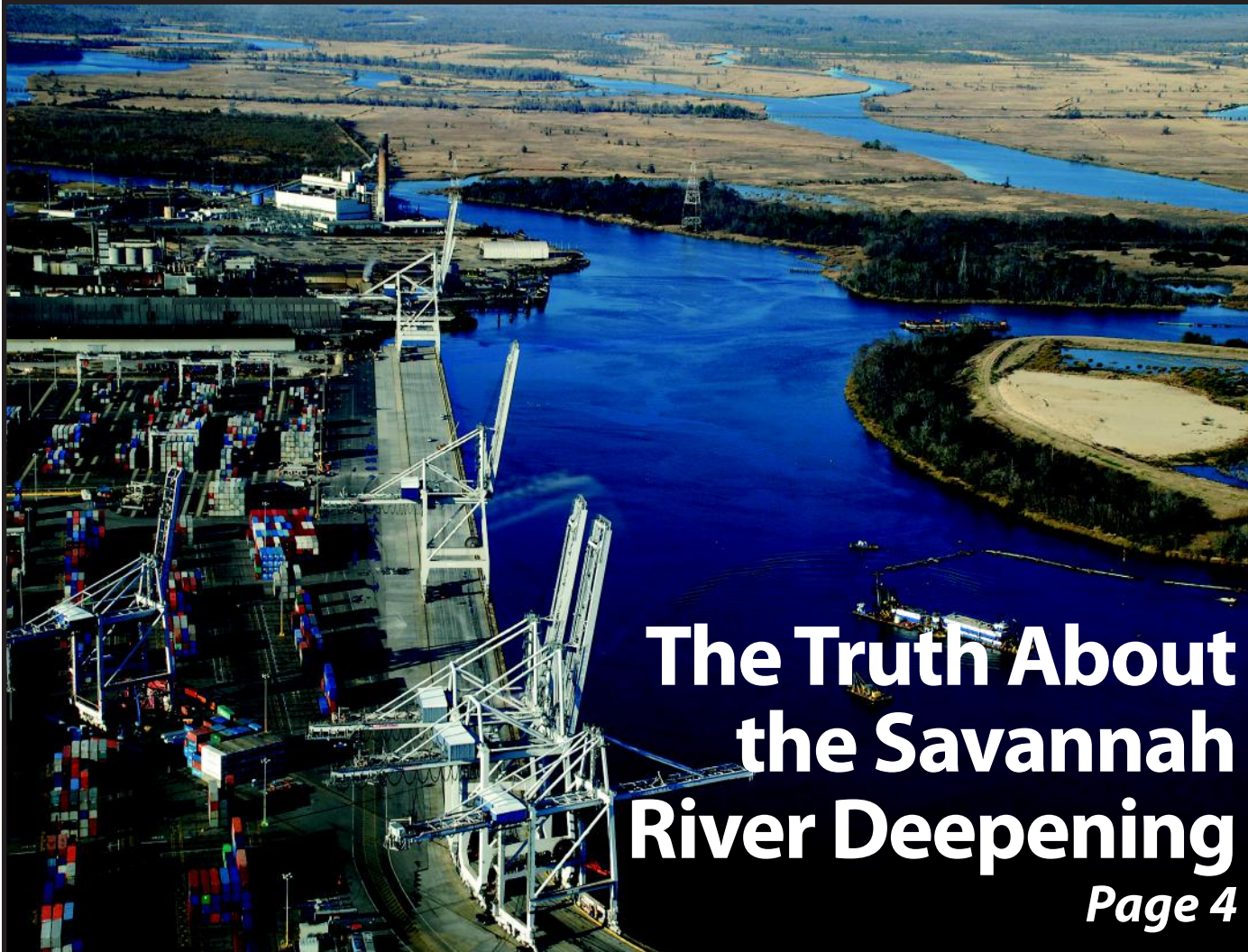




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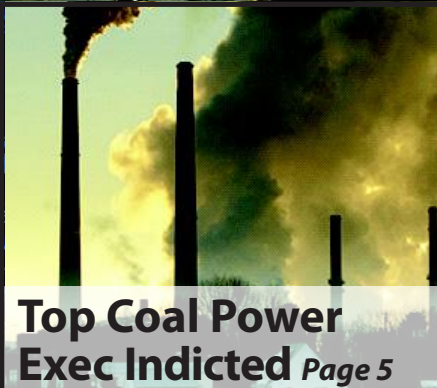
To Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet



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Going Back To Our Roots

By Colleen Kiernan

I once swore I would never celebrate Earth Day again. Earth Day is every day, right? April is one of my favorite months and I hated that it became one of my most stressful months. But this year, the Georgia Chapter is celebrating Earth Day in a new way. And I'm really excited about it.

After several false starts putting on a hike-a-thon fundraiser, we came up with the concept of going back to our John Muir roots by hosting a series of five outings – one every Saturday in April – where participants can learn about threatened places in Georgia and what they can do to help protect them.

To support the Georgia Chapter's work to protect these special, threatened places, we are asking for a suggested donation of \$100 is per participant, per trip. Of course, we will not turn you away if that is beyond your means. Be as generous as you can!

It would also be great if you would pass the word on to others you know. You can find more information and registration at www.georgia.sierraclub.org/apriloutings. Here's what we have in store:

April 2nd – Dawson Forest. Led by Alan Toney and Bob Springfield, with special guest Joe Cook of the Coosa River Basin Initiative. Private companies and the Etowah Water and Sewer Authority in Dawson County want to construct a 2,000-acre reservoir in the Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area (WMA), a 10,000-acre tract of land owned by the City of Atlanta, wiping out endangered species and their habitat.

April 9th – Dobbins Mountain (near Cartersville). Hike the Georgia Department of Transportation's pro-



Colleen Kiernan, Chapter Director

posed 411 Connector on Dobbins Mountain, which is located on the beautiful 1800-acre Rollins Ranch in Cartersville. As currently planned, the connector will blast through Dobbins Mountain, destroy a 100-acre conservation easement and historic mine on the mountain and jeopardize the threatened and federally protected Cherokee darter which has been located on the property.

April 16th – Savannah River. Led by Judy Jennings, Steve Willis & Karen Grainey. The US Army Corps of Engineers is poised to move forward on a plan to dredge the Savannah River to make it 48 feet deeper in order to accommodate bigger container ships and expand the Savannah Port. Does Georgia

really want to be the LA/Long Beach of the East Coast?

April 23rd – Unicoi Lodge to Helen. Led by Larry Winslett and Arthur Ratliff. Learn about the proposed Interstate 3 from Savannah to Knoxville (which will become more pressing if the Savannah River is deepened!), the wooly adelgid that is killing the Hemlocks and other endangered species.

April 30th – Oconee Paddle. Led by Erin Glynn and Martin McCounoughy. Paddle the Oconee River south of Milledgeville and learn why the Southern Environmental Law Center named it one of the Southeast's most endangered places. Hint: the proposed coal-fired Plant Washington would use up to 16 million gallons a day from the river and along the 30 mile pipeline where they propose to dig 16 wells.

Hope to see you on the trails!

“God has cared for these trees, saved them from drought, disease, avalanches, and a thousand tempests and floods. But he cannot save them from fools.”

-John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club

April 2 - Dawson Forest

April 9 - Dobbins Mountain

April 16 - Savannah River

April 23 - Unicoi Lodge to Helen

April 30 - Oconee Paddle

In celebration of Earth Day this year, the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club is going back to our John Muir roots by hosting a series of five outings – one every Saturday in April – where Georgians can learn about threatened places in Georgia. To support the Georgia Chapter's work to protect these special, threatened places, a suggested donation of \$100 is requested per participant, per trip.

**For more information and registration,
visit www.georgia.sierraclub.org/apriloutings**



General Assembly Off to Slow Start

By Neill Herring

At this writing the 2011 Session of the GA Legislature has used 15 of the 40 Days it is allotted for the year. The State Senate has seen less than 150 bills introduced, and the House less than 300. This is a much slower pace than usual. The Session opened as North Georgia fell under a blanket of snow, and shut down after two Legislative Days, recommencing on Jan. 24.

Despite the small number of bills, several of interest to the Sierra Club have appeared, and others are expected. Not surprisingly, water is a big topic of interest, since only a year and a half remains before a federal court order dramatically reducing the amount of water Georgia can use from Lake Lanier goes in to effect. That reduction can only be prevented by an agreement between Georgia, Alabama, and Florida over the sharing of the waters that flow through all three states.

Georgia's approach to the so-called Tri State Water Wars for 20 years has been aggressive litigation, but that has yielded only steady failure, and now Gov. Nathan Deal has become the first sitting governor to admit that Georgia will not prevail in court. He is proposing more intense negotiation, plus a contradictory strategy of building reservoirs in north Georgia, potentially antagonizing the downstream states over each of those impoundments as they threaten to reduce flows in the shared river basins.

While Gov. Deal has talked a lot about these reservoirs, he has proposed only a relatively modest \$45 million in new bonds to fund them, not enough to build even one lake of much size. He has also pointed to a new Rule by the Board of Natural Resources that appears to regulate the interbasin transfer of water as a gesture of conciliation to Georgia's downstream neighbors. Alabama has objected to the new Rule, saying that it falls short of the level of regulation needed for the health of the streams and the communities that depend on them.

Three bills have been introduced in the Georgia House to address the issue of Interbasin Transfers (IBTs). HB 111, HB 134 and HB 158. The first and third of these are bi-partisan products of the Columbus delegation, the first aimed at stronger EPD regulation of IBTs, while the last is mandates that water users put at least 75% of the water they use back into the streams from which it came. HB 134 is a bi-partisan bill with sponsors from all over the state to make the regulation of IBTs

mandatory.

Another disturbing bill dealing with water, in the form of stormwater runoff from Georgia DOT construction sites has also appeared. HB 131 by some mid-state legislators, apparently at the request of the DOT, exempts the DOT from obeying the Georgia laws that enforce the federal Clean Water Act. It also repeals the law the DOT got passed in 2000 that has provided the method by which dirt and mud from construction sites has been controlled. This is a completely irresponsible proposal that seems to have been prompted by large fines the DOT has run up for violations of these laws. Instead

of obeying the laws, and protecting the private property downstream from their worksites, the DOT wants to get rid of the laws.

HB 179, by several members of the House Transportation Committee, is yet another attempt by the billboard industry to deregulate their ability to cut down public trees on public road rights of way when those trees stand between their signs and motorists. This has been a constant project of the economically challenged billboard business and has been repeatedly beaten back by a conservationist coalition



Sierra Club Members at the annual Georgia Conservation Voters legislative breakfast, held February 23 at the Georgia Freight Depot in Atlanta

led by the Garden Clubs of Georgia.

HR 112 is a Constitutional Amendment offered by Sierra Club member Rep. Brian Thomas that will allow the creation of fee-based programs to protect natural resources and provide that those fees may not be used for other purposes. Current programs have collected the fees, but the legislature has used the funds as piggy-banks to fund other activities.

SB 86 and HB 260 are identical measures that will gut the Georgia Planning Act of 1989, making county comprehensive plans optional, and doing away with the planning category of "developments of regional impact." The current planning process is far from perfect, but it is a source that allows citizens what is likely to pop up in their neighborhood in the future. These bills would make it easier to conceal unwelcome developments from potential opponents.

HB 274 and SB 110 deal with solid waste landfills. The first ends the current prohibition on burying yard waste in sanitary landfills so that the landfill operators can make more money, even though recycling will suffer. The latter will remove a restriction on landfills build on top of significant aquifer recharge areas that keeps out trash from out of the county where they are located, threaten local groundwater quality.

Officials Push Ahead With Savannah Mega-Port Proposal

By Steve Willis

It seems like up until now the development of the Corps of Engineers recommendations for the deepening of the Savannah River to 48 feet was an insider process developed in back-rooms. It is true that a Stakeholder Evaluation Group (SEG) to inform and solicit input from the public was formed at Congressional Direction, and has been meeting for about a decade. Unfortunately, the mitigation and environmental impact advice from this group was generally disregarded in the draft Corps recommendations, and the crucial Corps economic analysis was finalized with virtually no input from the SEG. This amounts to an attempt to sneak in a billion dollars or more of taxpayer revenue for deepening the Savannah River channel without proper deliberation or public hearing. On top of this the Corps District Spokesman Billy Birdwell was quoted as saying the Corps did not plan on doing more than ranking public comments as “for” or “against”, and the Corps put all the public comments on their website with all information about the submittal redacted (blanked out in black ink) so the 28 pages of comment by Georgia Sierra cannot be distinguished from drawings of sailboats submitted by elementary school children. This unseemly and unified effort of the Corps of Engineers and port deepening boosters, so openly contemptuous of both the public and open government, is now in the process of coming apart at the seams.

The first shots across the bow came from South Carolina. Newly elected Governor Nikki Haley clearly affirmed that she had no intention of letting Georgia continue to call the shots on Savannah River port development issues. South Carolina leaders started coming out with harsh criticisms of the Corps of Engineers’ Georgia-centric deepening proposals. They noted that many miles of deepening and most of the projected environmental damage could be avoided if deepening were completed only to their proposed, close-to-the-ocean Jasper site, and not all the way to the Port-of-Savannah Garden City terminal, which would create a 38 mile twisting channel. The South Carolina equivalent of the Georgia DNR insisted that it needed the full year guaranteed by Federal regulation to complete water-quality assessments, thus putting final approval back to at least November 2011. Former head of the Coast



Guard for South Carolina and Georgia, James Cameron, noted that even if the channel were deepened to 48 feet, the 38 mile narrow corridor would still not be sufficient to meet the future traffic demands for 1,000-foot-long post-Panamax ships as projected by the Corps. Now South Carolina has dropped out of the South Carolina-Georgia deal to mutually support the development of the Jasper Port, in an apparent vote of “no confidence” in the commitment by either Georgia or the Corps of Engineers to eventually develop the Jasper site.

Recently the City of Savannah, which had been a lock-step supporter of deepening, revealed that there is a nasty problem with salt water intrusion into the present Abercorn Creek intake site. Moving the city’s water intake up river to a less vulnerable location will cost at least 40 million dollars – an expense not now covered in the Corps’ mitigation plans. When and if the Vogtle III and IV reactors go on line—which will pull about 50 million gallons of water per day from the river in evaporation through “consumptive use”— and Inter-basin-transfers to Atlanta of possibly 200 million gallons a day or more, it is likely that

even the relocated intake site for Savannah will be threatened either by saline intrusion or lack of adequate flow suitable for the city’s water supply.

Even the Savannah Morning News, Georgia’s biggest Port booster, is running articles which, Oh, my!, suggest that there might be alternative futures for the Lower Savannah other than becoming the Newark New Jersey of the Southeast. Would a safe, clean, environmentally healthy future for Savannah and the Georgia Coast be so bad after all?

An almost audible gasp could be heard in Savannah when the President’s budget included only \$600,000 for river deepening studies, etc. Although it may keep the project alive, this is a far cry from minimum of a half billion additional dollars needed to complete this project. Ultimately the Georgia Legislature will probably end up doing the bidding of big money interests (surprise, surprise) and stick the feckless Georgia taxpayer with another monstrous business subsidy. Will Georgians notice?

Now virtually all the interested environmental groups have come out as highly skeptical of the Corps’ study and recom-

Continued on page 5

Coal Plant Backer Brown Indicted on Theft, Racketeering Charges

By Erin Glynn

Cobb EMC, the largest utility cooperative in the state of Georgia, is “governed” by a CEO and a board of ten directors. In theory, these directors are “elected” at large. I use “quotations” because no election has been held in nearly four years; no information is available on the actual meetings of the board and it is unclear what sort of “governing” is actually going on. As the leader of Power4Georgians LLC, Cobb EMC is leading the pack of dirty power polluters trying to build two giant, expensive and unnecessary coal-fired power plants in our backyards.

Dwight Brown, CEO of Cobb EMC, is listed as “organizer” of Power4Georgians (P4G) group on signed documents filed with the Secretary of State. Cobb EMC is the largest financier of P4G, accountable for nearly 50% of the approximate \$4.4 Billion dollar price tag. (This cost estimate does not include carbon capture and sequestration technology nor does it account for carbon pricing, estimated at \$20 to \$40 per ton. The two plants together will emit approximately 14 million of tons of CO₂ per year.) Trusting the P4G estimate of the costs of these unnecessary coal plants is like trusting GDOT to come in under budget and on time for a road repair.

On January 6th, Cobb EMC CEO Dwight Brown, pictured above, was indicted by a Cobb County grand jury on 31 charges of criminal theft and racketeering. The charges stem from using ratepayer revenue from Cobb EMC, a nonprofit utility cooperative to establish many for-profit entities, includ-



A mugshot of Cobb EMC CEO Dwight Brown following his recent indictment

ing Cobb Energy. Dean Alford was previously a Cobb Energy board member, shareholder, and Senior Vice President, and received \$750,000 in preferred stock from Cobb Energy.

Dean Alford has his own ethical problems. In 1991, Alford, then a Georgia State Representative, established Rockdale Hospital Inc., a for-profit hospital agency to replace the nonprofit Rockdale Hospital Authority. At the time, the nonprofit authority members stated: “The new corporation is more interested in making money than attending to the expanding health care needs of Rockdale County residents.” The Authority challenged the for-profit in court and eventually won the case in 2002.

Despite the charges of corruption and ongoing dissent covered by the Marietta Daily Journal, the current Cobb EMC Board of Directors remains practically silent. Instead of stepping down, they issue a statement in support of CEO Brown. They refuse to disclose the amounts of money spent on the P4G deal so far. They don’t speak about the need for transparency, good governance, and forward-thinking, responsible investments at their cooperative.

It is time for the entire board of Cobb EMC to be replaced immediately. While the court deliberates, these individuals continue to hold decision-making power. Articles I, II and IV of the Cobb EMC Bylaws allow for members to call their own election and meeting. Go to www.action.sierraclub.org/cobbemc to send a message in opposition to the current system of power at Cobb EMC, and attend a Centennial Group meeting to pick up a petition.

Savannah Megaport Proposal, continued from page 4

mendations, Interior’s Fish and Wildlife opposes deepening beyond 45 feet, and the City of Tybee Island strongly opposes the Corps plans for “renourishing” Tybee’s beaches as a mitigation step to compensate for accelerated erosion caused by the project.

It has become quite evident that there is something deeply flawed about the whole Savannah River deepening project. The problem is that America’s ports and transportation infrastructure has become quite run down and obsolete over the past thirty years. Because there are political and financial rewards for state-by-state pork-barrel funding of infrastructure projects, both the Corps and individual Congressmen promote the status quo fragmented approach, making it impossible to develop a comprehensive, integrated, state-of-the-art infrastructure strategy for the U.S. that optimizes national goods movement and transportation functions.

If the nation is to prosper in the 21st Century, it is obvious that we must regain the clear-headedness and optimism that made the development of America’s railroad system possible in the 19th Century, and the Interstate Highway system possible in the second half of the 20th Century. These transportation systems were not merely useful, but they were what made American prosperity possible

We must create a national blueprint for vital transportation infrastructure investments improvements now. If we do not, we will surely witness a further decline in U.S. economic competitiveness. Continuing to waste scarce dollars on endless politically-driven infrastructure boondoggles is nothing less than national economic suicide.

The prompt development of a world-class ports and goods movement infrastructure strategy on the Atlantic and Gulf seaboards is vital for the economic resurgence of America in the 21st Century.

Help! I've Found A Baby Animal!

By Linda Potter and Stephanie Philip-po, AWARE Volunteers

You are taking a walk on a nice spring day and you find a baby bird on the ground. Would you know what to do? If you are like thousands of other Georgians who find baby animals each year, then probably not.

In Georgia, wildlife baby season runs from February through October. During this time, AWARE (Atlanta Wild Animal Rescue Effort) receives thousands of phone calls about wild baby animals. Some of these babies are orphaned or injured and in need of help. However, many seem orphaned but are actually still being cared for by their parents or are old enough to be on their own. AWARE helps callers determine when the baby is truly orphaned or injured and is there to lend a hand. From armadillos to yellow-throated warblers, our rehabilitators successfully raise and release hundreds of baby animals each year.

Is This Baby Orphaned?

Just seeing a baby animal without a parent doesn't mean that the parents are not taking care of it. Often a parent is keeping a watchful eye from a safe distance while the baby learns to take care of itself. Different species of animals become independent at different ages, so you must know a little about the species to determine if a baby animal is actually orphaned. Following is some basic information about a few of the most common types of animal babies found in Georgia.

Birds. A baby bird that is not yet feathered and should be in the nest is called a nestling. If you find a nestling on the ground, the best thing to do is pick it up and put it back in the nest. If you cannot reach the nest, then make a substitute nest from a berry basket or a margarine tub with holes poked in the bottom for drainage.



Line the basket or tub with dry grass or pine needles, put it as close to the original nest as possible, then observe from a distance. If the mother visits the nest with the baby in it, all is well. If the mother does not return, you should call AWARE or a wildlife reha-



bilitator for further guidance.

A young bird that is hopping on the ground and has most of its feathers but cannot fly is called a fledgling. Fledglings are supposed to be on the ground and you should leave them there. They will remain on the ground for several days after leaving the nest as their parents teach them to fly and find food. You may not see the parents because they are watching the fledgling from a distance. Or you may see the parents swooping down on the fledgling to either teach it to avoid predators or to scold it for doing something wrong. During this time, it is important to keep the fledgling safe by keeping pets away from it. Dogs should be kept on a leash and cats should remain inside.

Squirrels. A squirrel that is able to run, jump, and climb is independent. However, a baby squirrel that falls from a nest needs help. If the baby is uninjured, place it in a small cardboard box with a t-shirt mate-



rial as bedding. Include a drinking water bottle filled with hot water stuffed in a sock for warmth (be sure the bottle can't roll over on the baby). Attach the box to the tree at eye level so that it will not move when mom steps on it. Reheat the water bottle every hour. Keep pets away from the area and observe from a distance. Give the mother at least six hours of daylight to recover the baby. If she doesn't, call AWARE.

Rabbits. A rabbit that is four inches long and hopping around with its eyes open and ears erect is ready to be on its own.



Rabbits that are still dependent on their mother remain in their nest and should be left alone. Mother rabbits only visit the nest a couple of times a day (typically between dusk and dawn) to avoid attracting predators, so it may be difficult to tell if she is around. The only way to tell if a mother rabbit is feeding her babies is to check the babies' stomachs just before sundown and then again first thing in the morning. Their stomachs should be fatter in the morning if their mother tended to them over night.

Deer. Baby deer, called fawns, are left alone all day long, sometimes in visible areas such as the middle of a field or by the side of a road. The mother deer tells the fawn to curl up and not move while she forages for food. The mother then waits until after dark to reunite with her baby. Unless a dead adult deer is found nearby or the fawn is visibly injured, leave the baby where it is so that the mother can find it when she returns after nightfall.

Continued on page 10

Outings & 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>.

Thursday, March 3

Vickery Creek Trail

Location: Roswell, GA

Rated: { 4 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 500 ft elev gain }

Description: Come hike in Vickery Creek, a unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. Vickery Creek is located in downtown Roswell, so you do not need to make a long drive to enjoy this hike. After hiking we will explore the old mill ruins. Limit 15. Contact Susan Caster at Susan.Caster@gmail.com or call 770-649-0061.

Friday, March 4 - Sunday, March 6

Bartram Trail Backpack Trip

Location: Delta, AL

Rated: { 28 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 3000 ft elev gain }

Description: Discover a section of the Bartram Trail on this out and back, two night, three day backpack from Warwoman Dell to Rabun Bald (4,696 feet). Enjoy winter views and waterfalls including Pinnacle Knob and Martin Creek Falls. The rolling trail is strenuous going up to the bald. Contact Susan Caster at susan.caster@gmail.com or by phone (770)-649-0061. Please include your phone number for follow up if you reply by email. Limit 8.

Thursday, March 10

Gold Branch Hike

Location: Roswell, GA

Rated: { 4 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 500 ft elev gain }

Description: Come hike in Gold Branch, a unit of the Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area. This is a wonderful trail along the Chattahoochee River at Bull Sluice about Morgan Falls Dam. Limit 15. Contact Susan Caster at Susan.Caster@gmail.com or call 770-649-0061.

Sunday, March 13

Chattooga River Loop Hike

Location: Mountain Rest, SC

Rated: { 9.5 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 750 ft elev gain }

Description: We will meet at Walhalla Fish Hatchery. Set-up a short 1.5 mile shuttle. This will cut out a road walk and big climb. Start the hike on Foothills trail which will be mostly down hill. Connect with the Chattooga river trail, then take East Fork trail back to the hatchery. We will visit 2 impressive falls. King creek falls a 70 foot falls and Spoonauger falls a 50 foot falls. We will have lunch on a sand/rock bar on the Chattooga river. After the hike we will explore the hatchery. We will keep a good pace while hiking but will stop and enjoy the many impressive features on this hike. If you are a photographer make sure to bring a camera. Limit 12. Contact Sammy Padgett at sammy.padgett@covingtonford.net or call 404-775-7660.

Saturday, April 9

Lake Winfield Scott Loop (Slaughter Gap / Jarrard Gap trails)

Location: Dahlonega, GA

Rated: { 6.2 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 1000 ft elev gain }

Description: This trail is especially pretty in the spring with lots of wildflowers. Optional trek to the top of Blood Mountain for 2 more miles (up and back). Limit 12. Contact: Priscilla H. Padron, (404)-371-8340, (404)-373-7325 (cell), priscatran@gmail.com.

Saturday, April 16

Connally Nature Park

Location: East Point, GA

Rated: { 4 miles / 2 to 3 mph / 500 ft elev gain }

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

John Muir Outings Series

In addition to the outings listed above, the Chapter is also celebrating Earth Day by organizing a special series of five outings in April to honor John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club:

- April 2 - Dawson Forest
- April 9 - Dobbins Mountain
- April 16 - Savannah River
- April 23 - Unicoi Lodge to Helen
- April 30 - Oconee Paddle

Please see page 2 for details.

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 on **Saturday, March 12th** from 10:30 AM to noon for Sierra Club 101, your crash course on the Club, the Georgia Chapter, and our issues. Meet with volunteer leaders and staff at the Sierra Club office at 743B East College Ave., Decatur as we introduce you to our Sierra Club.

For questions or to RSVP, contact Colleen at 404-607-1262 x224 or colleen.kiernan@sierraclub.org.

Georgia Giving Society 2010

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 supporters who donated at the Live Oak Champion, Longleaf Pine Protector, Southern Magnolia Society, and Evergreen Partner levels in 2010. If you would like to join or renew into the Giving Society for 2011 please contact Colleen Kiernan at 404-607-1262 x.224. Your support is much appreciated.

Thank you to the Georgia Giving Society of 2010.

Live Oak Champions \$1000+

Sam & Laurie Booher
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Support Your Chapter

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(continued from previous page)

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Thank You!



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Preserve the Future

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, contact:

Sierra Club Gift Planning Program

85 Second St, Second Floor
San Francisco, CA 94105

gift.planning@sierraclub.org • (800) 932-4270

AWARE

AWARE, continued from page 6

Opossums. An opossum that is seven inches long (excluding the tail) can take care of itself. Baby opossums found with a dead mother are obviously orphaned and need to be taken to a wildlife rehabilitator. An opossum less than seven inches long that is found wandering around on its own is most likely orphaned or abandoned. Young opos-



sums begin to ride on their mother's back when they are about four inches long. Since a mother opossum usually has many babies clinging to her, sometimes a baby can fall off without the mother even realizing it and she will walk off, leaving the baby behind.

I've Found an Orphan. Now What?

If you have found a truly orphaned baby animal or a baby that is ill or injured, you should get the animal to a wildlife rehabilitator as soon as possible. Not only will this give the baby its best chance for survival, but it is also illegal in Georgia to care for wildlife on your own without a special permit. Until you can get the baby to a rehabilitator, make sure to keep it in a safe place that is warm, dark, and quiet. Don't play with the baby and don't let other adults or children play with it. Also, never give an orphaned animal food or water unless instructed to do so by a rehabilitator. Feeding a baby animal the wrong food or providing food and water the wrong way can make the baby severely ill and possibly even kill it.

To find help for an orphaned wild animal or for an adult wild animal that is ill or injured, call AWARE at (678) 418-1111 or visit our web site (www.awareone.org) to find a list of licensed rehabilitators in your county.

Metro Atlanta Group



Atlanta Group Elects ExCom Members: Pictured (l-r) are 2011 members Gordon Draves, Elizabeth Knowlton, Jeanne McCarthy, Eddie Ehler, Larry Kloet and outgoing 2010 chair Nancy Wylie

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

We meet the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Doors open at 7:00 p.m., program begins at 7:30.

March 8: Georgia Water Coalition

THIS MEETING ONLY—we will be meeting at Morningside Presbyterian Church, 1411 N Morningside Drive NE, Atlanta. The church is about .16 mile from North Highland and thus accessible by MARTA buses 16 (from 5 Points) and 36 (from Midtown or Avondale).

Can you transfer water from the Gulf of Mexico to the Atlantic Ocean just by taking a shower? There is a looming court decision that could affect water availability throughout the metro Atlanta area as a result of Georgia's fight with neighboring Alabama and Florida. April Ingle will tell us about the Water Coalition's concern regarding water use in Georgia, what the Coalition is supporting in the legislature. April is the Director of the Georgia River Network so you can also ask her about Paddle Georgia.

March 12: Adopt-A-Stream

We'll be doing biologic monitoring and we need a lot of eyes to find the critters. The creek is in Medlock Park. Willivee Drive runs between North Decatur Road and North Druid Hills Road, with Scott Circle in between, turn here go about 1/4 mile

to near 948 Scott Circle to the parking lot on the left (lots of baseball fields). Follow Sierra Club Signs and find us at the picnic table. More details at: <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/atlanta/>

Call Nancy Wylie 404-256-1172 for more information. After 9AM on day of monitoring, try Nancy's cell phone at 404 583-1455 (cell phone normally not on and doesn't take messages).

April 12: The Case For - and against - Jekyll Island State Park

Jones Hooks, the Executive Director of the Jekyll Island State Park Authority, recently hinted that Jekyll Island is not really a state park. Earlier, Mr. Hooks claimed that Jekyll Island State Park should be managed as a small city. A grassroots group, the Initiative to Protect Jekyll Island, contends that Jekyll Island's planning and management are incrementally eroding the island's state park mission, including a typical state park's focus on environmental sustainability. In light of the recently-released Draft Jekyll Island State Park Conservation Plan, which provides scant environmental protection for the island, who is right? Babs McDonald, author of Remember Jekyll Island, challenges us to consider whether we, as Georgian citizens, should choose to protect Jekyll Island as a state park or relinquish it to development interests.

Meeting Location: Unless otherwise indicated, 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 Dr. From MARTA's East Lake station, it's a 15 minute walk north along East Lake Dr.

Greennett? You Bet!

By Tom Morrissey

In Gwinnett, we sure have come a long way since being the poster child for suburban sprawl in the 80's and 90's. The last decade continued that trend until the credit/real estate bubble burst a couple years ago, but something funny happened along the way.

The county that led the nation in homebuilding and new residents for several years grew into the county that has been recognized for having the #1 county parks system in the nation for the last two years. Oh sure, Gwinnett still has the homebuilding hangover and a glut of unbuilt and half-built subdivisions, but the civic leaders in the county and some of its cities are showing signs of true leadership in the area of sustainability. Yes, you read that right!

The ARC recently recognized Norcross as reaching the Certified Silver level in the Green Communities program and Gwinnett County joined Suwanee (a 2009 recipient) at the Certified Bronze level. The Norcross achievement was due in great part to a very active group of volunteers that formed the Sustainable Norcross organization to increase environmental awareness and bolster the city's recycling efforts.

At Suwanee's State of the City address, Mayor Dave Williams listed some of the city's green achievements including a 2200% increase in park and greenspace acreage stemming from their \$17.7 million bond offering several years ago, the purchase of 15 acres along the railway for a future commuter rail station, the creation of Harvest Farm community garden, and the first LEED-certified City Hall in Georgia. And, Duluth is adding acreage to its parkspace and in the process of forming



Harvest Farm Community Garden in Suwanee

a Sustainable Task Force to lead its charge into the Green Community program.

Six cities in Gwinnett are officially recognized by the Arbor Day Foundation as Tree City Communities. Duluth and Suwanee have been honored for 22 and 21 years, respectively. And farmer's markets are springing up all across the county to provide locally grown, healthy alternatives to shopping at mega-supermarkets.

The Greater Gwinnett Group is proud of the achievements of our local communities and striving to foster close working relationships to help influence policy and provide environmental and sustainable

encouragement along the way. If you live in Gwinnett and want to get involved, join us as we work to Greennett.

Gwinnett Group Update

By Dan Friedman

It's Monday afternoon. The last of the snow (I think) is falling. Yes, it's that snow Monday. I went into work today- no one was there. I stayed for two hours. No one came. I came home. What's the morale here? I dunno. Maybe after making a big deal on Friday "We never close. We will be open" I wanted to test the assumption. Maybe I am still invigorated by the New Year. The "Page Two" of the story is that they paid me for a day of work instead of requiring me to take a vacation day. Sometimes, you just got to take a stand- which leads to (in case you thought I had forgotten) to the Gwinnett Group.

This year is getting off to a great start. Our January meeting will be/was (time travel looks so easy on TV) the amazing Colleen Kiernan, our Chapter Director, gave us a "State of the Chapter" briefing. February will be our Legislative Review with the "dynamic duo" of Mark and Neill.

March will be EV month when we'll hear about electric vehicles, a pertinent topic because it appears the price of gasoline is about to go through the proverbial roof. April is Earth Day Month and we will continue our annual tradition of planting trees at elementary schools.. This year we will be at Camp Creek elementary school on April 20 with their 4th grade "Earth Patrol". Our Adopt-a-Stream/ Stream Sentinel program is running strong and meets a Suwanee Creek on the 3rd Saturday of the Month. Our Group is growing, we are out in the community and we are doing good things. Come and join us.



LaGrange Group Update

By Laura Breyfogle

One ongoing project of the LaGrange Sierra Club group is sampling several local streams through the Georgia Adopt a Stream program. Several of our members, Sam Breyfogle and Derek Hay, attended a recertification in November led by Tara Muenz with the Georgia Department of Natural Resources.

In December, we enjoyed our annual Christmas party held at Yama this year. A fun gift exchange and entertaining conversation accompanied good oriental dishes at one of our 2 annual social events. We also held elections through the Sierran. 2011 board members are: Laura Breyfogle (chair), Dean Rogers (vice-chair and chapter excom delegate), Clare Zens (secretary), Renee Warrick (treasurer), Ellen Parkhurst (membership chair), Marty Wood (chapter excom alternate delegate), Mary Drake (chapter excom at large representa-

tive and hospitality chair). Ex officio board members are Derek Hay (Adopt a Stream co-ordinator), Elizabeth Appleby (outings chair) and Nancy Green (conservation chair).

In January we learned a lot about right whales from speaker Karen Grainey, who drove all the way across the state from Savannah to educate us about the endangered right whales, who migrate all the way from Canada to the coast of Georgia and north Florida to calve in our warmer waters. I highly recommend Karen as a speaker for other Sierra Club groups! She is listed in the "Volunteer Issues Leaders" (Marine species/habitat) section in the back of your Sierran.

In February Neill Herring and Mark Woodall promise an informative environmental legislative update. I also highly recommend both of them as speakers. As many of you know, Mark Woodall is our Chapter board president and Neill is the state Sierra Club lobbyist.

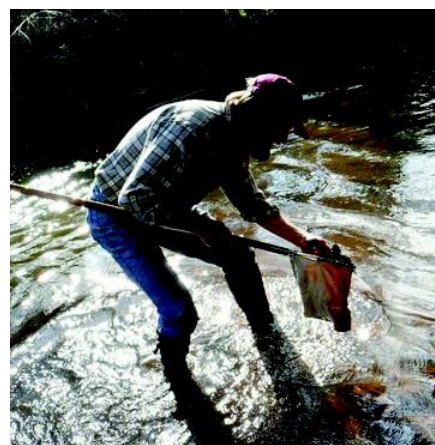
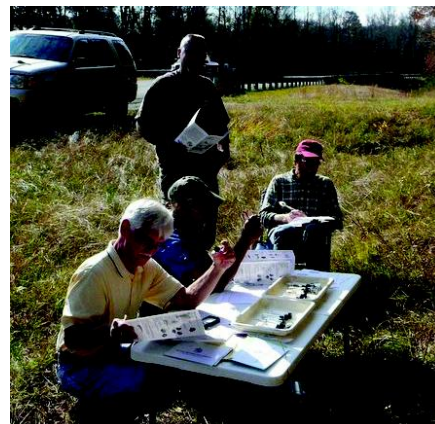


photo by Marcia Searat

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.

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Centennial Group Letter Addresses Willeo Trail Proposal

The following letter was sent by Centennial Group chair Wolfgang Tiedke to the National Park Service in January.

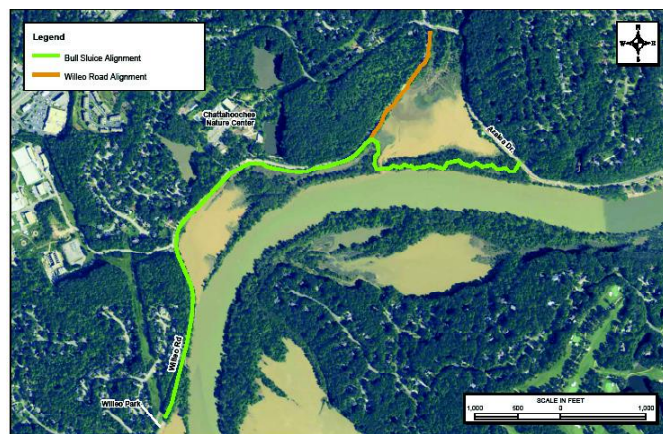
Thank you for inviting us to submit our opinion regarding the proposed alignment of the Willeo Road Multi-Use trail as part of the required environmental assessment. The issue was extensively discussed during our monthly meeting on January 6 and I think I can speak for all the 1200 members of our area in that the Bull Sluice Lake Option is unacceptable for us. This goes for a multi use boardwalk as well as for pedestrians only. Here are the arguments why:

Construction of a 10' wide boardwalk including a 65' bridge would require at least a 20' wide clearing through the vegetation on this narrow strip of land which in some parts is not even that wide. Effectively, this would kill the vegetation which now holds the river bank together and once the root system begins to weaken the river will very quickly claim the wetlands by washing away the narrow barrier. This is the obvious damage the boardwalk will do.

Environmentally, it should not be overlooked that these very few remaining wetlands serve as habitat to many local species of plants and animals. The wetlands are providing estuaries for fish and also resting places for migrating birds including sand hill cranes which already suffer from loss of suitable habitat. For the benefit of a few bikers and pedestrians this is an unacceptable price to pay especially in view of the fact that the trail will not really lead to anywhere and even when the MU trail along Lower Roswell Road is finished it will end at Mt. Bethel in Cobb County. People might walk to the Fulton county line but few probably up the long steep hill into Cobb County. They will use the car and park at points of interest in Cobb such as Hyde Farm and Gold Branch.

A word to bike use of Azalea and Willeo roads: The city of Roswell built a very nice trail along Azalea road a few years ago. It was intended to be shared by pedestrians and bikers. The reality, however, looks quite different. The trail is primarily used by pedestrians and very slow bikers, including children. The much more numerous sports bikers (incl. the mayor of Roswell) do still use the roads because pedestrians and bikers do not mix. In fact, Roswell has done a good job marking the roads with bike lanes and the boardwalk will not remove bikers from the road. For this very reason both Roswell and Cobb County would still have to mark bike lanes on their public roads next to the new trails.

The plans for the Willeo Road Alignment do already provide for some boardwalks along the existing road. Why then is this not good enough for the short remainder to the intersection at Azalea drive? Building the proposed shortcut through Bull Sluice Lake would render this part of the newly built trail along Azalea useless. There are much better places to observe wildlife from the boardwalks of the Chattahoochee Nature Center. The City of Roswell has some say in reducing or dropping admission for this section of the nature center thereby



making it more attractive. The vegetation along Willeo road is not unique as it has been clear-cut every so often by the city of Roswell. Here is a good opportunity to make lasting improvements.

We at the Sierra Club are definitely in favor of biking be it for transportation or recreation. Of course, hiking is another one of our primary activities. But we do not think that destruction of this vital embankment at Bull Sluice Lake will make anyone any happier. In fact it would be a loss to hikers and bikers alike. Last, but not least, the integrity of the fragile river bank has also to be considered because of frequent natural floods and especially frequent and high releases at Buford Dam. All this takes a toll at the river bank which has to be protected from erosion as much as possible. The precarious state of the river bank can best be seen from the river side.

In conclusion, we hope that you will call a public meeting on this project if the differences cannot be settled through the EA.

January Meeting Explores Georgia Geology

At the Centennial Group meeting on January 6, geologist and Centennial Excom member Carina O'Bara treated members to 'What is Geology?', a presentation about rocks and minerals and the forces that create them.

Carina began the presentation by introducing the different areas of geology and made it quite clear that geology is not the science of "just rocks". In addition to the various kinds of rocks and minerals that most people associate with geology, water resources, earthquakes, volcanoes, tsunamis, erosion, economic geology, sinkholes, rockslides, mudslides, and fossils are all important components of this area of scientific study.

After a "big picture" overview, she then moved closer to home with a discussion of Georgia geology. She brought several rock and mineral samples for display, many of which were passed around throughout the presentation.

The presentation concluded with the announcement of a planned geologic hike to Arabia Mountain in March, led by Carina and Outings Chair, Bob Springfield. The success of the presentation was evident when the sign-up sheet quickly filled up and immediately resulted in a waiting list.

Contacts

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

Vice Chair - Administrative: Ashley Robbins,
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Centennial Group Delegate

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

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Savannah River Group Delegate

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At-Large Elected Member

Appointed Officers & Chairs

Secretary: *vacant*

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Training Team Coordinator: Terry Jones,
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Webmaster: Charlotte Gardner,
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Conservation Campaigns

RAIL Committee:

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

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. E-mail 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,
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Factory Farms: Thomas Black,
tblack9@yahoo.com

Federal Endangered Species: Larry Winslett,
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Federal Public Lands: Shirl Parsons,
kparsons@mindspring.com

Historic Places/ Arch. Sites: Brian Thomas,
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Marine Species/Habitat: Karen Grainey,
karengrainey@bellsouth.net

National Forest Issues: *vacant*

Nuclear Waste: Stacey Kronquest,
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Okefenokee Swamp: Sam Collier,
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Organic and Locally Grown Foods: Bryan Hager,
bhager@mindspring.com

Population: Todd Daniel, todddan@mac.com

Rivers and Wetlands: Keith Parsons,
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Savannah Harbor: Judy Jennings,
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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

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Administrative Coordinator:

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

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., Chapter Office

Fundraising Committee

Third Wednesday of the month. Contact Erin Wetty
at ewetty@seyfarth.com for more info

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: Laura Breyfogle, breyfogle@charter.net

Conservation Chair: Nancy Green,
mngreen@wirelesshometown.com

Outings Chair: Elizabeth Appleby,
ecappleby@yahoo.com

Meetings: 3rd Tuesdays; 6:30 pm welcome and refreshments / 7 pm program; St. Mark's Episcopal Church Parish Hall, 207 N. Greenwood St., LaGrange (no meetings June-August)

Metro Atlanta Group

Serving Atlanta, Dekalb, & South Fulton

Chair: Gordon Draves,
nonsmoke4ga@hotmail.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.

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LeConte Group/Athens & NE Ga.

Terry Jones, wolpers4@aol.com

Forsyth County

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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.

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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!

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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/>

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

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Your message should read:

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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, Mar. 19th 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.



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Retreat Update

Mark Your Calendar for the 2011 Chapter Retreat!

You've all read articles lately about Jekyll Island, and what we can do to Save Jekyll Island. The first weekend in October you'll have a chance to see what you're saving. Our bi-annual chapter retreat will take place on Jekyll Island. We hope you'll join us for a weekend of beach combing, dolphin watching, shrimp eating, and enjoying this jewel of an island. Look for more information and the registration form in the next issue of the Sierran, or online at www.georgia.sierraclub.org. The Retreat Committee is always looking for new members to help us plan an exciting event. If you'd like to join us, please call Genie Strickland at 404-607-1262 ext.221 or email genie.strickland@sierraclub.org

Mark your calendars: September 30 thru October 2, 2011!

About Georgia Sierran

Advertising is welcomed! See our new, downloadable rate card at http://georgia.sierraclub.org/news/ga_sierran_rate_card.pdf.

Articles: Send materials to: gasierran@gmail.com. Maximum word length: 750 words with one photo. Please include high-resolution digital photos (200 dpi) with your story. Moving? Send address changes to: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968. Send changes by email: address.changes@sierraclub.org

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Looking for Outings?

Due to a large number of outings in March and April, the outings list appears on page 7 in this issue. Also see page 2 for information on the John Muir Outings, a special series of five outings in April to celebrate Earth Day.

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