

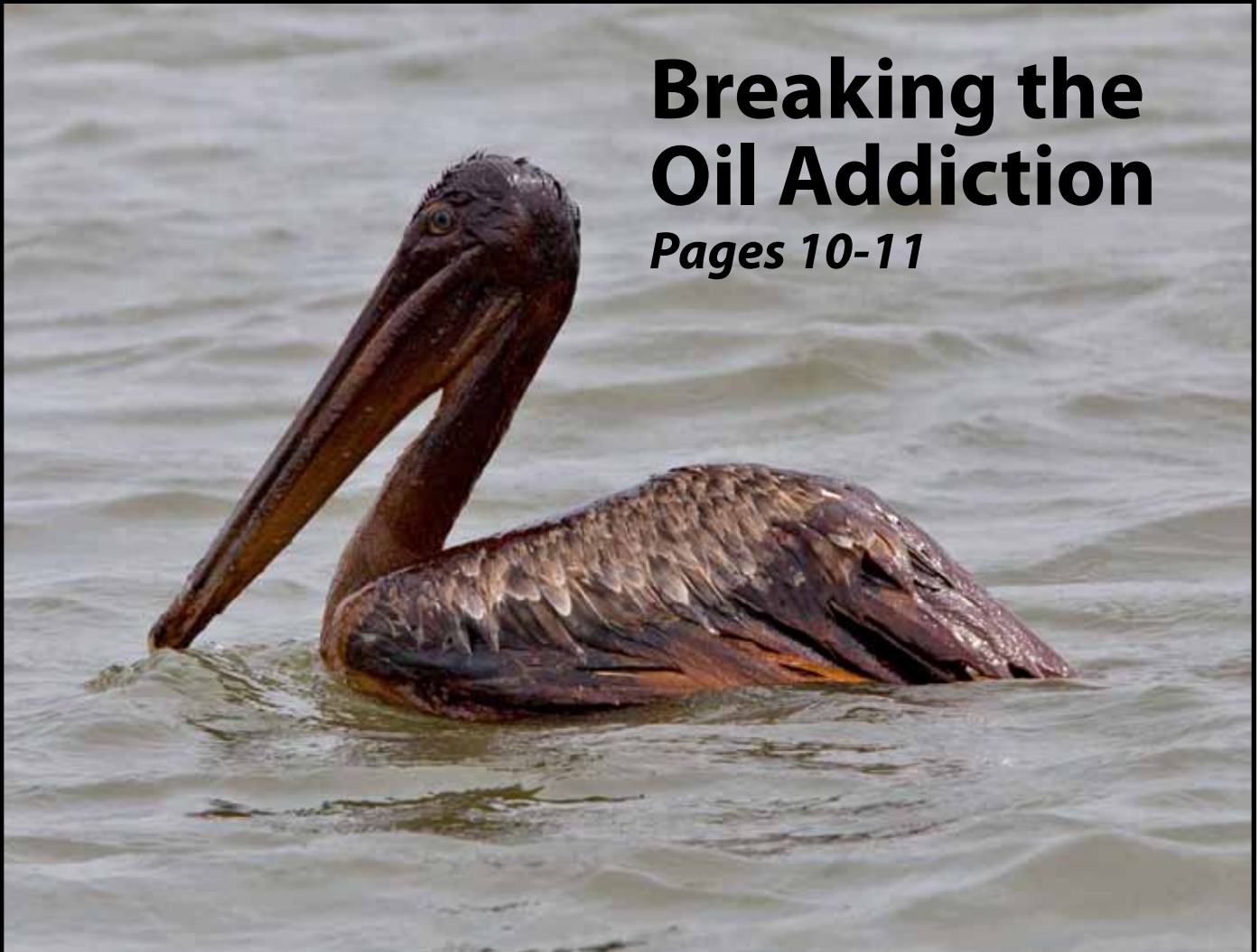


Sierran

To Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet

Breaking the Oil Addiction

Pages 10-11



Legislative Report
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**Photo Contest
Winners** *Pages 16-17*

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FDR: “I Welcome Their Hatred”

By Mark Woodall

Several pundits have noted the similarity of today's political scene to that of the first term of President Franklin D. Roosevelt. In an October 31, 1936 speech, FDR spoke of his first term: “We had to struggle with the old enemies of peace - business and financial monopoly, speculation, reckless banking, class antagonism, sectionalism, war profiteering.” Today, the reckless banking and speculation of AIG, Lehman Brothers, Citigroup, Goldman Sachs, Washington Mutual, Bear Sterns and others have almost succeeded in producing a 1930s style world depression.

The passage of Social Security in 1935 and the financial industry reforms of the New Deal led to a fierce backlash against FDR of which he observed, “Never before in all our history have these forces been so united against one candidate as they stand today. They are unanimous in their hate for me - and I welcome their hatred.”

For the first time since the 1930s, Congress is poised to pass significant financial reform legislation. The anger of American voters over the wreckage of Main Street by the greed of Wall Street seems to be prevailing over the thousands of Big Bank lobbyists now working in Washington DC.

Just as Congress prepares to address the outrageous behavior of the biggest financial corporations, the reckless behavior of British Petroleum has produced possibly the worst environmental disaster in U.S. history. FDR could well have been speaking of BP and the rest of Big Oil when he said: “They had begun to consider the Government of the United States as a mere appendage to their own affairs. We now know that Government by organized money is just as dangerous as Government by organized mob.”

Eight years of the Bush-Cheney administration certainly appears to have reduced the Minerals Management Service, theoretically the regulators of off-shore drilling, to an appendage of the oil companies. While reform of the MMS cannot happen too quickly, what about the more fundamental reform needed to address our dependence on oil which threatens our econom-



Mark Woodall, Chapter Chair

ic security, national security and environment? How long can the U.S. send a billion dollars a day overseas for oil? How long must the residents of Metro Atlanta sit in traffic and suffer from the smog that results from that traffic?

As the horrific consequences of our oil dependence are shown on every newscast, President Obama calls for the passage of clean energy legislation. Changing our current policy will not be easy. As FDR put it “We have not come this far without a struggle and I assure you we cannot go further without a struggle.” BP and the rest of Big Oil are incredibly profitable corporations. The politicians owned by

Big Oil such as Senator Lisa Murkowski of Alaska and Governor Haley Barbour of Mississippi are busy in its service. The front groups of Big Oil such as FreedomWorks, the Heritage Foundation and the Georgia Public Policy Foundation spew a seemingly endless stream of propaganda against government regulation of big corporations.

People power can overcome the defenders of the status quo. Let us all strive now to produce the change needed in our country. Let us emulate FDR and welcome the hatred of the greedy corporations who have done so much damage to the economy and the environment of these United States.

Go to www.sierraclub.org and click on news and then click on press room and the 5/27/2010 Oil on Memorial Day entry to read the new Sierra Club report “Ending our Dependence on Oil”.

Speaking of people power, thanks to all of you who emailed, called, sent letters or contacted your Georgia legislators about the issues of the 2010 legislative session which ended on April 29. As you can read in this issue, significant progress was made in many areas including water conservation, energy efficiency and transportation funding.

ON THE COVER

The oil-covered Brown Pelican has become a defining image of the Gulf Oil Spill of 2010. See pages 10-11 for two perspectives from Georgia Sierrans on the disaster and the lessons we can learn from it. Photo copyright 2010 Julie Dermansky for the Sierra Club.



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What's Next for Water?

By Neill Herring

After years of interstate conflict over water supplies, dramatic economic and population growth, and serial drought, the 2010 Georgia Legislature finally passed its first ever significant conservation law, SB 370, Gov. Perdue's Water Stewardship Act. The old cliché about "better late than never" has seldom seemed more appropriate. It must also be hoped that its companions, "too little, too late," or "day late and a dollar short," do not also apply.

Metro Atlanta faces a water supply crisis that has long resisted least cost solutions such as water conservation. Alternative water supply options are so costly that what has been unacceptable is looking increasingly attractive in contrast. Federal District Judge Paul Magnuson of Minnesota, appointed by the 11th Circuit Court of Appeals to deal with the multiplication of lawsuits over the allocation of the water shared by Georgia, Alabama and Florida, issued a dramatic order one year ago, in July, 2009: GA can no longer rely on Lake Lanier for water supply.

What must happen during the two years remaining in the time allotted for remedy by Judge Magnuson is not going to be easy, but it is unavoidable. Lake Lanier must be reallocated to allow most existing Metro water supply uses for that water to continue. The neighboring states of Alabama and Florida must be convinced that Georgia is serious about equitably sharing the waters of the three states in order for this reallocation to be approved by Congress. So far, agreement has been elusive and the blame seems to rest on GA.

Georgia needs to take several steps to assure the downstream states, and those Georgians who also live downstream, that it will fairly manage the shared waters.

1) GA must stop wasting water. All consumers need to achieve efficiency in

their uses.

2) GA needs to regulate the interbasin transfer of water in the state. No stream, or people depending on it should be benefitted at the expense of others.

3) GA needs to fully utilize existing reservoir storage capacity to meet new supply requirements, expanding those lakes where needed.



Lake Lanier at the height of the 2008 drought (photo via NOAA)

The Water Stewardship is a first step along the path to full realization of the first step. It has been estimated by the Sierra Club's fellow GA Water Coalition members the Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeeper (UCR) and American Rivers that the Stewardship law will save about 24 million gallons per day in Metro by 2035. In order to realize these savings, local governments must enact ordinances to enforce provisions of the Act. Most important among these are local laws to restrict outdoor watering during daylight hours when evaporation wastes most of the irrigation.

While the savings from the Stewardship law are impressive, UCR and American Rivers also looked at other conservation methods that were not included in the law. They found that an additional 120 million to 200 million gallons per day can be saved by residential and commercial users. These savings can come from pricing water to encourage conservation, retrofitting existing

buildings with efficient toilets, preventing leaks of water in distribution systems and by using landscaping that requires less water. (For details, see the fact sheet at www.ucriverkeeper.org.)

The savings outlined above do not include any reductions in the immense volumes of water used in the production of electric power, the state's largest use for water. Some of that water can be saved by energy conservation, an activity in which GA lags the rest of the country.

Interbasin transfers of water, in which water supplies are taken from one stream and discharged into another after use, are robbing the Chattahoochee and the Coosa Rivers, streams that are shared by other states. These transfers also threaten the economic future of all regions downstream from the locations where they occur, mostly in Metro Atlanta. Regulation of this practice in GA is effectively non-existent.

Correction of this mismanagement is vital to reaching agreement with the neighboring states.

North GA has numerous reservoirs built to protect farmland from flooding, but which are not used for water supply. At least 20 of these have been identified as potentially significant supply sources. One such lake, near Commerce, in Jackson Co. spared that community any ill effect during the last drought.

More important that the unused lakes is the additional potential of Lake Lanier. If the elevation of the pool in that reservoir were raised by two feet, an addition to its capacity that could be achieved at a low economic cost, an additional 25 billion gallons of stored water would be made available for downstream uses such as augmented flows, and for water supply. But Florida and Alabama would have to agree to such a change in lake management, and Georgia's next governor must prove to them that he, and the state, are committed to such change.

Energy Conservation Measures Pass

The 2010 Legislative Session saw welcome progress on energy conservation and efficiency measures. HB 493, HB 1069, HB 1388, SR 1231 and SB 194 could help Georgia tap its greatest and most cost effective energy source, energy efficiency.

With the passage of the American Renewal and Reinvestment Act of 2009, Rep. Tyrone Brooks (D-Atlanta) thought that some of the federal stimulus funds could be used to employ young people in home weatherization work, training and equipping them with skills needed in their communities to cut energy use and improve their neighbors' lives.

Rep. Brooks' HB 493 adds "weatherization of private residential property" to the mission of the GA Youth Conservation Corps, with the proviso that only federal stimulus funds may be used for that purpose. Now all that is needed to activate the program is a new round of stimulus funds. Since the current economic recession is still marked by continuing high rates of unemployment in places like GA, it is not unrealistic to expect additional funds for energy conservation to be forthcoming.

When the next round of stimulus funds arrive, the GA Departments of Labor and Natural Resources can use that money to activate the Youth Conservation Corps. The original Civilian Conservation Corps was called "a source of pride for the whole nation," by Pres. Roosevelt, and perhaps one day GA's YCC will inspire similar pride in newly trained and employed young people who may be set on career paths in the energy conservation field.

House Bill 1069, sponsored by Rep. Joe Wilkinson (R-Sandy Springs) passed on the final day of the legislature, April 29. The bill provides for a GA Income Tax credit of \$2500 or 25% of the cost of any project, to any income taxpayer who buys and installs water and energy saving equipment in their home. The purpose of the bill is to encourage conservation, obviously, but also to put skilled trades people, such as plumbers, electricians and HVAC workers back to work after the housing credit boom collapse put them out of work.

The bill is to be funded entirely by federal stimulus appropriations to GA, in such amounts as are available for the purpose, and on a first-come, first-serve basis. The program will end when the federal funds stop flowing, but should a new round of stimulus spending, like that available under the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act of 2009 become available, this program should help many Georgians make needed home improvements, and put many other Georgians back to work.

HB 1388, Property Assessed Clean Energy (PACE) is a new way of financing energy efficiency and green energy developments in residential areas. HB 1388, a form of PACE, was introduced by Rep. Tim Bearden (R-Villa Rica) and passed.

The basic concept of PACE is fairly simple: The value of a house for tax purposes can be increased by investments in the property. Adding solar power, for example, can add to the

value of a house, and reduce the energy cost of living in the home. A local government can sell bonds based on the increase in the value of houses in a community by solar power investment and then lend that money to homeowners to make the necessary improvements to realize the increase in value.

Rep. Bearden's bill allows local tax districts, called Tax Allocation Districts, which can, and have been established in many locations around the state, to undertake the financing of these energy improvements. Billing for the loans issued by these districts can be through ordinary ad valorem tax collections, or even through local water utilities. The loan, like the improvement, remains with the property as new owners come and go, unlike ordinary mortgages which are often paid off and refinanced when property is bought and sold.

While this concept for new residential energy investment is novel for Georgia, it has worked well to speed green energy and conservation efforts in other states, and should find a ready market here, given the low levels of energy conservation found in all of the southeastern states. Innovative alternative sources for energy like residential solar power is even less common than investment in energy conservation.

SR 1231 may mean Georgia is no longer the only state to prohibit its state agencies from entering into multi-year energy conservation contracts. Currently, each contract has to be renewed each year until the job it is designed to perform is finished. This adds cost to administration and reduces efficiency of work. SR 1231, if passed by the voters in November, will allow state agencies to enter into multi-year contracts with firms that will find ways to reduce energy use by the agencies, and the cost of this work will be paid from the savings in energy costs, which will be divided between the state and the contractors.

Senator Ronnie Chance (R-Tyrone) sponsored SR 1231 as well as the enabling bill, SB 194. This is an issue that has been successfully advanced over two years by Jason Rooks, who has become something of a "green energy" specialist in the GA lobbying corps.

Freshwater Turtles to be Protected

Rep. Joe Wilkinson (R-Sandy Springs) is a longtime supporter of all conservation causes. He introduced HB 603 at the request of a number of organizations interested in wildlife protection to stop the commercial harvest of freshwater turtles in GA. The bill did not move in 2009, when it was introduced, because a similar bill in the Senate stalled in the Senate Rules Committee because of opposition by Sen. John Bulloch, who had a constituent who was a turtle trapper and didn't like the bill.

In 2010 Sen. Bulloch's trapper constituent had moved on to another line of work and Sen. Bulloch was indifferent to the turtle matter. So Rep. Wilkinson moved the bill forward after

Charles Seabrook, the Atlanta Journal Constitution nature columnist, wrote a column about the threat to turtles from export to Asia for food use. Sierra Club's Wildlands and Wildlife Campaign provided expert testimony on the need for the bill to the Game Fish and Parks Committee and the bill passed easily. It was then added onto another bill in the Committee, with the easily remembered number of HB 1000, that changed the number of bears that a hunter could take in a season along with another bill to encourage youth hunting and passed the House.

The Senate Natural Resources Committee added another couple of bills that had been lost along the way when they considered HB 1000, and passed it to the Rules Committee. The Rules Committee then neglected to place the measure on the Senate calendar for the final day for bills to be considered, so another number had to be found for the project.

The House had SB 474, by Sen. Don Thomas, that would allow people who hit a bear with their car to keep the carcass of the animal after reporting the death to the DNR. That bill had been placed on the House Rules Calendar for the next to last day of the session, so Rep. Wendell Willard (R-Sandy Springs) consented to moving to send SB 474 back to the Rules Committee where the contents of HB 1000, plus still another bill, dealing with fishing regulations for weakfish, was added on to it the package as well. SB 474 finally passed easily, and was agreed to by the Senate, and is now law, making GA one of the many states set to stop the exploitation of freshwater turtles for exotic food uses.

Good work and congratulations to the Wildlands and Wildlife Campaign!

Garbage Companies Fail to Grab Yard Trimmings

HB 1059 as sponsored by Randy Nix (R-LaGrange) was a big fat bonus for the trash and landfill companies. Waste Management Inc. and Republic were solidly behind the bill which could have allowed them to divert a million tons a year of perfectly good yard trimmings into their landfills. One of their representatives, in talking to the House Agriculture and Consumer Affairs Committee about it, said that "we wrote it." There is no reason to doubt that assertion. Since the 1990s Georgia has prohibited trash firms from mixing yard waste, grass clippings and pruned limbs from trees, with municipal solid waste, garbage. This restriction has resulted in a large volume of GA's waste stream being recycled instead of buried in landfills, saving space for the stuff that needs to be buried, and finding new uses for yard waste, like mulch, compost and even boiler fuel.

An entirely new GA industry has grown up around the recycling of yard waste and other materials now diverted from Georgia Sierran ♣ July/August 2010

landfills. HB 1059 would have shut those businesses down so that the big landfill companies could make more money from their dumps as the tonnage of stuff to be buried would increase. The Dump outfits claimed that they wanted to use the yard waste to make methane that they could sell for energy, but yard waste is a poor source for methane, so that was just a story they were telling. As one industry person pointed out, putting yard waste into landfills to make more methane is the stupidest idea ever proposed.

What was learned during the period when there was a fight about methane was not only that yard waste is not a good source for the gas, but that most landfills leak as much methane as they are able to "capture" in their collection systems. Methane is a dangerous by-product of landfills, and its emission is regulated. It is also a greenhouse gas that is far more harmful than carbon dioxide. The idea that anyone would want to increase the amount of methane being produced in landfills is repellent on its face. That the landfill firms were trying to present the idea of more methane as a positive idea gives an idea of the kinds of distortions that legislators are exposed to daily.

The House leadership and EPD let it be known that no matter what the Agriculture Committee would go along with, they were not falling for any methane fairy tales, so the bill got sent back to Ag, where it was stripped of its methane provisions, but other language in another section of the bill was just as obnoxious to recycling, which is plainly a business the landfill industry wants to control and/or wreck.

The non-methane parts of HB 1059 change the requirements for permits for certain solid waste facilities. If someone wants to open a recycling operation at a landfill, before HB 1059, they had to get what is called a "major modification" permit. That type permit would be a "minor modification," with less stringent permitting requirements under the bill. However, woven into the language about major and minor was a new definition that would have allowed yard waste and other trash to be mixed together in transport, which mingling would have converted yard waste into ordinary solid waste, that would have to be buried in a landfill.

The definition was a back door to the same thing the methane story was written to produce: more trash, more tons of trash, more money for the landfill. The Senate Natural Resources Committee took up this matter under the guidance of Sen. George Hooks, who wrote the original Solid Waste Law in 1990, and stripped the offending amendment to complete the cleanup of the bill.

The bill, reduced to the change from major to minor modifications, finally passed. One obnoxious feature that got through: the landfills are no longer required to report how much material they are diverting from the waste stream to recycling to the Dept. of Community Affairs.

continued on following page

Yard Trimmings, continued from previous page

The Solid Waste industry is suffering, as are most industries, during the current economic recession. The volume of trash in America has declined, which should be good news, in the light of protecting the environment. HB 1059 was a fairly desperate effort to restore lost profits to the dump business. It is unlikely to be the last such effort.

HB 207 Bans ATV Racing in Streams

Environmental groups, hunting and fishing organizations and landowners have been wrestling with the problem of the abuse of all terrain vehicles (ATVs) for years at the General Assembly. The issue first surfaced about 10 years ago, when some legislators attempted to make operation of ATVs on public roads legal. It took about three sessions to beat that effort back and to force the Revenue Department to order some counties to stop selling license plates to ATV owners, which those people thought made their machines "street legal."

Next the effort turned to trying to regulate the machines for safety purposes, since the accident rates, particularly for children, are quite high from misuse of the machines. That effort, which lasted several years, ultimately failed because a number of legislators regarded such regulation as needless interference with the rights of ATV owners. During that period the number and power of the machines in use all over the state increased considerably. The incidences of machines being driven into streams was steadily increasing and vandalism of property along streams was also being reported more often.

Law enforcement was hamstrung to do much about the machines in streams, particularly the use of streams as pathways onto private property, where abuses were occurring. Driving the machines in streams was not unlawful. The only case that could be made by law enforcement were those involving driving on roads, which is illegal. A movement of property owners along the Satilla River in southeast GA, working through the Satilla Riverkeeper organization, finally took the lead in dealing with this problem. A two-pronged approach was used.

The Satilla landowners got their county, Brantley, to enact a local ordinance that made running the machines in streams illegal in that county. They pushed their local legislative delegation to get a state law that would do the same thing state-wide. Aided by Trout Unlimited in north Georgia, members of which were encountering ATVs in fishing holes, pressure was mounted in the legislature for action. Finally, in 2009, the House passed a bill, HB 207 sponsored by Rep. Chuck Sims (R-Ambrose) to make operating the machines in streams illegal, but it stalled at the end of the session in Senate Rules.

In 2010 the Satilla folks and their fishing buddies from north GA started back to work and finally got a bill that makes operation of ATVs in streams a civil offense. The bill that passed allows fines for such operation of not less than \$25 by local law enforcement. This law is expected to bring a welcome change in the way Georgians use their streams, all over the state, by making them safe from machines. It will also help law enforcement protect property along streams from vandalism by giving them an enforcement tool: if you are riding a four wheeler in a stream, you are breaking the law.

This law took 10 years to finally get, and without the support of folks on the ground, all over GA, who care deeply about our state's waters, it would still be unpassed.

- Mark Woodall

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MARTA, continued from previous page

being chosen by the existing MARTA jurisdictions (Atlanta, Fulton and DeKalb). For all of the imperfections of the bill, it does offer a shining ray of hope. As MARTA is cutting bus service by 11%, pushing rail service back to 20 minute frequencies and cutting 743 positions, section five of the bill allows for a possible MARTA expansion.

Section five exempts the MARTA sales tax from the state statutory sales tax cap, removing a longstanding obstacle to the expansion of MARTA to counties beyond the existing MARTA service area. The initial plans for MARTA drawn up in the 1960s covered a five-county area, to include Clayton, Gwinnett, and Cobb counties in addition to Fulton and DeKalb. As MARTA came to a vote in the 70s, only Fulton and DeKalb choose to opt-in. Clayton and Gwinnett counties twice voted against MARTA and the issue was never brought to a vote in Cobb.

There is a five step process that must be set into motion in the next few weeks in order for the vote to happen. It begins with the MARTA board instructing MARTA staff to create a plan for expansion into the proposed county. If the board passes the plan and adopts the amendment to MARTA's contract, a sixty day window starts, during which the county in question may adopt the amendment as well. Through adoption by the respective county commission, the vote to pass an additional one-cent sales tax to go to MARTA is added to the ballot in November.

The way in which HB 277 and the MARTA Act are written requires that the only time the vote may happen under current legislation is this November. Once that window passes, there is not another time this vote to happen without new legislation. But this vote could be crucial for the region.

C-Tran, the public transportation system in Clayton was shut down at the end of March of this year. If Clayton County were to vote to join MARTA it would bring transit back to the county. But more than restoring the bus service that once was, the adoption of MARTA by Clayton would be an expansion of service for those residents and MARTA. The sales tax is estimated to come in at \$50 million a year. This would allow for additional bus routes, paratransit and express bus service as well as Georgia's first commuter rail line from Lovejoy to Atlanta. It would bring a surge of economic growth to the region.

This amendment also offers the same potential for growth in Cobb and Gwinnett counties, including connecting the proposed light rail line along Cobb Parkway to MARTA heavy rail service in the city and expanded service in Gwinnett. It's the potential to solidify MARTA's place as a world-class transit system and a step towards seeing the Concept 3 plan come to life while making Atlanta a healthier place to live.

**take
action**

Contact county commissioners in Clayton, Cobb and Gwinnett! Tell them you want funding dedicated to transit, through the MARTA sales tax, to implement Concept 3!

State, Regional Panels to Study Transit Governance

The complex organization and governance of the Atlanta region's public transit system will get a fresh look in the coming year, thanks to a provision included in H.B. 277, the wide-ranging Transportation Investment Act of 2010. The Transit Governance Study Commission, authorized in Section 7 of the bill, will be composed of state legislators and regional officials, and is charged with preparing a report on how the myriad agencies providing transit services can be better integrated and streamlined.

The fractured nature of transit in Atlanta is an issue of increasing concern to metro residents. Twenty-five years ago, MARTA, which provides bus and rail service in Fulton and DeKalb counties, was the only major transit provider in the region. Since then, numerous suburban transit agencies and the GRTA Xpress bus system have come online, complicating the task of providing a seamless experience to transit riders.

A related effort at the regional level is the Regional Transit Committee (RTC), a newly-established policy committee of the Atlanta Regional Commission. Comprised of representatives of local governments and transportation agencies, the RTC is continuing the work of predecessors such as the Transit Planning Board, which developed the ambitious Concept 3 vision depicted on the previous page. For further information and meeting times, visit www.atlantaregional.com/rtc.



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Petitions Identify Major Flaws in Coal-fired Power Plant Permits

By Justine Thompson

On May 10, 2010, Sierra Club and partner organizations filed an unprecedented five lawsuit challenging permits for two major proposed coal-fired power plants in Georgia. These lawsuits were filed in response to a wave of permits issued by the state Environmental Protection Division (EPD) in April. Within a 24 hour period, EPD issued most of the permits needed for these two plants. The law provides only 30 days for appeals to be filed. Undaunted by the state's attempt to overwhelm the opposition, environmentalists are fighting back with important claims against the water and air pollution permits proposed for Plant Washington, to be built in Sandersville, and against the air pollution permit for Longleaf Energy Station, to be built in Early County.

The challenges to the Longleaf Energy Station were brought by GreenLaw, on behalf of Sierra Club and Friends of the Chattahoochee. Longleaf is a project of New Jersey-based LS Power, which anticipates selling power to the highest bidders it can find. In the 1200 mega-watt Longleaf permit, EPD classifies Longleaf as a minor source of pollution, while the other proposed coal-fired plant, the 850 mega-watt Plant Washington (in a permit issued the day before), is classified as a major source. Listing Longleaf as a minor source allows the power plant to avoid critical requirements that would ensure that the Plant is operated in compliance with the law. EPD also granted Longleaf an extension on when it must begin construction. This extension will allow the Plant to be built with outdated technology. Challengers are asking that EPD ensure that the permit is up-to-date.

Challengers have already scored a victory on Longleaf. On June 2, 2010, an Administrative Law Judge dismissed the appeal further delaying this project that was first proposed in 2001. The dismissal came after the Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) withdrew the permit amendments voluntarily. EPD issued two permit amendments to Longleaf in April 2010, but failed to allow adequate public notice and comment on the amendments as required by state and federal

EMISSIONS OVERVIEW	Plant Washington	Plant Longleaf
Nitrogen Oxides	1345 tons/year	2689 tons/year
Sulfur Dioxide	1890 tons/year	5647 tons/year
Particulate Matter (10)	654 tons/year	1855 tons/year
Particulate Matter (2.5)	447 tons/year	1361 tons/year
Mercury	63 lbs/year	88 lbs/year
Carbon Dioxide	6.9M tons/year	9.7M tons/year
Volatile Organic Compounds	87 tons/year	194 tons/year
Carbon Monoxide	3635 tons/year	5378 tons/year
Lead	1163 lbs/year	1936 lbs/year

law. Even though EPD sent draft permit amendments out for public comment in July 2009, the permit amendments issued in April 2010 were drastically different than those originally proposed.

Just a week after the appeals were filed, EPD stated in documents filed with the court that it agrees to re-send the permit amendments out for public comment. The Court agreed and dismissed the appeals. The dismissals have once again halted plans for the Longleaf Energy Station. EPD quickly scheduled a public hearing in Early County (July 1st) and is accepting comments until July 6th. If EPD does not make the necessary changes to the permit, further litigation is expected sometime in the Fall.

Plant Washington, which is being contested by the Fall-line Alliance for a Clean Environment (FACE) and Sierra Club, as well as Altamaha Riverkeeper (for the water permit only), and Southern Alliance for Clean Energy (SACE) and Ogeechee Riverkeeper (both organizations for the air permit only), is a project of Power4Georgians, a company composed of Cobb EMC and four other EMCs.

The Plant Washington air permit fails to set safe limits on harmful air pollutants that would be emitted by Plant Washington, including sulfuric acid mist and particulate matter. Particulate matter is linked to respiratory illnesses, heart disease and even premature death.

The state water withdrawal permit fails to set necessary limits on the amount of water the plant can take from the Oconee River for use at a proposed plant located in the Ogeechee River watershed. Without adequate limits, communities such as Dublin, area farms and other downstream users along the Oconee River would be left without sufficient water resources.

The state water discharge permit fails to limit the temperature of heated wastewater discharged by the proposed plant into the Oconee River, changing the river's ecology, depleting available oxygen in its waters, and harming fish and other wildlife that depend on the river system. Court dates are expected later this summer.

Chapter ExCom Candidates Wanted

The chapter nominating committee is seeking candidates for the executive committee (ExCom). The chapter ExCom has oversight responsibility for the Georgia chapter of the Sierra Club to ensure it is carrying out our mission productively. If you know of someone who would be a good ExCom member, or you are interested in serving yourself, contact Ashley at ashley.robbyns@georgia.sierraclub.org. Candidates must be nominated by August 31st, 2010.

Oil Addiction: The Time Is Now to Pass Green Energy Legislation

By Jordan Howard

Since April 20th, 2010, millions of gallons of oil have been pumped into the Gulf of Mexico by a well owned by British Petroleum. The total extent of the oil could reach as far east as the Florida Keys and as far west as Central Texas. The time to act to end the United States addiction to oil is now. The oil spill demonstrates that oil drilling is dirty, risky, and dangerous. The local beaches and the local economies along the gulf coast have been devastated by the oil spill and it will likely take years before the region can reclaim its former beauty.

While BP is claiming that only around 5,000 barrels of oil per day are leaking into the gulf, satellite imaging suggests that the number is closer to 100,000 barrels of oil per day, which would be roughly 40 million gallons of oil have been lost to the gulf since the accident. To give that perspective, Americans currently use about 20 million barrels of oil per day, more than 10 days worth of oil have been lost at the expense of our coasts and waters at the time this article is being written. All this time, the oil industry is raking in billions of dollars in profits to fund energy that has a timeline on it, that damages our environment, and that there

is simply not enough of for America to become energy independent (We currently have 3% of the world's oil reserves whereas Saudi Arabia has around 20%).

While a recent poll by Public Policy Polling indicated that a majority of Americans still favor offshore drilling, the oil spill



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has made a strong plurality, 43% less likely to support future drilling efforts. As the full effects of the spill become more apparent to the American public, this number is likely to continue to increase and number in support of offshore drilling is likely to decrease.

However, this disaster needs to serve as a wake up call to all those who support

offshore drilling. If this tragedy can happen in the Gulf of Mexico then it can happen anywhere. In addition, we will likely be feeling the effects of this oil spill for decades to come. Even the Exxon Valdez oil spill of 1989 has not been completely cleaned up over twenty years later. How many more spills will it take before we as Americans get together and realize we need to put ourselves on a path of sustainable, renewable energies?

To prevent a disaster of the magnitude from occurring again we need a smart, clean energy solution that will rid our country of oil while investing in clean energies such as wind and solar energy. With these types of energies we would no longer have to rely on dangerous oil rigs that puts people lives at risk while also damaging our planet; after all, how many times have you heard of a "toxic solar spill"? The country's coasts are loved and admired by millions of people and by continuously drilling we will run the risk of further damage to the coastline. The BP oil disaster needs to be the last time that there is an oil spill. President Obama needs to announce an ambitious plan to end our country's addiction to oil and Congress needs to act on pending energy legislation to ensure that our future is safe, clean, and enjoyable for all.



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The Real Lesson is About Risk

By Steve Willis

As the world population's ruthless exploitation of natural resources and addictive consumer culture keep growing and growing, we all must make more and more difficult choices. How are we going to live? Which social and economic strategies are we going to support? Where and when we will take action, or not? The greatest impact will come from the choices we make about governance: which politicians will we support? Which laws? Which policies?

The great BP Gulf Oil Spill of 2010, (and hopefully not of 2011, 2012, etc.) provides us with an excellent opportunity to consider something we need to be very clear about: risk. The real lesson of the BP disaster is not about technology, corporations, or oil, but about how flawed thinking can produce calamitous results.

We have all heard the terms cost-benefit and risk analyses, but most of us haven't thought about these concepts very seriously. This is too bad, because decision making without consideration of these factors is a crap shoot, generally coming down to gut feelings or going along with our favorite partisan talking head, whether they be conservative or progressive.

Essentially, the cost-benefit-risk analysis process is much less mysterious than many analysts might portray it. If something costs more to do than the benefits you might reasonably expect to gain from it, it isn't a good idea. If the risk from doing something exceeds the benefits minus the costs, it isn't a good idea.

While the notions of cost and benefit are more or less self-explanatory, risk can be more complex because external circumstances affect risk (e.g., a house is more likely to blow down as wind speeds increase), there are predictable particular factors affecting risk (the likelihood of a house burning down increases with the number of habitual smokers living in it, how much they smoke, and whether or not they drink excessively, as well). There are also many possible risk scenarios, from the most likely to the least likely, and from the least damaging to the worst case scenario.

The marketing and public relations businesses have created an ethos which makes no attempt to think clearly or discuss fairly, but which unfailingly promotes narrow self interests by any means necessary. These folks, especially when speaking in favor of some obviously risky project, will usually claim that it is impossible to assess risk, especially worst case scenarios. "Oh, you mean if there was an explosion in the middle of an earthquake, during a hurricane, while being hit by a meteor?" These people have engendered a precipitous decline in the quality of American discourse. Follow the money and you will almost always quickly understand what they are getting at.

Realistic worst case scenarios are usually not hard to imagine. Often they have already occurred. What is the worst case scenario for an off-shore oil rig disaster? Expanding natural gas and escaping oil will rush out unstoppably and devastate an entire region of ocean and coast. A nuclear reactor? A Chernobyl

event. A Liquefied Natural Gas tank farm? A gas cloud could spread over many square miles before being ignited, then burning to death everything within its coverage. Unchecked carbon emissions from burning fossil fuels? Almost certain extinction of thousands of species of life forms, the devastation of the world as we know it, and a greater loss of human life than in all wars men have fought up to now put together – and possible extinction.

Sometimes we rationally make our peace and accept the nasty price risk exacts: cars collide, planes crash, ships sink. We try to manage the risk, but we know that it is impossible to eliminate it altogether. We choose to accept the consequences.

We must not fool ourselves into believing we can simply be so careful that what could happen won't happen. Given enough time and opportunity, what can happen will happen. There is a simple rule to follow: if you can't live with the consequences of an activity's worst case risk scenario, do not let that activity happen.

This is the lesson thoughtful environmentalists have been repeating for decades. It will be a tragedy indeed if we walk away from the Gulf disaster thinking it was just one more disconnected event and fail to recognize that human technology has become far too hazardous for us to continue to be so irresponsible about its risks. The planet can't live with the consequences of that.



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Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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The Volunteer Experience at AWARE In Their Own Words

By Linda Potter, Volunteer Coordinator, AWARE

In the last *Sierran*, you were introduced to AWARE, Atlanta's Wild Animal Rescue Effort. AWARE exists because of the dedicated volunteer efforts of many people several of which are highlighted below.

Stephanie Philippo

Stephanie has been volunteering at AWARE, since the organization began building its current wildlife center in 2006 and has trained many of the volunteers at AWARE.



"Volunteering at AWARE has changed the way I view the world. Before AWARE, I knew that people, animals, and the environment were all interconnected. Now, I understand that.

A hawk that has eaten a poisoned rat. An opossum that has been hit by a car. A songbird that has been attacked by a cat. A baby squirrel that has been orphaned because its tree was cut down. These are the kinds of animals that AWARE receives—and they are all in need of help because of human actions. I feel privileged to work with these animals and to release so many of them back to the wild. It makes me feel as though I am doing my part to mitigate some of the damage that we as humans are doing to the world around us.

Through AWARE, I also have the opportunity to spread my new-found understanding to the public. With every person who contacts AWARE about an animal comes the chance to educate them about that species and its importance to our ecosystem. I know that when a person walks out the door after bringing us a bunny, an owl, a chipmunk, or whatever, he or she will never view that species the same way again. And that is what makes my AWARE volunteer experience so special to me—not only has it changed my view of the world, it has allowed me to change the views of others as well."

Marjan Ghardrdan

Marjan has also been a volunteer with AWARE since 2006.

"I wanted to become a volunteer because I wanted to work with animals after I went to college. When I found AWARE, it sounded like a different experience than what I have had in the past. When I learned more about AWARE, I realized

I wanted to do my part to replenish what is being destroyed by man and urbanization and help reduce my footprint on the Earth.

AWARE has become one of the greatest aspects of my life. The people at AWARE have become like a family to me, they have taught me so much about wildlife as well as courage, responsibility, and respect. I enjoy my time at AWARE and I get fulfillment from making a difference in this world by being a voice for wildlife."

Tiffany Baird

"I came to AWARE in September 2007 and kept coming back to AWARE because of all of the wonderful things the organization was doing—not only direct animal care, but also education. As a result of volunteering, I am much more "aware" of my environment and of my wild animal neighbors. I have also had the privilege of watching my family and friends' respect for the environment and wildlife increase as they have listened to my stories, toured the facility, and started paying more attention to nature around them. Moreover, the fact that AWARE is completely volunteer-run means that you get to work with people who share your passion. That energy, in and of itself, is inspiring.

If I had to offer one piece of advice to someone who was interested in volunteering at the center, I would say: Volunteering is a serious, and often tiring, commitment. The animals and the public depend on us. Nevertheless, it is one of the most life-changing commitments you can make."



Justine Thompson

Justine began volunteering with AWARE in 2009.

"Feeling a bit weary from years of challenging coal plants, I made my way to AWARE and found needed inspiration to carry on the good fight. Within weeks of volunteering at AWARE, I knew that I would keep coming back for years to come. Words are hard to find to describe the amazement and joy I feel when



I interact with the animals at AWARE. Perhaps you have felt it too - when you are out hiking and you happen upon a fox, watch a hawk fly overhead, hear an owl hooting in your back-

continued on next page



Atlantans Play in the Street at First "Atlanta Streets Alive!"

By Samantha Sayer

Atlanta held its first *ciclovia* on Sunday, May 23rd, and almost 6,000 participants came out to bike, skate, dance, run, walk, and soak up the sun on 1.7 miles of car-free streets in downtown Atlanta. Edgewood Avenue and nearby Woodruff and Hurt Parks were lined with free activities ranging from Zumba, Capoeira, belly dancing, tai chi, and break dancing performances and lessons, to hula hooping, obstacle courses, recycling-themed relay races, pedicab rides, circus performers, live music, and street chalking. Neighborhood businesses, including the historic Sweet Auburn Curb Market, joined in the festivities with special Sunday hours and offers. Fresh fruit, juices, organic snacks, and frozen treats were available from street vendors lining the sidewalks.

The Sierra Club, along with other environmental and pro-transit organizations including the Captain Planet Foundation, the BeltLine, and Citizens for Progressive Transit participated. The Club's "Camping Challenge" tested participants' speed in building a camping

tent. The Jenkins family of Atlanta won the contest with a time of 1 minute, 27 seconds. Volunteers also distributed information on "leave no trace" camping



Vanessa Toro / Everyday Celebrations Photography

ethics and camping recipes.

ASA attendees were encouraged to walk, bike, or take MARTA to the event. The Atlanta Bicycle Coalition provided free bike parking and organized volunteer-led group rides of a 4.4 mile loop extending beyond the road closures.

The idea of the *ciclovia* first started 30 years ago in Bogotá, Columbia, when city officials and activists, struggling with overwhelming traffic and unsafe spaces for pedestrians and bicyclists, worked to close several streets to cars for a single day. Today the *ciclovia* is a weekly event that draws over 1.5 million residents and opens up more than 70 miles of streets for people to participate in all kinds of free health and community-oriented events – every Sunday. The concept has spread to cities around the world from Tokyo, Paris, Ottawa and Mexico City, to NYC, Miami, Chicago, Portland and San Francisco in the US.

Atlanta Streets Alive is organized by the Atlanta Bicycle Coalition in partnership with organizations including the Centers for Disease Control, Central Atlanta Progress, the Atlanta Regional Commission, and Councilman Kwanza Hall. They hope to hold ongoing events that engage local residents and serve as a model for healthy, sustainable urban living.

The next Atlanta Streets Alive is planned for this fall. Get involved at www.atlantastreetsalive.com.

AWARE, continued from previous page

yard, or see dolphins swimming in the ocean. I feel that sense of wonderment and delight each time I am at AWARE. From feeding tiny squirrels formula with a syringe to hanging out with education ambassador animals, I have found new inspiration that I can use to enrich and inspire my work of taking on Georgia's biggest polluters."

Conclusion

Each of these volunteers brings different backgrounds and experiences, but they have each found that volunteering at AWARE has been worthwhile and has enriched their lives.

Contact me at (404) 395-2428 or Linda.AWARE@gmail.com, if you are interested in a fulfilling experience working with wild animals.

Social Corner

It's an exciting time for the Sierra Club in Georgia and we've been busy. In May we protested the BP oil spill in Tybee Island and in June we participated in Hands Across the Sands. Help us keep the momentum going by joining us at one of these upcoming events.

Monday, July 19th join us at the office in Decatur for a Sierran Kids Camp Day. Kids are invited to come to the office for a day of fun, volunteering, and learning about the environment and why we need to protect our planet. Lunch and snacks will be provided but children must be signed up prior to July 9th. Cost is \$15 per child.

On **Saturday, August 28th** join us for a MARTA Pub Crawl to help bring awareness of the potential to expand transit in the Atlanta region. We'll meet at the Sierra Club office at 7:00 PM, don't forget your Breeze Card!

For questions, to volunteer with the Kids' Day, or to RSVP to these events, please e-mail Ashley at ashley.robbyns@georgia.sierraclub.org

Georgia Chapter Conservation Retreat • August 20-22

The Georgia Chapter Conservation Committee invites you to attend a Weekend at Wahsega. This will be an opportunity for you to meet and network with other Georgia Sierra Club leaders, both from our several Groups and from the Chapter level. You will have an opportunity to gather information, ask questions and learn about the National and Chapter conservation priorities, some of our Group successes and challenges, and what you can do to protect Georgia's unique environments.

Workshops will include topics such as "Marketing Your Message in the 21st Century – How and When to use Face-

book, Convio, Meet-ups and old fashioned tabling or phone-banks" and "A Claen Energy Future for Georgia". Of course, we'll also have presentations by our Conservation Committee Chairs on the work they are doing, and how you can get involved, plus some hikes to nearby waterfalls, etc.

All this and more at one of Georgia's great 4H camps in North Georgia, with plentiful meals and dormitory housing. For a look at the camp, go to www.wahsega4h.org. You will need to bring your own bedding and bath items (sleeping bag and pillow, or sheets and blankets, towels and your "10 essentials" kit).

If you require more luxurious lodging, or a tv, there are a number of motels in the Dahlonega area. If you prefer to tent camp, please call Genie Strickland to ensure that there is a campsite available for you. Camping is very limited. Please do not just assume there will be camping available for you. Call Genie first!

If you have questions or need more information, please call:

Terry Jones, 706-549-9643, or
Genie Strickland – 404-607-1262,
ext. 221

Georgia Chapter Conservation Retreat Registration Form

August 20 - 22, 2010 • Camp Wahsega, Dahlonega, Ga.

We would prefer that you attend all meals and all training sessions on both Saturday and Sunday, in order to get the full benefit of the training and team building. However, we understand that some may not be able to attend the full weekend. If that is the case, please sign up for as much of the weekend as you are able to attend.

Number of persons needing a vegetarian meal: _____ Special diet?: _____

Name(s) of those attending: _____

Phone Number: _____ Email: _____

What topics are you most interested in learning more about? _____

Registration Fee: \$15.00 (everyone attending must pay the registration fee) \$ _____

Dorm/Camping: \$14.00 per night, per person \$ _____

We want to camp. There will be _____ persons in the tent.

Saturday Breakfast: \$7.00

Saturday Lunch: \$8.00

Saturday Dinner: \$8.50

Sunday Breakfast: \$7.00

Sunday Lunch: \$8.00

Total Cost of our meals \$ _____

Grand total (registration fee, housing and meals) \$ _____

Please mail your registration form and check made payable to: Georgia Chapter Sierra Club
c/o Genie Strickland
743 E. College Ave., Unit B
Decatur, GA 30030

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

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Visit the Georgia Chapter donation webpage at
http://action.sierraclub.org/ga_donate

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 gregory.schwartz@sierraclub.org or 404-607-1262 ext. 225.

Centennial Group Photography Contest Winners

Animals in Motion



First Prize:
Ina Allison for *Pelicans in Sunset*



Second Prize:
Carina O'Bara for *Alligator in Pond*



Third Prize:
Wolfgang Tiedtke for *Cormorants in Fog*

Animal Portraits



First Prize:
Bob Springfield for *Crab on Beach*



Second Prize:
Ina Allison for *Toad in Grass*



Third Prize:
Bob Springfield for *Caterpillar*

Centennial Group

**Photography Contest Winners,
Continued from previous page**

Landscapes



First Prize:

Jane Springfield for Arches National Park



Second Prize:

Joerg Voss for Bryce Canyon



Third Prize:

Danny Whisnant for Flower in Blue

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.

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

July 1: Join us for the Centennial Group annual picnic and BBQ, from 7:00 to 9:00 at the East Cobb Park, 3322 Roswell Road in Marietta. The ex Centennial Group will provide meats and drinks, members to bring a side dish to share. In order to reduce trash, please, bring your own dishes and flatware.

August 5: Rex Hauck with the Alliance for Climate Protection will speak with the group. The Alliance for Climate Protection was founded in 2006 by former Vice President Al Gore and has 5,000,000 members worldwide committed to educating the global community about the urgency of implementing comprehensive solutions to the climate crisis.

Meetings: The Centennial Group meets at 7 p.m. on the first Thursday of every month (except this July) 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.

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

We meet the 2nd Tuesday each month.

July 13: Annual Picnic at Candler Park, Atlanta, 6:30 - 8:00 pm

The entrance is from McClendon Avenue, which runs between Moreland Avenue and Clifton Road. Bring a food dish to share. The Atlanta Group will provide drinks, utensils, etc - OR be conscientious and bring your own plates and utensils. We plan to be at the usual pavilion across from the pool. You may come as early as 6:30 PM. We usually have a fire for those who want to barbecue, but if you want to do that please bring something to burn (just in case no one else does). **NOTE LOCATION AND TIME for this special event only.**

August 10: Trust for Public Land

The Trust for Public Land is a national non-profit that has been saving land for people – from cities to wilderness – since 1972. In Georgia, TPL has secured 21,000 acres for current and future generations, including important habitat, special historic sites, water sources, and land for parks and trails. Come learn about how some of the places we love are protected by TPL. Our speaker Helen Tapp, AICP, is director of TPL's Georgia office. A land and transportation planner, Helen has worked for government, non-profits and the private sector. A native Georgian, she is pleased to be working with a group that delivers tangible results in communities statewide.

Doors open at 7:00 p.m., program begins at 7:30. Church of the Epiphany, 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave.

Meeting Location: Metro Atlanta Group General membership meetings are held at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, 2089 Ponce de Leon Ave. at the intersection of with 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. MARTA Bus 2 also runs on Ponce de Leon between North Avenue and Avondale stations.

Birding in Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve



By Marcia Abrams

Though we have been walking this marshland nature preserve many times, my husband, Norman and I never saw so many birds. In fact when we first discovered this place, there was no water at all because of the recent drought. On this outing with Atlanta Audubon Society leader Lisa Hurt, we learned to “observe” birds with our eyes and with our ears. Fascinating sounds like “peter, peter” for the titmouse or “drink your tea” for the towhee or towhee. We learned that some birds are residents, while some are migrants – just passing through.

What a difference it makes to learn how to use a good pair of binoculars!! Thanks to Art Hurt who showed me how to properly adjust them. And I was just going to share my husband's – duh!

Walking just a short distance into this 28-acre preserve, we walked onto an observation deck overlooking a picturesque marshland. The marsh alone was beautiful to see with the mist hovering low, but then we spied two handsome wood ducks drifting through the fog/mist. Soon we spied a goose sitting on her nest. The male takes his turn keeping the eggs warm – I didn't know that either. Gnatcatchers, rough-winged swallows, goldfinches, a pileated woodpecker and of course, robins and cardinals were all around for us to observe from this one location.

Unfortunately we had to leave early this time, but definitely will do it again. So much to see – so much to learn and enjoy in this great environment of ours that Sierra Club members and others help to preserve!!!



“Clyde Shepherd Nature Preserve (formerly South Peachtree Creek Nature Preserve) is located in the Medlock Park neighborhood of DeKalb County. The entrance is located at the intersection of Wood Trail Lane and Pine Bluff Road. The 28-acre nature preserve opened in 1995 under the management of South Peachtree Creek Nature Preserves, Inc., (SPCNP) a non-profit, neighborhood organization with the goal of preserving natural spaces in the South Peachtree Creek watershed. SPCNP Inc. maintains the property for the protection of wildlife and the enjoyment of our neighbors and other visitors.”

For more information, please visit <http://www.cshepherdpreserve.org/>

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* Denotes a member of the Metro Atlanta Group Executive Committee.	

Granmaw Gordon, Storied Lake Claire Pecan Tree, in Peril

By D. Gordon Draves

There is one last wooded area along DeKalb Avenue, but soon it may disappear from the Lake Claire area of east Atlanta. Red X's have been painted on the trunks of the trees, including a 130-year old pecan tree named Granmaw Gordon. Unless a compromise is reached, this half acre of greenspace will become 10 condos.

Not only is there a nature story here, but also history. This is the last remnant of the 86.5 acres known as Sutherland Estate owned by General John Brown Gordon who served with Lee during the fracas of the 1860's and served as Georgia's U.S. Senator, Governor for two terms, and again as Senator. It was named after his wife's lineage, and they had the habit of naming their trees after family members.

The potential pocket park is much better suited to the housing in the area of Gordon Avenue. Then just down the road a block west is an old house that is really an eyesore, if you can see it through the out of control mulberry trees, and it is falling down. Plus there is a group of stores that are closed and for sale. A developer would be doing the neighborhood a favor by taking down that house or shops and putting in new condos. But another block farther west are the Sutherland Corners town homes that are in foreclosure. So is there a need to sacrifice Granmaw Gordon for more housing that may not sell?

The park area needs attention for the grass is 3.5' tall and there are purple thistles, which are very appropriate because the Gordon and Sutherland families were Scots and thistle is the national flower of Scotland. However, it might take a bushhog to covert it into a park with a pavilion, bike racks, picnic tables and other amenities.

According to the petition by the Save Granmaw Gordon group, "the Neighborhood Organization and NPU-N voted against the developer's plan." Their website also announces a very important benefit of keeping Granmaw in good condition: "She appears resistant to Pecan Scab, a fungus that costs Pecan growers across the Southeast millions. The USDA is interested in testing her further to determine if she could revolutionize the pecan industry. She is a historic and biological treasure and deserves to be saved." <http://www.granmawgordon.com/>

Teri Stewart is one of the residents of the area who has become very involved with the effort to save Granmaw. She is a master gardener and pledges to keep the area in good condition when the tensions are over. Her presentation on the Sutherland Estate was a big hit at the DeKalb County History Center in the Old DeKalb County Courthouse recently. She mixed the history of Fannie and the General through the war with the events coming down to today. Fannie helped her husband from one of the battlefields and nursed him for months. Their first house burned down, and then was replaced. But after his death in 1904, she wasn't able to hold onto the house, or the rest of the property including Granmaw. Fannie died in 1931, and then in 1942 the house was torn down—a great loss to Georgia history.

Now the estate is down to a half-acre on DeKalb Avenue halfway between Edgewood-Candler Park and East Lake MARTA stations. Bus 123 provides easy access, and bike lanes are close by. If you are interested in helping preserve this greenspace, please go to the website. Contributions can be made through Park Pride using that same site. But time is running out for Granmaw.

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Birth of an Earth Day Tradition in Gwinnett

Earth Day 2010, the 40th such annual celebration of people committed to taking a greater role in the health and well-being of our planet, was celebrated in Gwinnett twice this year by the Greater Gwinnett Group. Our initial celebration took place in Suwanee on April 17th as we gathered along the banks of Suwanee Creek for our monthly Adopt-a-Stream monitoring which featured a post-monitoring picnic and clean-up of the Suwanee Creek Greenway Trail. As last year, we reached out to interested passers-by on the trail to explain the monitoring and tout the efforts of the Sierra Club. It was a beautiful day and we capped it off by collecting four trash bags of litter along the trail.

On the actual Earth Day, we literally planted the seeds of environmentalism in our youth by organizing and leading a tree and seed planting at Chattahoochee Elementary School in Duluth. Parapro, Shannon Keller, resident environmental champion at the school, helped guide 190 kindergarten students through a fantastic nature learning experience for kids, teachers and parents on that sunny day. Thanks to the generous donation of approximately \$300 worth of specimen maple and cherry trees from Buck Jones Nursery in Grayson, we were able to do our part to provide much needed-shade for the kids and habitat for birds and other living creatures in the playground area. The children eagerly helped us plant the trees after their little seed-planting party that Tamyra Hyatt of our group



helped organize.

By the many questions that were asked, it was evident that they soaked up a great deal of knowledge during the day's activities. The kids will get to enjoy the fruits of their labor as they watch the trees grow over the next few years. They will also play a part in caring for the trees and really showed a genuine concern that the trees grow big and strong and stay healthy for many years to come.

We plan on this being an annual event as we involve other schools in future Earth Day tree plantings in Gwinnett. Special thanks go out to Tamyra, Michael Hallen, and Art Sheldon for their dedication and hard work to make this a very successful community event. The tree planting made the front page in the following day's Gwinnett Daily Post with headline, story and nice photo.

- Tom Morrissey

Gwinnett Group Update

Spring and summer are the two seasons when Gwinnett comes to life. What is more indicative of summer than a picnic? If you answered being in cool water or learning about gardening you might be correct, depending on your preferences but enjoying food the way I do, I will begin with the picnic.

Every year in the month of June, the Gwinnett puts aside our serious side (ok, we tone it down) and have fun. This year, our picnic was held at McDaniel Farm Park. Hot dogs, hamburgers and a wide assortment of dishes were enjoyed by all. We had a great turnout with over 25 people enjoying the weather, the food and the great company and conversation. Everyone left full and happy.

As a quick review, in May, Joel Hitt, Master Gardener, spoke on the benefits of organic gardening. In Gwinnett we take our gardening seriously because it provides a fresh, tasty and healthy alternative to the food found in grocery stores. Come and learn what you can do to eat better.

- Dan Friedman

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

On July 15th Carol Hassell of the Georgia Piedmont Land Trust will be speaking on "Gardening for Pollenators" such as bees, butterflies, and hummingbirds.

July 17th: Monthly Adopt-a-Stream monitoring at Suwanee Creek Greenway 11 AM

August 19th: TBD (to be determined)

August 21st: Monthly Adopt-a-Stream monitoring at Suwanee Creek Greenway 11 AM

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.

LaGrange Group

Field Trip to Great Blue Heron Rookery/Sweetwater Creek State Park



On May 8th a group of bird enthusiasts from LaGrange were fortunate to view a large great blue heron rookery on the private property of Ron and Lynn Orr in Douglas County. This rookery with over 30 nests in 2 sycamore trees merited being highlighted in a Georgia Outdoors episode entitled "Heron and Heroes." Before viewing a large number of active parents and some of their offspring still in the nest, we were surprised to find 2 snakes sprawled across our trail. Several participants also picnicked and hiked in nearby Sweetwater Creek State Park which features the ruins of a 19th century textile plant burned by union soldiers during the civil war, as well as class 4 rapids of Sweetwater Creek. Another highlight was seeing mountain laurel at their peak!



Shoal Lilies on Flat Shoals Creek

Life Sierran Stephen Johnson invited our local Sierra Club, as well as all of Troup County, to view globally imperiled shoals spider lilies on his Flat Shoals Creek preserve during their peak bloom period in May. Johnson has entered into a conservation easement with the Georgia Chapter of The Nature Conservancy in order to protect a large population of this rare and beautiful plant on Flat Shoals Creek. Nearby industrial development has spurred Johnson to monitor the possible deleterious effects through photo documentation as well as Adopt a Stream monitoring with a local team formed through the LaGrange Sierra Club group.



Upcoming Meetings & Programs

Thursday, July 8: Monthly Meeting at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on 207 N. Greenwood St. Refreshments at 6:30. Program at 7 pm. Subject: French Food Culture. Speaker: Dr. Elizabeth Appleby, Professor at Lagrange College

Saturday, July 10: Wild Edibles Talk/Walk at Vine and Fig Tree in Chambers County, Alabama 2-5 pm EST. This event led by Janice Key Walding and hosted by Judy Collins and Jim Allen. If interested, please contact Judy and Jim at (334)499-2380 or judysi@knology.net and she will send directions.

Thursday, August 5: Monthly Meeting at St. Mark's Episcopal Church on 207 N. Greenwood St. Refreshments at 6:30. Program at 7 pm. Subject: Troup Alive and Green with speaker Nancy Green.

Contacts

Executive Committee

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

Vice Chair - Administrative: Ashley Robbins,
276-780-3748, ashley.robbs@georgia.sierraclub.org,
Centennial Group Delegate

Vice Chair - Policy: Steve Willis, 912-341-0718
snwillis@yahoo.com
Coastal Group Delegate

Sam Booher, 706-863-2324, sbooher@aol.com
Savannah River Group Delegate

Mary Drake, 706-412-9728,
mdrake126@charter.net
At-Large Elected Member

David Emory, 404-477-0496,
david.emory@gmail.com
At-Large Elected Member

Dan Friedman, 404-610-5770, dan3688@aol.com
Greater Gwinnett Group Delegate

Bettye Harris, 678-463-7827, bharris@gpb.org
At-Large Elected Member

Judy Jennings, 912-352-0122,
judyjennings@comcast.net
At-Large Elected Member

Rand Knight, 404-915-1191,
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At-Large Elected Member

Stacey Kronquest, 912-691-0769,
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At-Large Elected Member

Dean Rogers, 706-837-0037,
dean@mediamindz.com
LaGrange Group Delegate

Nancy Wylie, 404-256-1172,
nancywylie@mindspring.com
Metro Atlanta Group Delegate

Appointed Officers & Chairs

Secretary: Todd Daniel, todddan@mac.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 Chair: 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: Ashley Robbins,
ashley.robbs@georgia.sierraclub.org

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

Outings: Scott Sanders,
thebrittinggroup@gmail.com

Personnel: Ashley Robbins, ashley.robbs@georgia.sierraclub.org

Political Chair: Eddie Ehler,
edehler@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 Grossmann, glynnng@charter.net
Meetings rotate, please call.

Smart Energy Solutions:

Colleen Kiernan, colleenkiernan@mindspring.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 I-3: Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

Transportation: Bryan Hager,
bhager@mindspring.com

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

Water Sentinels / Adopt-a-Stream:
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.223
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.

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: Steve Wagner,
sjwgnr@hotmail.com

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 Gordon, 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
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Georgia Chapter Office

743 East College Avenue, Suite B
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, July 17th from 1 p.m. to 6 p.m. at the Chapter office. 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

Sierra Club Outings provide a variety of opportunities for people to enjoy the beautiful outdoors. To find out more about what outings are being offered, please visit our website at <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/outings>.

Saturday, July 3

Paulding Forest

Location: Western Paulding County / West of Dallas, GA

Rated: { 6 miles / 1 to 2 mph / 460 ft. elev. gain }

Description: This is a new hike in Paulding Forest. We will park at a little used access point on the Silver Comet Trail and walk off the SCT through the woods for about 2.5 miles to scenic Raccoon Creek. We will wade across Raccoon Creek several times as we travel from the culvert under the Silver Comet to the culvert under the currently used train tracks. We will climb up from the creek to the Silver Comet Trail and walk back to the access point. This hike involves several ascents and descents in the first half. Limit 10. Contact Bob Springfield at bob@bobspringfield.com or (770) 365-9440. If you send an email please include your phone number.

Saturday, July 31

Lake Winfield Scott

Location: Blairsville, GA (map)

Rated: { 8 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 1568 ft. elev. gain }

Description: The spring ephemerals are long gone. As we start up the Slaughter Creek Trail on our way to the Blood Mountain shelter, the rhododendron and mountain laurel blooms will also be a thing of the past. Never mind. When we start back down the Appalachian Trail on our way to Jar-rard Gap, we begin our quest for *Lilium superbum*, the magnificent Turks Cap lily. Hopefully our timing will be right!

Back at Lake Winfield Scott, we can dip our tired feet in the water and enjoy some cool refreshments. This Blood Mountain Wilderness hike is a moderate loop plus a steep 0.7 mile climb up Blood Mountain to the historic CCC built shelter. At 4458 feet, Blood Mountain is the highest peak on the AT in Georgia. On a clear day, the reward for the climb is the magnificent view from a rock outcropping near the shelter... Limit: 8. Contact Marilyn Porter at mmp7900@aol.com and include your phone number for follow-up.

Saturday, August 7

Connally Nature Park

Location: Connally Nature Park, East Point, GA (map)

Rated: { 1 miles / 1 to 2 mph / 25 ft. elev. gain }

Description: This will be a nature walk through a 27-acre forest, preserved in part by Sierra Club members, and including state champion white oak. Bring cameras, plus plant and animal guide books. Families are welcome. Limit 12. Contact: Gordon Draves, (404) 766-3456 or nonsmoke4ga@hotmail.com

Saturday, September 4

Silers Bald, North Carolina

Location: Franklin, NC

Rated: { 5 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 3200 ft. elev. gain }

Description: After hiking through the forest to our lunch stop at 5,000 feet above sea level, we will be in one of the unique ecosystems in the southern Appalachians. Also, if it is clear, we will have spectacular 360 views. Minimum 5 participants. Contact volunteer outings leader, Lee Thomas at (770) 458-3389.