day to the north end of Cumberland. We believe that the intent and letter of the Kingston rider can be met with a simpler and less expensive plan for providing tours to the northern end of the island. We urge you to review and reconsider the current plan. In particular, we would urge you to consider:

The Kingston rider specified that all "tours" must be consistent with the Wilderness Act. We believe that the proposed motorized tours would not be consistent with the Wilderness Act. The Kingston rider does not in any way specify how these "tours" shall be provided. Since mechanized transportation is

not allowed in wilderness areas, "tours" are customarily offered via horse, mule, kayak, canoe, etc. We believe that there is no reason this universally accepted solution should not be applicable to Cumberland.

While it is true that "cherry stem" roads do exist in other wilderness areas, often for important purposes such as providing transportation to pre-existing communities or providing necessary transit across large wilderness areas. However, none of these circumstances apply to the cherry stemmed trails on Cumberland, and the damage done there is greatly exacerbated because Cumberland is a narrow barrier island.

Finally, the Kingston rider did not require that any particular number of vehicles be provided for each "tour", nor did it indicate how many tourists shall be on each "tour." The Park Service has interpreted the legislation to mean that up to three vehicles will be provided for each tour, to accommodate up to 30 tourists. We believe that a smaller number of tours, with a strict group size limitation, would both fulfill the requirements of the Kingston rider as well as helping to protect the wilderness characteristics of the island.

We are optimistic that this issue can be resolved so that the promises made to both current and future generations of Americans regarding the Cumberland Wilderness designation will be honored. We urge you to reconsider and amend the National Park Service Transportation Plan for Cumberland Island. We believe that the requirements of the Kingston rider can be met, and public access maintained, while balancing and protecting the wilderness values and ecological integrity of the Cumberland Island National Seashore Wilderness.

Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Carl Pope
Executive Director

take action

Find your state representative and senator by going to the following address:

<http://www.legis.state.ga.us/legis/findlegislator.htm>

Call them or send them an email stating that you don't support motor vehicle tours on Cumberland Island and favor less invasive means instead such as horse and mule tours or canoe and kayak tours.

Get Involved In Georgia's Energy Future

By Ashley Robbins

To many, a new year means a fresh start. It's a time to better ourselves, to make resolutions, put our best foot forward and begin anew. As we look to what the future holds, we should take a moment to consider what we can do to ensure a healthy and beautiful future for everyone.

Power4Georgians has recently announced a proposal for a coal-fired power plant in Ben Hill County. This 850-megawatt plant is the second that they intend to build, the first being Plant Washington, making it the third proposed coal-fired power plant slated to be built in rural Georgia.

Did you know that Power4Georgians, LLC, is composed of five electric membership corporations (EMCs)? They are: Cobb EMC (Cobb County and surrounding area); Central Georgia EMC (south metro Atlanta, north Macon area); Snapping Shoals EMC (southeast Atlanta metro area); Upson EMC (six counties in west central Georgia); and Washington EMC (Sandersville area, Washington County). Electric Membership Cooperatives - EMCs - differ from private utilities in that they are nonprofits who are owned and operated by their members

Did you know that Cobb County, the largest EMC in Power4Georgia, is more than 200 miles north of Ben Hill County?

Did you know that conservative cost estimates for Plants Washington and Ben Hill come in at \$4.6 billion dollars? That's \$13,800 per EMC member for the more than 330,000 who are a part of these five corporations.

Did you know that two world-record fish have been caught within 40 miles of where Plant Ben Hill is to be built, both

the largest largemouth bass and chain pickerel (jackfish)? But a coal-fired power plant built here, on the Ocmulgee River, would dump more than a hundred pounds of mercury into the river and the Flint watershed.

We all know coal is bad, from the mining to the burning, but do we need this power?

Did you know that a report put out by the George W. Bush administration stated that only two additional power plants would be needed in the United States to meet the demand of the population by 2025? The entire country only needs two, but Georgia needs three? And that doesn't account for the proposed plants in other states.

And did you know that in an area facing a water crisis the largest users of water in the state are the coal-fired power plants?

But do you know how to get involved? Make your resolution this new year to take a stand against any additional coal-fired power plants in Georgia. If you live in an area served by an EMC that is a member of Power4Georgians, con-

tact your board of directors and let them know that you are opposed to any additional coal-fired power plants. If you live in Ben Hill or Washington counties, keep an eye out for public meetings and forums where you can voice your opinion, and consider joining a grassroots organization in your area. If you live in the Atlanta Metro area, attend a Smart Energy Committee meeting on the first Mondays of the month at the Sierra Club office. And feel free to contact staff or volunteer leaders with any questions that you have regarding Georgia's energy future.



Photo by Bruno Rodriguez (cc-by-nc-sa)



Sierra Club 101



Are you new to the Sierra Club and want to get involved but not sure how? Do you know what issues the Georgia Chapter is working on and how to get involved? Do you want to know who we are and what we're doing?

Join us for Saturday, **February 6th** at 10 AM, for Sierra Club 101, your crash course on the Club, the Georgia Chapter, and our issues. Meet with volunteer leaders and staff for breakfast at the Sierra Club office at 743B East College as we introduce you to our Sierra Club.

For questions or to RSVP, contact Ashley at sierra_club_socials@gmail.com.

New Year Presents Opportunities, Challenges

By Dan Friedman

Seldom have we begun a new year that has presented such opportunities for making so many positive environmental gains and, at the same time, offered such obstacles to our success. We have within our grasp the opportunity to make a difference with many environmental issues including transit, water, and alternative energy. With transit we can give MARTA the financial flexibility it needs to continue to be the backbone of the transportation system we have. Without MARTA's infrastructure and expertise, any regional transit system could not exist. With the looming water crisis facing Georgia and particularly Atlanta, we must find a solution that will focus on conservation while guaranteeing Atlanta's supply of water given the claims made by Alabama and Florida. On the coast, we must protect the ecology and ecosystems at the mouth of the Savannah River and

area coastal aquatic biodiversity, including our efforts to restore the local fresh water estuaries and to stand up against deepening the harbor if it harms the environment. The upcoming year offers us the opportunity work with our legislators to make energy sources that are not only environmentally friendly but also financially prudent available to Georgians. These energy sources include solar, wind and tidal energy. Our current carbon and nuclear based energy sources have proven to be overly expensive, a cause of health problems such as lung disease and nervous system problems in humans and wildlife and have required users to pay for energy coming from plants whose power will not be available for several years. In the case of nuclear power plants, there is a potential target for terrorists that drive up the monetary, psychological costs as well as the potential costs to life and property.

For over 25 years the Georgia Sierra Club has worked to improve the quality

of life for our members and for all who live in and visit Georgia. Georgia Sierrans have fought to protect Georgia's wildlands from damage and destruction. We have worked to ensure dependable and cleaner sources of water, better transit options and cleaner, financially viable and healthier energy sources. This year we ask all of our members to do one thing (more than one would be good, too) for their communities, their children and grandchildren and themselves by writing a letter, making a phone call or attending a meeting to discuss the issue that means the most to you and to your family. The Georgia Sierra Club was founded as a member organization and is dependent on each of our members to take action to make Georgia cleaner and the people of Georgia healthier. So, make a decision to get involved. If you need help deciding what you can do, call the office. We will help you decide what you can do in a way that is comfortable for you.

Social Corner

Start the new year off by hanging out with some like-minded environmentalists. We had a lot of fun with y'all in 2009, and we'll kick off 2010 with dinner at Pizza Fusion **Tuesday, January 5th**, at 7:00. Pizza Fusion is at 2233 Peachtree Rd, Atlanta.

In honor of the legislative session and transit lobby day on February 18th, hop on MARTA for a transit pub crawl **Saturday, February 20th**. We'll meet at the Sierra Club office at 743B East College Ave in Decatur at 8:30. Don't forget your Breeze card!

In March, join us at Cha Bella in Savannah for dinner on **Saturday, March 27th** at 6:00pm. Cha Bella is at 102 E. Broad Street.

To RSVP e-mail the Social Committee at sierra_club_socials@gmail.com.

Scenes from the New Chapter Office Open House
October 22, 2009



Support Your Chapter



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Yes! I want to support the work of the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club for sustainable living, healthy environment, improved transportation, and a green Georgia future!

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Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____

E-mail _____

_____ Sign me up to receive the Georgia Chapter E-Newsletter: *Footnotes Online.*

_____ Please do not publish my name as a donor.

_____ Please send more info on how to give an environmental bequest!

Make check payable / send check and form to:

Georgia Chapter Sierra Club
743 E. College Ave., Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030



2010 Georgia Legacy Council

- | | |
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| <input type="checkbox"/> Live Oak Champion \$5,000 + | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Magnolia Society \$1,000 - \$2,499 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Longleaf Pine Protector \$2,500 - \$4,999 | <input type="checkbox"/> Evergreen Partner \$500 - \$999 |

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\$100 \$75 \$50

Other \$ _____

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Donate Online now. **Easy, quick, and saves paper!**
http://action.sierraclub.org/ga_donate

Give a **tax-deductible gift**—make your donation check out to **the Sierra Club Foundation—GA Chapter.**

Donate a gift to be **published** in the next issue of the Georgia Chapter's *Sierran*: (circle one)

In Honor of ... In Memory of... Holiday Gift to...

Please write to whom the gift will honor:

Contributions and gifts to the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. For information concerning tax-deductible contributions to the Sierra Club Foundation to support grants for public education, research, and litigation programs necessary to further the Sierra Club's conservation goals, please contact greory.schwartz@sierraclub.org or 404-607-1262 ext. 225.

Georgia Giving Society 2009

The Georgia Chapter of Sierra Club established its Georgia Giving Society to honor individuals making significant gifts to the Georgia Chapter. Their partnership and commitment to our work leaves a lasting legacy.

Contributions from the Georgia Giving Society are integral to the hard work from volunteers and staff all around Georgia including promoting renewable energy, monitoring and protecting Georgia's pristine coastal marsh, and protecting our public forests in the North Georgia mountains. Please join

us in thanking current members.

Listed below are the names of most of the over 150 supporters who donated at the Live Oak Champion, Longleaf Pine Protector, Southern Magnolia Society, and Evergreen Partner levels between December 19th, 2008 and December 11th, 2009. If you would like to join or renew into the Giving Society for 2010 please see the donation form on page 11 of this issue. Your support is much appreciated.

Thank you to the Georgia Giving Society of 2009.

Live Oak Champions

\$1000+

Booher, Sam and Laurie
Bosserman, Charles and Mary
Cogswell, Margina
Eisenhauer, William
Fellman, Peter
James, Scott and Carol
Sturgeon, Joseph
Walraven, Carroll

Gill, Debbie and Steve
Grigsby, Emily
Grossman, Peter
Harris, Bettye
Heilweil, Marc and Caroline
Kruger, Walter and Stewart-Kruger, Sandra
Ludi, Gary and Maria
McPhail-Wetty, Erin and Wetty, David
Rushton, Robert and Joan
Shapiro, Martin and Shapiro, Donna

Durand, Patty and David
Dusenbury, Karin and Eric
Dykes, Francine and Richard
Eimer, Kristen
Ellis, Lauren
Funk, Florrie
Gittelman, David
Grainger, Rodney and Lee, Nancy
Hall, Eugene
Hand, Eleanor
Hanson, Bradford
Hastings, Michael
Helmick, Chad and Kristy
Henry, Vernon
Herrmann, Kenneth
Higgins, Bruce and Lilly
Honor, Gurdon
Howell, Shepherd
James, Christian
James, Gilbert
Jennings, Judy
Johnson, Charles
Johnson, Roger and Jean
Johnson, Weyman
Jones, Theresa
Kahn, Henry and Gillmor-Kahn, Mary
Katz, Sidney and Ruth
Kegler, Michelle and Scott
Keir, William
Keys, John
Kittel, Gloria
Kleiner, Scott and Heather
Knipfer, Mark
Kolbinsky, Emily
Kountz, Edward
Kratsch, Paul and Kratsch-Pod, Robert

Longleaf Pine Protectors

\$500-999

Adrean, Lee
Bush, Carol and Aubrey
Honicker, Jeannine and Dolph
Lindsay, Peter and Binzen, Kate
McArdle, Kerry
Michaels, Sandra
Slawsky, Norman and Abrams, Marcia
Stoneman, Zolinda
Thadani, Vikram and Lakshmi
Washburn, Morning
Widener, Brown and Kathleen
Woodall, Mark
Woodley, Pamela
Zinsmeister, Philip and Dorothy

Evergreen Partners

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Anonymous Donors
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Baba, Daniel
Barnes, Marylou
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Bennett, Lovett
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Cook, Charles
Crafts, Bryan and Carolyn
Creswell, Elise and Richard
Darrow, Lyndsey and Strickland, Matthew
Denniston, Maxine
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Southern Magnolia Society

\$250-499

Boyle, Thomas and Betsy
Cordle, Price and Rogena
Firment, Michael
Fischgrund, Lynne and Tom

Support Your Chapter

Evergreen Partners

(continued from p. 12)

Krause, Michael
Krecklow, Nancy
Kretzer, Andrew and Borg, Jenifer
Kronsoble, Jeanne
Largay, George
Long, John and Gwinn, Marta
MacGregor, Bruce
Majors, Laura and David
Majure, William and Eleanor
Manak, George and Melissa
Mcconaughey, Martin
McNeill, Norma and Douglas
Miller, Roy
Mulcahy, Kevin
Neff, Thomas and Marie

Nicely, Shala
Norris, William and Cheryl
Parker, Shelley
Petkas, Emmaunel
Phillips, Jan and Mary
Powell, Jim
Rasmussen, Thomas and Margaret
Roberts, Melanie and Poole, Grayland
Robertson, Brad
Rosenman, Martin
Scholl, Edward
Schwartz, Gregory
Scott, Nancy
Shufeldt, Robert
Sievert, Robert
Smith, Archer and Doris
Smith, Jerry

Squire, Stephen and Shorey-Squire, Catherine
Stark, Benton
Stein, Jason
Steinfeld, Patricia
Taylor, Iona
Thomas, Lee
Tiedtke, Wolfgang and Susanne
Topping, Nancy
Trentadue, Tracy
Vivona, Joseph and Carol
Walston, Lynn
Wantland, Janet
Wethern, Samuel and Cronin, Jane
Willingham, John
Winters, James
Wooten, Joel

Special Thanks to Our Partners

The Georgia Chapter would also like to express our thanks to contributing organizations that supported the Georgia Chapter through sponsorships, in-kinds gifts and events in

support of our conservation work. Please take note of these organizations that do care about our environment.

Thank you for your partnership in 2009.

Arnold Air Society of UGA
Cynthia Bohannon
EarthShare of Georgia
East Decatur Station
Eddie Ehlert
Galaxy Trading Properties, LLC
Glenridge Hall
GreenLaw
Half-Moon Outfitters

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Mama Bath + Body
Masterpiece Events
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Publix
Push Push Theater
REI Atlanta
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Southern Home Performance

The Cookie Studio
The Sally and Peter Parsonson Foundation Inc.
The UPS Foundation
Whole Foods Market
Williamson & Williams and Keller Rohrback LLP
Yellow + Blue Wine

Thank You!



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Not everyone can make a large gift to protect the environment during their lifetime, but you can preserve the environment for generations to come by remembering Sierra Club in your will.

There are many gift options available. We can even help you plan a gift for your local Chapter.

For more information and confidential assistance, please contact:

Gift Planning Program
(800) 932-4270
planned.giving@sierraclub.org

Preserve the Future

Atlanta Punts on Sustainable Building Codes

By Nancy Wylie, Metro Atlanta Group Chair

In 2003 the City of Atlanta adopted an ordinance requiring substantial new construction and major renovations of city-financed projects to incorporate sustainable design criteria. This includes energy efficiency, water efficiency, recycling of materials, and other measures to protect the environment. Because of the energy efficient government buildings, and energy efficient college buildings (Georgia Tech, Georgia State University, etc), Atlanta is one of the leaders in energy efficient buildings.

Almost 40% of America's total energy use is to heat or cool buildings, and about 70% of all electricity use is in buildings. In Georgia, there is more water used in generating electricity than any other single purpose. These two areas - electricity and water - are the environmental battlegrounds in Georgia. There are two (now THREE?) proposed new coal fired power plants to be built in Georgia; we already have one of the worst carbon dioxide emitting plants in the country in our state. A judge has ruled that the metropolitan Atlanta area is unlawfully taking water from Lake Lanier, and the situation must be corrected by 2012.

The National Sierra Club has established high goals for high-energy performing buildings. The goal is the elimination of carbon emissions from all new buildings by 2030. This includes both residential and commercial buildings. For existing buildings, the goal is to retrofit for energy efficiency in 10% of existing homes and buildings each year, starting with 2% of existing buildings in 2010, and increasing by 2% each year until the goal of 10% a year is reached in 2014. We would like to reduce emissions from existing building stock by 50% by 2030.

Yet, at the beginning of December, Atlanta City Council apparently punted. After a year of working with all stakeholders, city council committees could not recommend passage of a sustainable building code for Atlanta. The proposed code was to be phased in gradually; only applied to mid-and high rise buildings; and only required existing buildings to be made energy efficient during major renovations. But the real estate community wanted incentives if they were going to be required to be energy efficient. Nearby communities of Doraville and Chamblee have adopted sustainable building codes, but Atlanta is dropping the ball.

Because December is the end of the term of City Council, if there is to be a sustainable building code for Atlanta, we will have to start all over with the new council in 2010. If you live inside the city, keep in touch with our efforts next year. Write to nancywylie@mindspring.com to be added to our e-mail list for Sustainable Building Code for Atlanta.

Milton Fields: A Natural Burial Ground



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| Membership | Lissa Jackson |
| * Denotes a member of the Metro Atlanta Group Executive Committee. | |

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

We meet the 2nd Tuesday each month • Doors open at 7:00 p.m. • Episcopal Church of the Epiphany • 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave. (between Atlanta and Decatur - see directions below).

January 12, 2010 - Find out how to live in the wilderness. Tips and tricks to outdoor survival will help us appreciate the convenience of being inside on this winter night. Learn how previous generations survived by using primitive skills such as matchless fire making and tool creation. Chat with experienced instructors and watch demonstrations of these skills.

Biography: Vered Kleinberger is a native Atlanta and attended Emory University. Currently living in Jasper, Vered has worked with Earthskills Rendezvous for 7 years coordinating environmentally responsible events. She is also the director of Educational Excursions, a non-profit educational organization which offers nature programs and craft activities for children.

February 9, 2010 - Sierra Club lobbyist Neill Herring and Legislative Chair Mark Woodall will give the 2010 Georgia General Assembly update. In their annual report to the Atlanta Group members, Mark and Neill will detail the status of environmental bills in the legislature; who are the power players that will have an impact; and what are the prospects for the bills we support. They will also recommend actions that each member can take. Big issues in this year's legislature promise to be transportation - especially mass transportation, and water conservation. Related to water conservation is the fact that the single largest water use in Georgia is related to electric power generation.

Biography: Neill Herring has been the Sierra Club lobbyist for over 20 years - he KNOWS the legislature. Mark Woodall is the volunteer Legislative Chair for the Georgia Chapter, and the Chair of the Georgia Chapter of Sierra Club Executive Committee.

Meeting Location: The Metro Atlanta Group general membership meetings are held at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave. (east of Atlanta, near Decatur). Epiphany is located at the intersection of Ponce de Leon Avenue and East Lake Drive; the entrance to the church is off of East Lake Drive. From MARTA's East Lake station, it's a 10-15 minute walk north along East Lake Drive.



Metro Atlanta Executive Committee Meetings:

January 4th and March 1st, 7:00 p.m. at Caramba Cafe, 1409 N Highland Ave NE # D, Atlanta, GA 30306, 404-874-1343 (www.carambacafe.com)

Keep the Dirt Out of Our Streams

By Nancy Wylie, Metro Atlanta Group Chair

The Metro Atlanta Group has adopted a section of the South Fork of Peachtree Creek in Medlock Park in DeKalb County. Every month we go to the park and measure various chemicals in the water. Every third month we also look for macro (large enough to see without a microscope) invertebrates (things without backbones).

The real surprise is what happens to an urban stream. Atlanta is in the Piedmont area of Georgia. Our streams should have rocky bottoms. Sandy bottom streams belong in South Georgia. Yet, because of erosion, the bottom of our stream is full of sand. That sand and dirt comes from many sources but typically one of the worst is construction runoff.

Most water quality issues, from the Adopt-A-Stream program, through enforcement of soil erosion and control are the responsibility of the local governments. For the Atlanta Group, that means DeKalb County, the City of Atlanta, and Fulton County.

The Adopt-A-Stream program is a state-sponsored program to promote awareness of stream health, and to facilitate working with local governments. The local governments vary dramatically in their view, commitment, and resources provided for the program. With the current budget cuts, stream protection is often a low priority. Citizens can help through volunteering for Adopt-A-Stream, or stream clean ups, or just not putting things into the streams. The Clean Water Act requires a 25 foot buffer for streams, and our local governments extend that to 75 feet without impervious surfaces. Yet, people who live along stream banks blow their leaves into the stream. It seems harmless enough, but these leaves settle on the bottom and suffocate invertebrates, or they settle and decay, using up the oxygen in the water in the process, and suffocate invertebrates in a different way.

The impervious surfaces increase the runoff into the stream which also has several impacts: there is more water running off rather than sinking into the ground, so the water level is higher, and faster moving, and the sides of the stream erode more. These result in more sand and mud getting into the streambed and covering the rocks the invertebrates would live on or under.

ADOPT-A-STREAM TRAINING/CERTIFICATION

On January 23 the Atlanta Group is sponsoring Chemical Monitoring training for the Adopt-A-Stream program. The class will be at Stone Mountain Park and will run from 10AM to 2PM. We will have an overview of the Adopt-A-Stream program plus actual chemical testing. Yes, you get to see the sample turn yellow, blue, and then clear as you add different chemicals.

To register for the training, contact Nancy Wylie at nancywylie@mindspring.com or 404 256 1172.

Park Service Proposes Mountain Biking Trails

Map Showing New Trails at Sope Creek Presented to Public

In 1978 President Carter signed legislation to establish 16 parks along a 48-mile river section in the Chattahoochee river valley to be enjoyed by future generations. For many years the parks have served the public well as they were mostly left alone and trails developed as the public preferred. The park service calls these “social trails” but does not like them as they do not follow NPS guidelines, even though they do mostly follow and lead to the attractive parts of the parks.

Some of the largest and most beautiful sections are located within the Centennial area and include such gems as Vickery Creek, Gold Branch, Johnson Ferry North and South, Cochran Shoals/Sope Creek and Palisades. Earlier this year Hyde Farm was added which connects to Johnson Ferry North. These sections represent some of the most scenic parts of the Chattahoochee River.

With the addition of Hyde Farm the Park Service has begun to look at some of the parks with the intent to open them up to mass traffic by building 10’ wide gravel roads and closing of social trails. We did report on the controversy over Hyde Farm and Johnson Ferry North which is currently on hold until early 2010.

On October 29th the Park Service invited stakeholders to a Public Scoping meeting concerning the Sope Creek, Johnson Ferry South and Bowmans Island sections.

This is part of an Environmental Assessment the Park service has to perform before major changes can be implemented.

During the scoping meeting maps were presented showing the current locations of trails and the future plans. Bowmans Island and Johnson Ferry South are small parks and trails may be widened and located to higher grounds. Not a major change.

The interesting part is Sope Creek. The reasoning was to replace badly eroded trails and to “create a new system of connected trails in order to reduce long-term impact on the environment and enhance recreation at these park units”. All this sounded reasonable enough until we began to take a close look at the current situation.

The maps which were presented to the public showed “Cochran Shoals Trails”, which really is Sope Creek, as they are now and the plans the NPS had for the future. Many side trails would be closed and the park would primarily feature multi-use trails which means hikers and mountain bikers on the same trails.

What the current map did not show was that the only major trail was already designated as a mountain bike trail which also could be used by hikers. In the trail map at the park bulletin board the trail is prominently marked in red. The question arises why this was omitted. Is it, because the Park service knows of the public objections to such a project as they were

experiencing during the controversial planning for Hyde Farm/JFN? Whatever the motive can be anybody’s guess.

The current trail is in some places only 2-3 feet wide and a good many hikers have been startled by bikers racing down the hill and coming up from behind. Hikers and bikers in such a system do not mix.

The Park service speaks of erosion prevention. Already, the ground where the trail crosses drainage ditches is beginning to be torn up by knobbed tires and there is also erosion damage in sharp curves where bikers run high into the banks. One then must assume the NPS is not serious about erosion control as the new trails would be subject to similarly damaging use. If they want to allow mountain bikes in the park then the trails must be clearly separated for hikers and bikers. As it looks now the park is projected to become a mountain bike mecca. This we should object to. The plans for the parks can be found under <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>. Please, plan to attend future meetings so that you have a say as to what is going to happen to your parks.



Sope Creek proposed trails

Centennial Group

Goodbye Jean Ann!

On November 29th, a few Sierrans met for dinner to bid farewell to Russ and Jean Ann Wheelock at Chicago Restaurant in Roswell. Jean Ann's enthusiasm and leadership will be greatly missed, along with Russ's friendship and musical talents. Good luck in Asheville!



Sierra Club License Plates

We have the Sierra Club front auto plates now for sale. They identify you as a committed environmental activist, they serve as effective advertising for the club, they make a nice, thoughtful gift to friends who care about the cause, and not least, help sustain your Centennial Group. See the auto plates on page 19. Your Centennial Group ExCom appreciates your support.

Plates can be purchased in two ways: 1) purchase at our monthly meetings for \$12.50 each; or, 2) purchase by mail for \$16.50 each, including postage and handling.

Make check out to Centennial Group and mail together with your order to: Wolfgang Tiedtke, 750 Bayliss Dr., Marietta, GA 30068.

High School Students Join Centennial Adopt-A-Stream

On November 7, 4 North Cobb High School magnet students join the Centennial Group for chemical testing at our Adopt-A-Stream site at Life University as a part of a community service project for their AP Environmental Studies class. Carina O'Bara, Charles Roebuck, and Delon Barfuss educated the students on the purpose of the testing and about the Adopt-a-Stream program. The students also ran each test under the supervision of the certified Sierrans. We all had a great time and two of the girls plan to come back on to help us with the next biological monitoring. On November 21, Ina Allison also had 4 student volunteers assisting her, which included Brittany and Matt along with 2 other boys.



Group Picture Left to Right: Charles Roebuck, Carina O'Bara, Hannah Woosley, Katie Ott, Brittany Layfield, and Matt Roskin. Not pictured Delon Barfuss

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

January 7th, 2010: Join us as Centennial member Ashley Robbins discusses coal mining in Appalachia and how it effects the residents, culture, and environment of the region. Ashley grew up in Central Appalachia and has a degree in Appalachian studies from Radford University.

February 4th, 2010: Sierran lobbyists Neill Herring and Mark Woodall make their annual trip to the Centennial Group to give the 2010 update. They will discuss environmental bills in the state legislature, what bills the Club will be supporting, and how members can get involved.

Meeting Location:

The Centennial Group meets at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month at: Life University, Room 311 in the Upper Gymnasium, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta, GA 30060. For detailed directions contact wtiedtke@bellsouth.net or check our website www.georgia.sierraclub.org/centennial. Executive Committee meetings are the 3rd Thursday of every month at 7 p.m., usually at La Madeleine Restaurant, 4101 Upper Roswell Road, Marietta 30060.

Programs and Events

Our **January** meeting will begin our new year's programs with an overview of what the Georgia Sierra Club is doing in the areas of energy, political, water, transportation, as well as our outings programs. This will provide our Gwinnett members with the specifics of our programs and how our members can become involved.

Our **February** meeting will discuss the 2010 legislative session. Our Chapter Chair, Mark Woodall, and our legislative lobbyist, Neil Herring, will discuss the Sierra Club's goals for the legislative session and the behind-the-scenes stories about the Georgia legislature. This is one of our best-attended meetings so be sure to arrive early as seating is limited.

Our **March** meeting will be about the Appalachian Trail. Our **April** meeting will discuss wind power in Georgia and why wind power is an integral component of an environment friendly energy future.

Meetings: 3rd Thursday at Berkmar High School, 405 Pleasant Hill Road, Lilburn, GA 30047, in the Media Center. Doors open at 7 p.m. with light refreshments. Meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. For questions, contact Tom Morrissey at 404-513-4069.



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Gwinnett Group 2009 Recap

By Dan Friedman

Thanksgiving, which is when I am writing this article, is when I give thanks for all I have including for how far the Gwinnett Group has come in the past year and where we are going in 2010. In 2009 we developed our chemical and biological stream monitoring program and have trained members to conduct the tests needed to monitor the health of the stream. We have also conducted several hikes in Gwinnett for all levels of hiking skills. Our programs, like the Georgia Sierra Club, spanned the spectrum of environmental needs. Our programs ranged from transportation, to Georgia birds, the Chattahoochee River, and nuclear energy.

In 2010, our stream-monitoring program will be expanded as will our outings programs. We plan to increase the number and variety of hikes including theme hikes. Our goal for 2010 is to build on our efforts in 2009 to make next year a more meaningful experience



Connie Wiggins, Executive Director of Gwinnett Clean & Beautiful, conducted a lively discussion at the October meeting.

for our members. We hope that you will join us not only for an educational experience and an opportunity to become involved but also to enjoy good conversations with like minded people.

LeConte Group to be Disbanded

This is the final official notice to the LeConte Group members and to its former executive committee members that a vote shall be taken at the January 2010 meeting of the Georgia Chapter Executive Committee meeting regarding the dissolution of the LeConte Group. This meeting will be held on Saturday, January 16, at 11:00 am. The location for this meeting has not yet been announced. If you wish to attend this meeting, please contact the Chapter Administrative Assistant, Genie Strickland, at 404-607-1262, ext. 221, for the location and the time this issue will be discussed.

In order to prevent the Group from being dissolved, a new group of five leaders would need to be identified and put in place.

If the LeConte Group is dissolved,

this action will have no affect on the standing of the individual members as members of the Sierra Club or as members of the Georgia Chapter. Sierra Club members in the Athens area are encouraged to continue their active membership and support of the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club. The Georgia Chapter has many committees which need active volunteers. For the names and contact information, please see p. 22 of this newsletter. In addition there are several Outings Leaders in the Athens area who will continue to lead hikes in this area. To see the current list of Outings, please check the chapter website at www.georgia.sierraclub.org and click on Outings.

If you have questions about this issue, or would like to have more information, please call Terry Jones at 706-549-9643.

LaGrange Group Update

Recent Sierra Club monthly meetings have included a presentation by LaGrange College President, Dr. Dan McAlexander, about LaGrange College's sustainability programs. The November program was a showing and discussion of the documentary film, King Corn. December's meeting was the traditional annual Christmas dinner, this year held as a potluck at St. Mark's Episcopal Church (the group's normal meeting place). Also at the dinner, bids were taken for a beautiful handmade guitar, a gift to the LaGrange Sierra Club for fundraising purposes by member, Mack Best.

Special activities have included ongoing work with Adopt-A-Stream programs and participation (coordinated by Edna Foster) in the annual West Point Lake Clean-Up Day. The LaGrange group welcomes the addition of several new members to the Executive Committee after the fall elections. Mary Drake will be joining the LaGrange Executive Committee as a newly elected member. Marty Wood and Dave Wappler were re-elected. Nancy Green recently joined the Executive Committee

to fill the vacancy left by the resignation of Jeannine Honicker, founder and co-chair of the LaGrange group. Clare Zens will serve as recording secretary for the group.

We hope all Sierra Club members in the area can join us for regularly scheduled monthly meetings on the first Thursday of every month in the parish hall of St. Mark's Episcopal Church, 207 North Greenwood Street, LaGrange. Refreshments are at 6:30; programs start promptly at 7:00. Volunteers are needed for involvement in a school Arbor Day project, publicity, refreshments, and with Adopt-A-Stream activities.

LaGrange Meetings

Meetings are held the first Thursday of each month at St. Mark's Episcopal Church, in the Parish Hall, 207 North Greenwood Street. Refreshments and registration at 6:30 p.m. Programs start at 7:00 p.m.

Savannah River Group Participates in Climate Change Festival

By Judy Gordan

Southern Politech student Amanda Bell was a featured participant in 350.org's Climate Change Festival held on October 24 at Lake Olmstead Park in Augusta, Georgia. This event followed a clean up co-sponsored by the Savannah Riverkeeper and the Savannah River Group Sierra Club. Amanda, an architectural student, submitted her drawings and photographic renderings of her presentation, "Edible Architecture" to share her research with the public. She transformed a local middle school into a green school by designing a structure and surroundings that support green practices while at the same time providing environmental education to the student body.

Other speakers included local ecologist, ASU professor Donna Ware, faith leader, Sid Gates, organic farmer, Brian Gandy and environmental justice advocate, Charles Utley representing The Blue Ridge Environmental Defense League. The Grease Guy, Bob Kogel explained how simple it was to redesign his

diesel truck to a corn oil alternative while Squeaky Green Cleaning founder Julie Anne Howard offered her green housecleaning services. Music from The Grumblers and Tara Scheyer made for a perfect day to honor Nature at her finest. Organizer Denice Traina asked that everyone contact their state and federal representatives to demand improved climate legislation to protect our air, water and wildlife and to support the Climate Change Conference in Copenhagen this December. For more information and to see our album follow these links. www.350.org

SRG Movie Screenings

Join the Savannah River Group as we enjoy environmental movie screenings. In November, the group watched Coal Country and signed petition letters to the EPA. On January 18th, we will view another film at the Unitarian Universalist Church on the Walton Way Extension.



Connecting a River to Its Community

By Stacy Kronquest

While a friend was visiting from the West Coast this past October, the Savannah Morning News published an article on Environment America's study of the most polluted rivers in the country.

"Look at this," she said. "The Savannah River is the fourth most polluted waterway in the U.S."

She was amazed to see that it was right behind the Mississippi in toxic discharges. Ten states release toxins into the Mississippi, while only two – Georgia and South Carolina – discharge waste into the Savannah.

"People must be outraged," she said.

When I told her that actually there is little to no outcry, she was amazed. And curious. How could that be?

I explained to her that Savannah has always been an industry town and people here think of the river as an economic engine, not a natural resource.

To be fair, Savannah, and the entire low country, was fortunate to have access to pristine drinking water from the Upper Floridian Aquifer for over a century. So river pollution was an abstract concern for people outside of the small environmental community, the commercial oyster industry and crabbers.

That is until the aquifer became over-used, and saltwater intrusion forced communities like Hilton Head, Beaufort and now Savannah to suck drinking water from the Lower Savannah River.

My friend, a hot shot in the Seattle advertising world, came up with a mock ad she tried to convince me to post on a Savannah blog. It was a baby bottle with powdered formula in the bottom being filled from the tap. The tag line: Clean water is precious.

When she left Savannah, she was still trying to figure out how to work in the statistic: the Savannah ranks as the sixth-most polluted waterway with cancer-causing chemicals.

It is not likely I'll ever use the ad. But the idea is sound – to get people to connect that what comes from their tap, comes from the river.

The Coastal Group has decided to take this seemingly simple issue, and use it as a way to engage the community on their river.

Our group, after all, is no stranger to Savannah River issues. Judy Jennings has been working tirelessly on Savannah River deepening for over a decade. Steve Willis has been championing a comprehensive river plan – what he calls Savannah River Basin Initiative – for several years. We've fought the LNG expansion, the nuclear power expansion, wetlands and cypress forest degradation.

But, to be honest, while we've engaged the officials and the experts, we've missed an opportunity to engage the public.

Over the next months, the Coastal Group begins a new

campaign, Getting to the Bottom of Savannah River Pollution. There will be no speaking in acronyms on this issue, just presenting the plain facts and asking the right questions.

The Coastal Group is kicking off Getting to the Bottom of Pollution with a public tour of the City of Savannah Water Treatment Facility on Jan. 7th.

Throughout the spring and summer, experts, city officials and health experts will be invited to speak at Coastal Group's general meetings, giving the public an opportunity to understand issues like oxygen-depletion, intersex fish, the Clean Water Act, and how these issues directly effect them.

There are some difficult questions that need to be answered. For instance, why are major new permits, that would discharge more toxins to the river, being considered after Carol Couch (the former director of Georgia EPD) said years ago that the Savannah River was at capacity for assimilating waste?

And why do the dozens of violations of the Clean Water Act by major industries on the river go unfinned, year after year?

Savannah and Chatham County leaders have always contended that these river industries are integral to the community's economic well-being. But, if we look at Savannah's poverty rate – fifty percent higher than the national average – and its history, we'll see its been that way as long as the officials have allowed the river to be industry's sewer.

The Coastal Group looks forward to this new year of engagement. We look forward to new conversations and friendships in the community and to our role in connecting the river to its people and working with them on a better future for it.

Upcoming Coastal Group Outings

In light of a recent report that ranks the Savannah River as the fourth most polluted in the nation, we think it would be a good idea to learn something about the place where water from the Savannah River is withdrawn and treated for human consumption.

Our new Outings Chair, Steve Wagner, has arranged for a group of up to 15 people to tour the Cherokee Hill water treatment plant in Port Wentworth on **January 7** at 9 am. The tour should take about one and a half hours. Please RSVP by contacting Steve by email (sjwgnr@hotmail.com) or phone (912-655-0797).

Steve Wagner, who is an excellent ornithologist, will also be leading a birding expedition to the Solomon Tract along the Savannah River on the morning of **January 9**. Please email him at the address above if you would like to participate, and get the details.

Training Committee

New Focus on Training in 2010

The Training Committee has been re-invigorated with new members and ambitious plans for training opportunities in 2010. Last year we tried out a couple of training weekends. Both were well attended and enjoyed by those who came. We plan to expand them this year, with more topics and more fun.

Our first training event will be the Leadership Training in February, 2010. At press time, we were still in negotiations for the location and date. Anyone and everyone who is interested in leadership in the Sierra Club is strongly encouraged to attend this training. This would include all chapter and group excom members, all chairs and members of chapter and group committees, and everyone who is interested in taking an active role in the Sierra Club in Georgia. Training topics will include how to plan a campaign, how to recruit volunteers, how to get funding, when and how to endorse political candidates, how to lobby at the state capitol, etc. Meals and lodging will be included in the cost of the weekend, which should be under \$100. This will be a great opportunity to meet other Sierra Club activists, network, develop new skills or just enjoy some hot chocolate (beer?) around the fireplace/campfire. Check the chapter website (www.georgia.sierraclub.org) or the next

issue of Footnotes for the registration form.

Our Conservation Activist Training event will again take place in August in the north Georgia mountains. Like last year, this event will focus on how to plan and execute campaigns directed at saving Georgia's unique environment: its national forests, coastal wetlands, swamps, and protected species. We'll talk about how to stop new coal, increase alternative energy and transit and protect our fresh water. This event will have something for everyone interested in protecting our planet.

Don't forget to purchase your Sierra Club tag



See page 17 for more information.

Okefenokee Swamp Retreat

Halloween weekend the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club held its Annual Retreat at the Okefenokee Swamp in Waycross. Sixty Sierrans spent the weekend taking canoeing and boat tours, visiting the Folkston Funnel for train watching, parading in costumes, and learning about the swamp.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has recently received funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 to develop plans to remove the two water control structures and excavate three breaches in the wildfire prevention sill, a 4.8-mile long earthen dam. This will provide safe, all season access for the to the Suwannee River as it leaves the swamp. Work should start in late 2010 and be finished early in 2011.



Contacts

Executive Committee

Chair: Mark Woodall, 706-674-2242,
markwoodall@windstream.net
At-Large Elected Member

Vice Chair - Administrative: Ashley Robbins,
276-780-3748, 0a.shi.li6@gmail.com
Centennial Group Delegate

Vice Chair - Policy: Steve Willis,
snwillis@yahoo.com
Coastal Group Delegate

Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com
Savannah River Group Delegate

Mary Drake, mdrake126@charter.net
At-Large Elected Member

David Emory, david.emory@gmail.com
At-Large Elected Member

Dan Friedman, dan3688@aol.com
Greater Gwinnett Group Delegate

Bettye Harris, bharris@gpb.org
At-Large Elected Member

Judy Jennings, judyjennings@comcast.net
At-Large Elected Member

Rand Knight, ecologicalsciences@yahoo.com
At-Large Elected Member

Stacey Kronquest, stacey@kronquest.com
At-Large Elected Member

Dean Rogers, dean@mediamindz.com
LaGrange Group Delegate

Nancy Wylie, nancywylie@mindspring.com
Metro Atlanta Group Delegate

Appointed Officers & Chairs

Secretary: Nancy Wylie,
nancywylie@mindspring.com

Treasurer: Tom Neff, tsneff2003@yahoo.com

Assistant Treasurer: Wen Zhou,
wzhou.awsco@gmail.com

Conservation Chair: Alan Toney,
mudflat@comcast.net

Conservation Vice Chair: Sam Booher,
sbooher@aol.com

Conservation Vice Chair: Larry Winslett,
winfog@windstream.net

Finance Chair: Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Fundraising Co-Chairs: Sandy Stewart,
sskruger@bellsouth.net & Erin McPhail Wetty,
ewetty@seyfarth.com

Inner City Outings: Allison Williams,
adwilliams8@yahoo.com

Legislative: Mark Woodall,
markwoodall@windstream.net

Litigation: Mary Drake, mdrake126@charter.net

Membership Engagement Chair: Dan Friedman,
dan3688@aol.com

Newsletter Co-Editors: David Emory & Ashley
Robbins, gasierran@gmail.com

Outings: Ed Scholl, edscholl@bellsouth.net

Personnel: Ashley Robbins, 0a.shi.li6@gmail.com

Political Chair: Eddie Ehlert,
edehlert@bellsouth.net

Sierra Student Coordinator: Kelsea Norris,
kelseanorris@gmail.com

Training Team Coordinator: Terry Jones,
wolpers4@aol.com

Webmaster: Charlotte Gardner,
ga_sierra_webmaster@yahoo.com

Conservation Campaigns

RAIL Committee:

Jim Dexter, jimdex@aol.com
Meeting: 4th Mon., 6:45 p.m., chapter office

Fresh Water Protections Committee:

Glynn Groszmann, glynnng@charter.net
Meetings rotate, please call.

Smart Energy Solutions:

Colleen Kiernan, colleenkiernan@mindspring.com
& Gary Harris, gharris@ntsenterprises.com
Meeting: 1st Monday, 7 p.m. chapter office

Cool Cities: vacant

Wildlands and Wildlife:

Phil Zinsmeister, pzinsmeister@oglethorpe.edu
Meeting: 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m., Location TBA
Committee sometimes skip months. Call first.

Volunteer Issue Leaders

The Conservation Committee is organized by issues. To get involved in Conservation issues, please contact the Issue Leader of your choice below.

Chattahoochee National Recreation Area:
Alan Toney, mudflat@comcast.com

Clean Air: Curt Smith, chsmith@speakeasy.net

Coastal: Judy Jennings,
judyjennings@comcast.net

Coastal Marsh: Mark Mosely, msmosely@aol.com

Cumberland: Annette Gelbrich,
apgelbrich@yahoo.com

Factory Farms: Thomas Black,
tblack9@yahoo.com

Federal Endangered Species: Larry Winslett,
winfog@windstream.net

Federal Public Lands: Shirl Parsons,
kparsons@mindspring.com

Historic Places/ Arch. Sites: Brian Thomas,
bthomas@trcsolutions.com

Marine Species/Habitat: Karen Grainey,
karengrainey@bellsouth.net

National Forest Issues: *vacant*

Nuclear Waste: Stacey Kronquest,
stacey@kronquest.com

Okefenokee Swamp: Sam Collier,
scollier@mindspring.com

Organic and Locally Grown Foods: Bryan
Hager, bhager@mindspring.com

Population: Todd Daniel, todddan@mac.com

Rivers and Wetlands: Keith Parsons,
kparsons@mindspring.com

Savannah Harbor: Judy Jennings,
judyjennings@comcast.net

State Lands/Georgia DNR: Phil Zinsmeister,
pzinsmeister@oglethorpe.edu

State Lands/Stone Mountain: Larry Winslett,
winfog@windstream.net

Stop 1-3: Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Transportation: Bryan Hager,
bhager@mindspring.com

Waste/Recycling: Larry Winslett,
winfog@windstream.net

Water Sentinels:
Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Georgia Chapter Staff

Director: *vacant*

Administrative Coordinator:
Genie Strickland, 404-607-1262 x.221
genie.strickland@sierraclub.org

Development Coordinator:
Gregory Schwartz, 404-607-1262 x.225
gregory.schwartz@sierraclub.org

Program Manager: *vacant*

National Staff

Regional Conservation Recruiter:
Erin Glynn, 404-607-1262 x.229
erin.glynn@sierraclub.org

Standing Meetings

Inner City Outings

Meetings: 4th Tuesday, 7 p.m., Brookhaven Boys
& Girls Club, 1330 North Druid Hills Rd., Atlanta.
Call Allison at 404-664-4199, adwilliams8@yahoo.com.

Georgia Chapter Excom

Meetings: Typically the 3rd Saturday of every odd
numbered month from 11-5 p.m.

Local Groups

A great way to get involved in your Chapter is by joining and participating in a local group. Some groups take certain months off, so it's a good idea to email first. Each group has a website. For maps and additional information on each group, visit the website: <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/local/>

Centennial Group

Serving Cobb, Cherokee & North Fulton

Chair: Wolfgang Tiedtke,
gacentexcom@gmail.com

Conservation Chair: Joe Sutherland,
suth1e@comcast.net

Outings Chair: Bob Springfield,
bob@bobspringfield.com

Meetings: 1st Thursday, welcome/refreshments 7:00 p.m., program 7:30 p.m.; Life College, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta. For directions call Wolfgang Tiedtke at 770-973-7820.

Coastal Group

Serving Savannah & surrounding counties

Chair: Steve Willis, snwillis@yahoo.com

Conservation Chair: Judy Jennings,
judyjennings@comcast.net

Outings Chair: Jim Darby,
darbyjim@bellsouth.net

Meetings: 3rd Thursday, 7:00 p.m., First Presbyterian Church, 520 E. Washington Ave, Savannah

Greater Gwinnett Group

Serving Gwinnett Co.

Chair: Tom Morrissey, thmorrissey@bellsouth.net

Conservation Chair: Art Sheldon,
a.sheldon@charter.net

Outings Chair: Mirza Balic,
mirza.balic@georgia.sierraclub.org

Meetings: 3rd Thursday, 7:00 p.m., Berkmar High School, 405 Pleasant Hill Rd, Lilburn 30047

LaGrange Group

Serving the LaGrange area

Chair: Dean Rogers, dean@mediamindz.com

Conservation Chair: David Wappler,
david.wappler@gmail.com

Outings Chair: Elizabeth Appleby,
ecappleby@yahoo.com

Meetings: 1st Thursday, 6:30 p.m. St. Mark's Episcopal Church, Parish Hall, 207 North Greenwood St.

Metro Atlanta Group

Serving Atlanta, Dekalb, & South Fulton

Chair: Nancy Wylie,
nancywylie@mindspring.com

Outings Chair: Martin McConaughy
mcmarty@bellsouth.net

Conservation Chair: Nancy Wylie,
nancywylie@mindspring.com

Meetings: 2nd Tuesday, 7:30 p.m., Episcopal Church of the Epiphany • 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave. (between Atlanta and Decatur.

Savannah River Group

Serving Augusta & surrounding areas

Co-Chair: Judy Gordan, Ph.D.,
gordonjudith@att.net

Co-Chair: Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Conservation Chair: Denice Traina,
yboty@aol.com

Outings Chair: Cindy Annis, ctreehuggr@aol.com

Meetings: 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Unitarian Church on Walton Way, Augusta at 7:30 pm.

Regional Contacts

LeConte Group/Athens & NE Ga.

Joel Eizenstat, jeizenst@uga.edu

Forsyth County

Jim Callison, jimcallison@juno.com

Macon

Fletcher Winston, winston_f@mercer.edu

North Ga. Conservation Group

Larry Winslett, winfog@windstream.net

Valdosta

Brian Day, bjday@valdosta.edu

Looking for a Group near your home?

The Georgia Chapter website (<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/>) contains a map showing the locations of all Groups. Or, call the Chapter office at (404) 607-1262.

CLIMATE
RECOVERY
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Georgia Chapter Office

743B East College Avenue
Decatur, Georgia 30030
404-607-1262 • FAX: 404-876-5260
georgia.chapter@sierraclub.org

Directions to take MARTA to the Sierra Club office:

Our office is an easy 1-2-minute walk from the MARTA Avondale station (E7). We encourage you to take MARTA when possible. Exit the MARTA station towards the SOUTH PARKING LOT, located on the East College Ave side. Once outside, proceed to the right towards Sams Street. Cross over Sams St. and the office is the building located right behind the convenience store. The office is the second door from Sams St. – Suite B.

Stay Informed!

SIERRA CLUB WEB SITES

GA Chapter Web Site:
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/>
GA Chapter Outings:
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/outings/>
GA Chapter Email Lists Site:
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/lists/>

EMAIL LISTS

Subscribe to a Georgia Chapter e-mail list. Just send an e-mail to:

LISTSERV@LISTS.SIERRACLUB.ORG

Your message should read:

SUBSCRIBE LISTNAME FIRSTNAME LASTNAME

LIST NAMES:

GA-OUTINGS (chapter outings list)
GA-NEWSLETTER-ANNOUNCE (online newsletter updates)
GA-ENERGY-FORUM (Smart Energy Solutions Committee)
GA-RAIL-NEWS (RAIL/Transit Advocacy Committee)

Subscribe to Georgia Chapter Online E-Newsletter at:
http://action.sierraclub.org/CHP_GA_Signup

Visit the Ga. Chapter web page and click on "Local Groups" for info on local groups e-mail lists.

Chapter ExCom Meeting

The next meeting is Saturday, January 16th from 11 a.m. to 5 p.m. Meetings are open to the membership. For more information, call the Chapter office at 404-607-1262 x. 221.



PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID

Outings and Events

Outings Rating System

Our dayhikes, backpacking, and flat-water trips are rated using a distance-elevation system. Thus, a trip rated 11-M-48 is an 11 mile round trip, medium pace (2-3 miles per hour), with a total elevation change of 4,800 feet. For a more detailed explanation of this system, ask an outings leader (listed with each trip below).

January 1: Sweetwater Creek

Location: Sweetwater Creek St. Park

Rating: [5 mi. / 2-3 mph / 10']

Make your first resolution outdoors with us. Come and see why this is one of the of the most popular parks in the Atlanta Metro area. Children and pets are welcome. Limit 12.

Contact: ArthurRatliff@Bellsouth.net

January 9: Solomon Tract

Location: Savannah NWR

Rating: [3 mi. / 1-2 mph / 1']

Bring your binoculars and join us for a leisurely hike through the Solomon Tract, a section of the Savannah NWR in Port Wentworth. We'll be looking for birds as we walk through bottomland hardwood forest and on a dike around an old rice impoundment. Limit 10.

Contact: Steve Wagner, sjwgnr@hotmail.com



GOING, GOING... GONE?

Sea turtles date back nearly 90 million years and are among the Earth's oldest surviving species. All 6 species of sea turtles are protected under the Endangered Species Act. Sierra Club has mounted a major effort to defend and preserve threatened habitats before their inhabitants are gone forever.

Help protect our animal friends; because once they're gone, they're gone. Join Sierra Club now.

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 Phone (____) _____
 Email _____

Check enclosed. Please make payable to Sierra Club.
 Please charge my: Visa Mastercard AMEX

Cardholder Name _____
 Card Number _____ Exp. Date ____/____/____

| Membership Category | Individual | Join |
|-------------------------|---|------|
| Special Offer | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 | |
| Standard | <input type="checkbox"/> \$30 <input type="checkbox"/> \$40 | |
| Supporting | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75 <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | |
| Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 <input type="checkbox"/> \$175 | |
| Life | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,000 <input type="checkbox"/> \$1,750 | |
| Senior | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 | |
| Student/ Limited Income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25 <input type="checkbox"/> \$35 | |

Join today and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!



Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our efficient, direct-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.99 for a subscription to SCSM, magazine and 41 for you! Our newsletter.



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Enclose a check and mail to: Sierra Club, 101 Box 2080, San Francisco, CA 94116-2080 or visit our website: www.sierraclub.org