



# Sierran

To Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet



## Toward a Sustainable Transportation Future

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# Taking the Long View on Transportation

By Colleen Kiernan

Even though “going green” is cool these days, protecting the environment is easier said than done. There is no end to bad ideas, or people who want to make a short term profit from exploiting something that should be valued for the long term. To make progress on an issue, whether it is air, water, land or species protection, energy or transportation, environmentalists are often faced with having to stop proposals that would move us in the wrong direction while also removing the barriers to the solutions to the problem.

Fighting the bad stuff takes a long time. The Georgia Chapter fought the Outer Perimeter and the resulting Northern Arc for a decade, and every few years, a proposal emerges that triggers a fear that....it's baaaack! We had just such a scare as part of last year's T-SPLOST proposal, which would have dedicated hundreds of millions of dollars to build an expressway along right-of-way originally preserved for the Outer Perimeter.

Bringing about the good stuff takes even longer! Ryan Gravel wrote his paper proposing the Beltline in 1999. We at Sierra Club learned about it in 2003, and after being accused of being against everything after the Northern Arc fight, were pleased that we could run a campaign in support of something. After two years of clean ups, yard signs, community meetings and door-to-door campaigning, Atlanta City Council passed the Beltline TAD in 2005. Seven years later, the 2.5 mile Eastside trail opened. While it's been a long time since the Sierra Club was a key player in the Beltline, it's exciting and rewarding to see how much demand there is for projects like the Beltline and how much pride in Atlanta that it engenders.

It can be tempting to give up on working for change when



Colleen Kiernan, Chapter Director

you feel like you aren't seeing progress. I think that was the sentiment behind the “there is no Plan B” argument for supporting the T-SPLOST. Many who have been working on transportation issues in our state for years (and even decades) are really needing to see some fruits of their labor. I understand that, and I'm sympathetic to it. I feel like giving up sometimes, too.

That's why I'm excited that this issue will dig into all the really good stuff that has happened on transportation since the sales tax referendum failed last summer. I hope that whatever side of the issue you were on, you will acknowledge the issues still need attention, we are making progress, and we need all hands on deck!

**On the Cover:** *The BeltLine Eastside Trail has been a big hit with cyclists and pedestrians in Atlanta. The Georgia Chapter was among the project's earliest and most enthusiastic supporters.*

## About Georgia Sierran

Articles: Send materials to: [gasierran@gmail.com](mailto: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](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org)

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*Note: in accordance with Chapter bylaws, all members will receive the annual election issue by mail.*



## Legislative Report

# Positive Steps in 2013 Legislative Session

By Mark Woodall



The Georgia General Assembly adjourned at midnight, March 28, with some positive steps having been made. The Ethics legislation, HB 142, had many loopholes, but at least there is now a cap on lobbyist gifts to legislators, so previously unlimited bribery will now be limited to \$75 per gift. Most of the worst bills, including the Flint River bill, SB 213, and the “Amnesty

for Polluters” bills, HB 357 and SB 176, were stopped. Some bills which were dangerous when introduced, such as HB 402, *Movies on the Beach*, were fixed.

Many thanks go to our veteran contract lobbyist, Neill Herring, for another session of outstanding work. I also want to thank our Legislative Committee of Frank Carl, Steve Willis, Norman Slawsky and Eddie Ehlert. Special recognition goes to the Sierrans who went to the Capitol the last week of the session to help work the ropes and ensure the victories described below. The Sierra Club led the way with Commander Bob Fletcher, Midge Sweet, Kelly Jordan, Colleen Kiernan, Sybil Cypress, Carolyn Danese, Neill Herring and myself all there.

Many thanks also to those of you who sent emails or called your state senator and/or your state representative. We depend on people power to prevail.

As 2013 was the first year of a two-year legislature, many bills will be carried over into the 2014 session. The worst is the Flint River bill, SB 213, which would allow the EPD Director to take ownership of additional flows called augmented flows created by pumping groundwater into creeks or rivers. All the groundwater in Georgia could be pumped out and into Florida under the current bill as there is no limitation on the amount of augmented flow. Very bad indeed are the “Poison your Neighbor” or “Amnesty for Polluters” bills, HB 357 and SB 176, which would weaken the standards for the clean up of groundwater contamination. This is a project of the Georgia Chemistry Council. We also have some good bills to push in 2014 such as HB 549, which requires the EPD to re-establish its emergency response program.



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# One Year After T-SPLOST Vote, Encouraging Signs

Nearly one year has passed since the July 2012 election in which voters weighed in on series of 12 regional transportation sales tax referenda – known commonly as the T-SPLOST – voting down the proposal in nine of the state's twelve regions, including metro Atlanta.

The Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club made a difficult decision to oppose the referendum, determining that, despite some merits, it was ultimately not in the best interest of sustainable transportation policy in Georgia. While not all of our members agreed with the Chapter's T-SPLOST position, we all share a common interest in moving forward on the larger issue of sustainable transportation policy.

Thankfully, the potential for such progress is still very real. We tend to view the failure of the T-SPLOST not as a blanket rejection of new transportation investment in general, but rather as a rejection of an institutional status quo that was increasingly seen as ineffective by the voting public, and as an opportunity to chart a new course forward based on improved accountability and responsiveness to our actual 21st-century transportation needs. Following the July election, the Chapter promoted a framework for transportation progress centered on three major themes:

1. **"Put the House in Order."** Ensure an equitable, accountable, and trustworthy transportation governance framework prior to investing billions of new taxpayer dollars.

2. **"Pursue Funding that Makes Sense."** Focus on maintaining and effectively utilizing our existing revenue streams and assets. Tie new transportation funding sources to use and travel behavior to the greatest extent possible.

3. **"Give Georgians Transportation Choices for the 21st Century."** Focus on natural, results-oriented progress that responds to the needs and desires of Georgians rather than a one-size-fits-all, top-down approach.

Fortunately, there has been significant activity on all of these fronts in the year since the referendum. Below, we discuss some of the highlights from these eventful past twelve months.

### A New Day at MARTA

As the largest transit provider in the state by far, MARTA has a critical role to play in the local transportation framework, but going into the election it was also one of the agencies most in need of reform. Over the past decade or so, a troubling culture had emerged at MARTA headquarters, characterized by an increased tendency toward service cuts and fare hikes in lieu of other cost-saving methods; stubborn resistance to the national trend toward greater openness, transparency, and information-sharing; and a series of chief executives who rarely rode the system and were increasingly detached from the day-to-day rider experience. While the Chapter is supportive of MARTA and increased transit funding in general, there was some concern that an infusion of revenue without addressing the agency's longstanding institutional challenges would not ultimately be in the best interest of MARTA or its riders.

Thankfully, since last July we have seen a new way of thinking emerge at the agency. Just two months after the election, MARTA, which previously held the dubious distinction of being the largest transit agency in the country not to release its data to third-party developers, reversed course and joined the open data revolution, releasing both schedule data and real-time location feeds to the public. That move allows Atlanta to join the thriving culture of open-source transit rider app development, a trend that has made transit more usable and accessible in cities around the country. The data release also served as a catalyst for the Chapter-sponsored Transportation-Camp South event in February, a gath-



*Events like February's TransportationCamp reflect a renewed focus on openness and innovative approaches to transit challenges*

ering of over 200 transportation activists and innovators focused on new solutions for our transportation challenges.

Later in 2012, MARTA saw an even bigger shift with the hiring of Keith Parker as the agency's new General Manager. It was a bold choice for MARTA's board of directors, who bucked much of the local political establishment in selecting Parker, a young, reform-minded leader, over a status-quo internal candidate. Under his leadership, the agency has prepared and approved an ambitious 5-year strategic plan and budget that, for the first time in recent memory, would actually restore service rather than eliminate it. And perhaps most encouraging of all, Parker has established himself as the first GM in over a decade to ride the system on a regular basis.

MARTA no doubt still faces major challenges, and we have much work to do before we can truly call it a world-class transit system. But there is no question that the agency is in a much stronger position than it was a year ago, and the progress made since last July provides an excellent foundation for continued reform and improved effectiveness.

### An Exciting Opportunity for Transit in Clayton (and Beyond)

One point that the Chapter stressed during last year's debate was that other opportunities for transportation funding exist beside the T-SPLOST. One





*Commuter rail could finally see progress if Clayton County were to join MARTA*

such mechanism is the potential expansion of MARTA beyond Fulton and DeKalb Counties. Under existing state law, MARTA is already authorized to serve an additional three counties: Clayton, Cobb, and Gwinnett – which happen to be the three counties with the greatest need for improved transit service. Particularly when combined with the move toward institutional reform and accountability that is happening under Keith Parker, the expansion of MARTA beyond its existing two-county service area is more plausible than it has been in decades.

Of the three potential MARTA expansion counties, Clayton is the logical place to start. Unlike Cobb and Gwinnett, which at least have basic bus systems in place, Clayton has been without any public transit service since the elimination of the C-Tran service in 2010. Clayton joining MARTA would not only mean the return of bus service to the county, but would also clear the way for progress on the long-awaited first segment of the proposed regional commuter rail system, the Lovejoy Line, which is located primarily in Clayton County. Public support for transit is quite high in the county; in 2010 a non-binding ballot question on joining MARTA passed with nearly 70 percent support.

The Georgia Chapter is taking a lead role in the Clayton transit campaign, with an eye toward a potential binding referendum in the November 2014 election; organizing is underway and initial meetings with local leaders have been encouraging. Watch this space for more news on this promising opportunity.

### State Transit Funding a Historic First

Among the transit items on the Atlanta regional T-SPLOST list was ten years' worth of operating support for Xpress, the regional commuter bus service in the Atlanta area. (The T-SPLOST's enabling legislation explicitly forbade the use of its revenues to operate existing MARTA service, but other transit providers were free of such restrictions.)

The Xpress service was established in the mid-2000s by the Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA), a state agency, to provide commuter bus service from suburban park-and-ride lots throughout greater Atlanta to major employment centers in the core of the region. The service has proved popular with riders, currently handling about 7500 daily boardings on routes spanning 12 metro area counties. While passage of the T-SPLOST would have ensured the bus system's survival for another 10 years, it would have effectively amounted to the full regional assumption of funding responsibility for a service that was created by and is still operated by the State of Georgia.

While the failure of the referendum was followed by a period of initial uncertainty for Xpress, the end result is perhaps the best possible outcome both for Xpress riders and the state's long-term transit policy. During the 2013 legislative session, full operational funding for Xpress was included in Governor's annual budget, an important milestone for a state government that had never before made such a commitment to mass transit. (The state had previously provided one-off infusions of cash to Xpress through supplemental allocations, but had never included funding in the annual budget.) While transit advocates would like to see much more from the state in terms of support for public transportation – it still provides no ongoing assistance to MARTA, for instance – the funding of Xpress is an important step in that direction.



*Atlanta recently installed its first "cycle track" on 10th Street near Piedmont Park*

### Atlanta Forges Ahead on Complete Streets Infrastructure

While the T-SPLOST failed in all 10 metro Atlanta counties, one place where an outright majority of voters did approve the referendum was the City of Atlanta – which, as it happens, was the one jurisdiction whose projects overwhelmingly focused on sustainable transportation priorities such as improved transit and better walking and biking infrastructure. The merits of the larger T-SPLOST package notwithstanding, many in the City of Atlanta were disappointed at the failure to secure additional revenue for popular complete streets projects.

The good news is that the popular momentum behind improved livable streets infrastructure is pushing forward an aggressive package of bicycle and pedestrian projects in the City of Atlanta even without T-SPLOST funding. Over the next two years, the City of Atlanta will be building 50 miles of complete streets infrastructure, including new bike lanes on signature thoroughfares such as Peachtree Street and Ponce de Leon Avenue, the city's first "cycle track" (a buffered, dedicated on-street bikeway), and a variety of other projects intended to improve conditions for walkers and cyclists. In addition, the City is also moving forward with plans for a 500-bike bicycle share system, an initiative that the Georgia Chapter has helped promote (see article on p. 8)

And of course, at the forefront of

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the city's transportation renaissance is the Atlanta BeltLine, the 22-mile loop of historic railroad corridors that is envisioned as a comprehensive network of transit, trail, and park infrastructure. Long before the project was a household name in the city, the Georgia Chapter was among its most active supporters, helping lead the grassroots campaign for the BeltLine's inclusion in official transportation plans as well as the establishment of the project's primary funding source, the BeltLine Tax Allocation District (TAD). And last fall, the BeltLine saw its biggest triumph to date with the opening of the hugely popular Eastside Trail between Midtown and Inman Park. Despite the T-SPLOST's failure, support for the BeltLine among city residents remains as enthusiastic as ever, and the Sierra Club will continue to help push the vision forward as it has since the project's earliest days.

### **Making the Most of Our Existing Transit Infrastructure**

Part of "putting the house in order" is ensuring that our existing transportation investments are being protected and used to their full potential. This extends to all aspects of the transportation network; on the road side, it means keeping our existing infrastructure fully maintained before embarking on major expansion programs. And on the transit side, it means making sure that we are maximizing our investment through appropriate development around key public transportation facilities.

Atlanta has traditionally done a poor job of utilizing the land around its transit hubs. Many of our MARTA stations remain surrounded by acres of surface parking and other inappropriate uses. Even during the height of the T-SPLOST campaign, developers were pressing ahead with plans for a large suburban retail center, to be anchored by a Wal-Mart store and the attendant sea of surface parking, on a key piece of property on Piedmont Road – right across the street from the Lindbergh MARTA Station. That proposal was thankfully defeated by neighborhood groups who are committed to a walkable, mixed-use vision for the Lindbergh area. But it illustrates the disconnect that often exists between transportation and land use policy; in fact, many of the same city officials who supported the T-SPLOST – which would have created a major rail transit hub at Lindbergh – simultaneously backed the Lindbergh Wal-Mart proposal, which would have immediately squandered the sustainable development potential that any new rail investment might have created there.

Today, with a heightened appreciation for how valuable our major transit infrastructure is, we are seeing a renewed focus on appropriate development around transit stations. Since last summer, MARTA and several of its supporting jurisdictions have moved ahead with a major transit-oriented development push; expect to see activity at several key sites (including our home station of Avondale) in the coming year. And even

in areas where transit is still only in the planning stages, efforts are underway to ensure that any new development respects the transit-friendly vision for these areas. In Southeast Atlanta, neighborhoods along the Southeast BeltLine Corridor have banded together to fight another proposed Wal-Mart-anchored big-box development, this one on Glenwood Avenue immediately adjacent to the BeltLine alignment – a proposal wildly out of line with the BeltLine Framework Plan that neighbors spent years working on. The Georgia Chapter is providing assistance to this effort, and thus far it has been successful in preventing city approval of the project.

### **Bloated Road Proposals Being Brought Under Control**

For whatever merits the transit component of the T-SPLOST may have offered, it is impossible to escape the fact that passage would have also unleashed a torrent of new spending on roadway expansion. In the Atlanta region alone, roughly \$4 billion of new road spending would have been added, with the vast majority of that focused on new construction and widening projects; more justifiable operations and maintenance projects generally took a back seat. It should come as no surprise that the list of financial supporters of the pro-T-SPLOST campaign was dominated by road builders and suburban real estate developers.

One consequence of the T-SPLOST's failure is that jurisdictions are being forced to be more strategic about road funding decisions, and many of the larger expansion projects are either being scaled back or are not proceeding at all. Some of the most objectionable road expansion projects – the "Sugarloaf Parkway Extension," for instance, which would build a new interstate-style highway on right-of-way originally preserved for the Outer Perimeter – now face a much more challenging path forward as local jurisdictions must prioritize more pressing (and generally more reasonable) roadway needs.

### **Plan B is Happening!**

A frequent refrain during the T-SPLOST campaign was that "there is no Plan B" for moving forward on transportation if the referendum did not pass. We rejected this notion, arguing instead that a "Plan B" was not only possible but necessary. And we are pleased to report that much of what we envisioned as components of that plan – from improved transparency and openness to state funding for transit to more targeted and strategic funding of local transportation needs – is now beginning to happen.

The Georgia Chapter is excited by the progress that has been made this past year, and is optimistic for the future of sustainable transportation in Georgia. If you are interested in becoming more involved with the Sierra Club's work on these issues, the Chapter's Regional Action to Improve Livability (RAIL) committee meets monthly and always welcomes new participants; see details on p. 22.

# Study Eyes Atlanta-Charlotte Rail Service

By Robert Krone

Rail passenger service between Atlanta and other cities consists of just one train per day in each direction. Amtrak operates the Crescent between New Orleans and New York, a train that calls on Atlanta in the morning and evening and passes through Charlotte in the middle of the night in both directions. There is hope, however, for those who would like to ride fast, modern passenger trains from Atlanta to Charlotte and beyond. A plan called the Atlanta to Charlotte Passenger Rail Corridor Investment Plan (PRCIP) is being led by the Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) on behalf of the Federal Railroad Administration (FRA). Informational meetings for the public about this plan were held in Suwanee, Ga.; Greer, S.C.; and Charlotte, N.C.

The public scoping events mentioned above were the initial meetings in the process of preparing a Tier I Draft Environmental Impact statement. There are six potential route alternatives to be evaluated. The first three involve shared operations on existing freight rail lines owned by CSX Corporation or Norfolk Southern. Two others are proposed on or within interstate highway right-of-way alignments. The sixth route alternative is called a greenfield route as it would be an entirely new right-of-way. All of the alternatives connect the cities of Atlanta and Charlotte but pass through different Georgia and South Carolina cities depending on the route. The exact starting and end points for the PRCIP will be finalized through the alternatives development analysis but all six are depicted on the map as passing through the Multimodal Passenger Terminal in Atlanta and terminating at Hartsfield-Jackson International Airport.

The corridor connecting Charlotte, Richmond, Va. and Washington, D.C. was designated as part of the Southeast High Speed Rail (SEHSR) network



Six potential route alignments between n Charlotte and Atlanta are being considered

by the USDOT in 1992. Extension of SEHSR to Greenville, S.C. and Atlanta was announced in 1998. Georgia, North Carolina and Virginia have been able to obtain significant funding to study, design, construct and operate passenger service in this corridor according to GDOT. The PRCIP project was awarded a federal High Speed Intercity Passenger Rail grant in 2010 which funded most of the project. The GDOT contributed “match” funding. Information promoting the PRCIP goes on to say that for Georgia, South Carolina and North Carolina to remain competitive in the global marketplace and worldwide economy, a diverse and efficient transportation system is vital. This corridor will allow all three states to connect to the mid-Atlantic region and ultimately the Northeast Corridor. The benefit to cities and states in the region is that high-speed rail passenger service can help relieve existing and future congestion on highways and interstates by providing an alternative travel mode. Inter-city passenger rail is safe with one of the lowest accident rates of any mode of travel according to GDOT. Passenger

rail is also a reliable form of service with set schedules on a daily basis.

The Federal Railroad Administration, Georgia Department of Transportation and the project team will use information gathered in the public presentations to analyze the corridor. The PRCIP includes two processes that will occur simultaneously. The first is an alternative analysis that evaluates the operation and level of service the corridor can provide. The other determines the environmental impact associated with each alternative. The environmental studies are under way and are expected to continue through the end of 2014. Approval of the project by the FRA, issued through a Record of Decision, is expected in the summer of 2015.

Community involvement will continue throughout the environmental study. Following the environmental study, the FRA and the states will determine if it is justified to move forward with a more detailed environmental and engineering study of the corridor.

Further information on the study is available at: <http://www.dot.ga.gov/AtlantaCharlotteHSR>.



### Chapter, Bike Advocates Team Up to Promote City Bikeshare System



*The proposed Atlanta bikeshare system was discussed at the May Sierra Club and Beer, held at Cameli's in Little Five Points*

Bicycle sharing is coming to Atlanta! After several years of discussion and anticipation, the city is moving forward with plans for a system that would place 500 bikes at publicly accessible stations throughout the city. A request for proposals was issued to vendors in June, and the system could come online as early as next year.

Bicycle sharing is an increasingly popular mode of urban transportation, allowing people to cover short distances by bicycle without the hassle of being responsible for their own bike. Originally popular in larger cities like Paris and Montreal, bike sharing is now found in a growing number of U.S. cities, and systems have recently launched in several Southern cities including Charlotte and Chattanooga.

The Georgia Chapter has joined with bicycle advocates to help promote the Atlanta project. The May edition of Sierra Club and Beer, the Chapter's environmental happy hour series, was devoted to the topic of cycling improvements in the city, including the proposed bikeshare system. In addition, the Chapter has launched a website, [www.atlbikeshare.com](http://www.atlbikeshare.com), that allows residents to propose and vote on potential bikeshare station locations.



*New York City's recently launched CitiBike bikeshare system*

### Macon Advocates Press On in Forest Hill Road Fight

Our stalwart CAUTION Macon crew, led by Lindsay "Doc" Holliday, is engaging in a David vs. Goliath battle against Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT). The group has been fighting this road proposal for at least 18 years, when it was approved as part of a SPLOST, but the funding was raided for other projects. Last December, GDOT put the project out to bid, and Doc Holliday filed a lawsuit against GDOT seeking to stop the project and asking for a road redesign, a repaving as soon as possible and the addition of left-turn lanes added at the intersections of Forest Hill Road with Ridge Avenue and Wimbish Road.

So far, he has been successful.

Bibb County Superior Court issued a stop work order, and GDOT filed a motion to dismiss the suit, but was denied. The orange cones, which were used to mark the trees that were to be removed, were taken down the week of June 6th. The case is undergoing fact-finding and the next hearing will be held late this summer. To support Doc Holliday's legal fund, please visit [www.cautionmacon.org](http://www.cautionmacon.org)

### Dobbins Mountain Spared Destruction by US 411 Project

In Northwest Georgia, the Rollins family has been fighting Georgia DOT's proposed route for the US 411 connector near Cartersville, which would blast through Dobbins Mountain. There are other alternate routes that would be far less expensive and destructive, with only marginal impact on roadway travel time. In June, the Federal Highway Administration weighed in with their concern about the mountain's historic mining resources. In response, Governor Deal sent a letter to the Northwest Georgia legislative delegation that acknowledged GDOT will need to look at alternative routes for that segment.



*Sierrans hiked Dobbins Mountain, then threatened by the US 411 project, as part of the 2011 John Muir Outings series*



# Georgia DOT Reform: 50 Years Ago, and Now



Highway construction in Downtown Atlanta during the mid-20th century. The Georgia Highway Department has changed its name to the Georgia Department of Transportation, but many of its old practices persist to this day. (Photo: Georgia State University Collections)

**By Neill Herring**

In 1962 Georgians were trying to decide between two Democratic candidates for Governor, former Gov. Marvin Griffin, who had served a term previous to then Gov. Ernest Vandiver, and a State Senator, Carl Sanders of Augusta. The major issue in the race was, of course, race, but that always volatile topic had just been turned down to high simmer by the work of the famous Sibley Commission, which had conducted statewide hearings on the future of public schools.

Georgia public opinion was opposed to closing the schools, and a policy of “tokenism,” symbolic, limited school desegregation was the default option the state would follow instead of Massive Resistance. With school closing vs. desegregation effectively removed as an issue, Sen. Sanders raised the issue of the management of the Georgia Highway Department as one where former Gov. Griffin was vulnerable.

When Gov. Ellis Arnall had presided over the revision of the State Constitution in 1945, some thought road building and paving decisions should be made “less political.” Arnall observed that roads were inherently political, and could not be insulated from the give and take of influence. The 1945 Constitution left the Highway Department alone.

Until the end of the 1940s and early 1950s, the motor fuel tax, dedicated to “public roads and bridges,” was the largest

single source of revenue the state received. That changed when Gov. Herman Talmadge got the legislature to pass the 3% General Sales Tax to fund new schools, a step taken to defend “separate but equal” public education as well as replace worn out school plant facilities and raise teacher compensation.

## Interstate Highway Construction Prompts Change

The Highway Department in the 1950’s can be accurately described as a “satrapy.” Its very independent Highway Commissioner was an influential middle Georgia politician from Treutlen County named Jim Gillis. To an extent, Sen. Sanders ran as much against the singular power of “Mr. Jim” Gillis and his Highway Department as he did Gov. Griffin. Forcing the issue was the construction of the Interstate Highway system, then getting underway.

The routes and land acquisitions of the Interstates were a much larger matter of Georgia political economy than similar decisions on the smaller state highways. Patterns for the future of the state’s development were being decided, and Sanders could see that the change was qualitative, a fact made most apparent by his own desire to complete I-20 from his hometown to Atlanta; it would be the first Interstate segment completed in Georgia.

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Sanders pushed a reform of the Highway Dept. through the legislature. The Constitution was amended in 1964 to create a Board of Highways, elected to six-year terms by legislators voting in Congressional District Caucuses. That board then selected the Highway Commissioner.

The Congressional District Caucuses were a new creature in Georgia's political firmament. Their district boundaries were drawn according to the 1960 Census, and each apportioned with a roughly equal number of voters. They occupied regions of the state, smaller in area in more populous Metro Atlanta, larger in the rural reaches. They became a de facto organizing tool for a legislature just beginning to find an independence from the Governor after years of total subordination to the chief executive.

### **Highway Department Board Elections Presage Shift of Political Power in Capitol**

The 7th District caucus was the pioneer in this growth of legislative independence, particularly in the House, a body whose size has always made for a certain level of disorganization, which can appear to be independence, when not disarray. A younger member from the southern end of that congressional district, which then occupied the state's northwest corner, Tom Murphy of Bremen, emerged as its leader.

The issue that offered the House members of the 7th their organizing opportunity was called "the NC&StL fight." At issue was the periodic renewal of the lease of the state-owned Western and Atlantic Railroad, built by the state in the 1840's to connect Atlanta and Chattanooga. The road was leased to the Nashville, Chattanooga and St. Louis Railway in 1890.

The NC&StL was a subsidiary of

the Louisville and Nashville Railroad, itself controlled by yet another railroad, the Atlantic Coast Line. All of these, and other railroads, are now part of today's drably named CSX Corporation, still leasing the W&A. A rival railroad, the Southern Railway, sought to win the lease when it came up for renewal in the 1960s, and the decision was before the legislature.

The older lions of the Georgia House were largely in the Southern Railway camp, and a leader among them was Denmark Groover, a talented lawyer from Macon, a Southern Railway town. Tom Murphy used the 7th District caucus of House members, created by Gov. Sanders's DOT reform, as an organizing tool to fight off the forces of the Southern in the renewal of the W&A lease, and his team proved adept at influencing other members from around the state through personal relationships to defeat "the big lobbyists" in the Capitol of that era.

Many years later, at a caucus meeting for a DOT Board member election, Groover recounted this very story to his own congressional district caucus, and urged them to take a lesson from the NC&StL fight: Groover argued that legislators could make a larger difference in their work if only they would use tools like the congressional district caucus to pursue policy goals in the same way that Murphy had been able to get the old 7th District caucus to speak with a single voice. Groover contended that it was that teamwork that ultimately made Murphy the Speaker of the House, where he went on to serve longer in that role than any other official.

Gov. Sanders had no intention of creating an alternative organizing instrument for the development of public policy and legislative governance when he proposed the congressional district caucus system of selecting Highway Department Board members. He was looking for a way to temper the power of a single entrenched bureaucrat, the Com-

missioner of Highways, and distribute that much desired power out into the legislative body as a way of enhancing his own relative strength as Governor.

During Gov. Sanders's term, he chose the Speaker of the House and the chairs of the committees in both chambers. He had been a member of both bodies. He was able to have legislation he did not like sent to committees that routinely buried it, so he had little need for the veto.

### **Georgia DOT Becomes Location of Political Struggle among State's Leaders**

After Sanders was succeeded by Gov. Lester Maddox, all of that changed, abruptly; Maddox owed his election to the Georgia House, and had never held public office. He was in no position to dictate to the House, nor did he do so. From that disruption soon would follow the election of Maddox's floor leader, Tom Murphy, as Speaker, and the development of an independent legislature in a "strong governor" state.

Since Sanders and Maddox, political struggles over the Highway Department have continued, started with Gov. Carter renaming it the Department of Transportation, and getting the board to install his supporter, Calhoun banker Bert Lance, as Commissioner. Lance was succeeded by an engineer who worked his way up through the ranks, Tom Moreland, an extremely talented bureaucrat who was able to maneuver through the shoals of board members, legislators and highway contactors with an ease that would come to infuriate Atlanta highway opponents during the 1980s.

During this period the six-year terms to which DOT Board members were elected proved to be handy instruments for the paving contractors and their political allies in turning board members into servants of their industry, instead of their intended roles as repre-



sentatives of the people and legislators of their congressional districts.

Fighting between Tom Murphy and four-term Lt. Governor Zell Miller over control of the DOT Board, and Miller's support for Commissioner Moreland, marked the two terms of Gov. George Busbee and then those of Gov. Joe Frank Harris. Miller's ascent to the Governor's office tended to stabilize relations between the legislature and the DOT in a state of "armed truce" between the rivals, the Speaker and the Governor.

The long-term winners during that period were the paving contractors and their political allies, led by the concrete magnate Virgil Williams of Gwinnett County, Miller's unpaid but very active chief of staff. The site of most of this triumph in Georgia political economy was Gwinnett County, the "fastest growing county in the nation" at the time, where residential and shopping center development and road expansion were intense.

DOT expenditures in Gwinnett far outstripped those in other metro counties, including the comparable Cobb, as shown by information developed by Georgia Sierra Club staff member Bryan Hager. This relative advantage for Gwinnett was prompted by the unified support of the county's developers behind Miller, while other areas divided their loyalties among a number of candidates.

### **Shift of Power in DOT Prefaces Shift to GOP Control of State Government.**

Roy Barnes was elected Governor in 1998, in something of an attempt by other Metro counties, led by his home county of Cobb, to redress the power balance. Barnes was denied a second term by the election of the state's first modern-era Republican Governor, Sonny Perdue, who switched parties at about the same time that the Gwinnett leadership also switched parties. Those developments were not unrelated.

Barnes had sought to avoid the drudgery of fighting over control of the DOT Board in a legislative caucus-by-caucus election slog that was growing increasingly partisan by the legislative creation of a rival Georgia Regional Transportation Authority (GRTA). That agency was designed to restore some balance in road, and perhaps other transport spending among the varied interests contesting in the region. GRTA operates under the exclusive control of the Governor.

While GRTA was empowered to perform the function of controlling DOT in Metro Atlanta, it never did so; Gov. Perdue, a Middle Georgia native, was not initially interested in Metro transportation issues, or negotiating the byzantine politics that had grown around them. He converted GRTA into the operator of a suburban bus line providing "luxury coach" commutation service for riders from mostly GOP suburbs into downtown Atlanta to connect to MARTA.

Perdue's major transportation initiative was a program initially called "Paving the Way Home," but evolved into "Fast Forward," a massive debt-funded rural highway expansion project. The result of Fast Forward was a long string of delayed projects, broke paving contractors and a mountain of debt. A project to "reform" the DOT by putting a gubernatorial appointee in charge of spending, and the infamous T-SPLOST proposal was the Perdue Transport "legacy," if that term is appropriate for so much failure.

### **The Choice Today: More Evasive Experiments, or Constitutional Remedy?**

Georgia's Constitution refers to transportation in two places. In one, the motor fuel tax is both levied and appropriated for transportation, "public roads and bridges." In the other, in the Article dealing with the Executive Branch, the

DOT Board is created and its election is described. These provisions were last altered in the 1964 reform. At that time the state had public intercity transportation networks provided by private bus lines and a network of railroad passenger services, both subsidized and regulated by the public. While these modes of public transportation were in decline because of competition from private autos on new highways, they remained substantial: a traveler could reach most significant communities in the state via public transportation.

50 years later, public transportation options are much more limited today for most of Georgia. Despite its name and its public relations work, the Georgia DOT is still "the highway department," and most board members still view their jobs in that light. That board has been largely depowered by Perdue's creation of the overriding post of Planning Director. Its members' secret elections to six year terms inspire un-innovative, "fat and happy" behavior, as they are cosseted by highway contractors and their lobbyists.

This situation, a statutorily ineffective board already made unresponsive by overlong terms, secret elections and undue contractor influence, requires change. It is why groups ranging from the Sierra Club to the Atlanta Tea Party have called for open elections of DOT board members, conducted publicly out in the congressional districts from where they are elected by the legislative caucuses. Elections in the relative isolation of the State Capitol on a weekday afternoons during the General Assembly are designed to be hidden from public view.

Will a new, reformed DOT find innovative and cost-effective solutions to Georgia's transportation problems? Anyone can plainly see that the current powerless, almost moribund Board of Transportation offers nothing in terms of either innovation or cost effectiveness. A more democratically elected board, with its full power to make decisions restored, would be a healthy experiment for Georgia.

# Southeastern Sierrans Quiz Southern Company

By Dan Everett

The energy tide has turned in Georgia, away from coal and towards renewables. Georgia Power, the nation's second-largest investor-owned electric company, is beginning to take baby steps to embrace solar and wind power. The company's turn toward renewables is only the beginning, and the Georgia Sierra Club will continue to press Georgia Power to discontinue their risky-energy bias, but the momentum over the past 6 months has decisively shifted towards clean, renewable energy. The Southern Company has added nearly 1,200 MW of planned renewable energy generation to its portfolio since late last year.

The company is, though, currently holding tight to two very large and very risky projects that seem to be slowly slipping out of their control. Plant Radcliffe, under construction in Kemper County, Mississippi, is a coal gasification project which intends to burn some of the dirtiest coal in the world. Plant Vogtle units 3 & 4, as Georgians will be all too aware, are the first (and almost the only) new nuclear reactors to be put under construction anywhere in the United States in the last 30 years. Both projects have been dependent on the public's dime from the beginning. Vogtle is already almost \$1 billion over budget, while Kemper is pushing an already doubled budget of \$4.3 billion, and both projects are years behind schedule. Just weeks before the shareholder meeting, Southern Company ate \$540 million in overruns at Kemper and fired its Mississippi Power CEO.

Thirteen Sierra Club volunteers and staff members from around the Southeast attended the Southern Company (SoCo) annual shareholders meeting at Callaway Gardens on May 22 to ask some pointed questions about Southern's energy plans for the future. The SoCo staff were courteous to us, and CEO Tom Fanning engaged many of us in friendly conversation. The displays around the meeting hall included several panels featuring renewable energy and "smart grid" technology, and three electric cars were parked outside. It was clear that SoCo wants to be perceived as being forward-looking on renewables.

In his prepared remarks to the shareholders, Mr. Fanning portrayed his company's stock as a steady and reliable, if unexciting, source of dividends and capital gains. The need to maintain this reputation may explain why SoCo is not eager to risk the big jump into renewables.

Although Mr. Fanning did not promise large renewable investments in the near future, he did point out that SoCo has formed an internal research 'Tiger' team conducting investigations about how the company can deploy more distributed renewable energy "when the time is right." He also was open to using the electric grid to distribute energy generated by rooftop solar, but he argued that the company should be paid for the use of its grid.

In our questions, the Sierrans focused on economic issues of concern to shareholders, rather than simply lambasting the



*Julie O'Neal of the Miss. Chapter speaks at the shareholders meeting*

company for dumping carbon and other pollutants into the atmosphere. For example, SoCo currently relies heavily on natural gas for generating electric power. We pointed out that while gas is currently very cheap, gas prices have historically been subject to wild up-and-down swings. Long-term investments in wind and solar, which generate electricity almost for free after their initial cost is paid, are a safer bet for shareholders and customers as they provide electricity at a stable price.

Sierrans Gloria Tatum and Stephanie Coffin called on Mr. Fanning to account for the highly unpopular Construction Work In Progress (CWIP) charges that are added to consumers' electric bills to pay for the runaway construction costs on the new nuclear reactors at Plant Vogtle. Several powerful Mississippi Sierra leaders -- Julie O'Neal and Linda St. Martin -- gave passionate testimony to the mistreatment, lies, and severe rate-increases caused by the coal gasification plant under construction at Kemper. Both of these projects are suffering from major cost overruns, in addition to posing severe environmental hazards. We pointed out that wind and solar are not only much cleaner, but likely to be cheaper as well. Before our barrage of questions closed, we delivered several thousand letters written by Southern Company customers directly to CEO Fanning, asking him to abandon dirty, high-risk energy schemes for a real clean energy future.

Going forward, it is important for Sierra Club activists to understand the reasons why Southern Company might choose to accelerate their turn to renewables. Unfortunately, it is unlikely that the Southern Company leadership will suddenly "get religion" on the need to avoid the worst of climate change, unless the federal government finalizes strong limits on carbon emission. But even without federal carbon limits, Southern Company has powerful economic motives to replace their fossil-fuel plants with renewables. As the cost of solar cells continues to fall, big commercial customers like Ikea and Wal-Mart are choosing to generate more of their own energy on their rooftops, leaving the company stuck with central power plants whose electricity output is no longer wanted. We could see a massive switch to wind and solar much sooner than any-

***continued on page 15***



## Robins Air Force Base Wins National Sustainability Award

By Rudi Kiefer, Ph.D.

If you think of the U.S. Military, and what comes to your mind is mostly big trucks and airplanes consuming lots of fuel, along with buildings and operations sites lit brightly night and day, you'll probably need to re-think. In recent years, the Department of Defense (DoD) has made great strides improving energy efficiency and focusing on sustainability as a goal. The 2012 issue of its Strategic Sustainability Performance Plan lists "Continuously Improving the DoD Mission through Sustainability Management and Practices" among its priorities. An old point of view was that when you're at war, you do whatever is needed at the moment. But new thinking at the DoD builds energy efficiency into strategic planning. "Energy availability can actually change our strategic environment," Deputy Assistant Secretary for Strategy Daniel Chiu was quoted as saying in early June of this year.

Forward-looking planning is already the norm in Georgia. The nationwide list of 9 winners of the 2013 Secretary of Defense Environmental Awards includes the 78th Civil Engineer Group of Robins Air Force Base in Warner Robins, bringing home the only prize in the environmental quality category. Considering the size of the base, which covers almost 7,000 acres and employs 23,000 people, includes 2,200 acres of forested wetlands and borders additional swamp habitat, including nearby wildlife refuges, providing environmental excellence is a daunting task.

"It was a true team effort," said Bob Sargent, Ph.D., Natural Resources Manager of the Environmental Management Branch at the base. "We work with personnel from many organizations within the base, but also with the community outside the fence, including

the state and federal regulators. There's a community environmental advisory board composed of civilian people who are experts in their fields, and we have quarterly briefings." On the energy side of things, Environmental Management and other collaborating groups reduced fossil fuel consumption by cutting down on individual commuting. Car pools helped, but the most significant change was a new program titled BiRD (Busing into Robins Daily), providing regular mass transit to the base with help from Bibb-Macon Transit Authority. Compressed work schedules and allowing some employees to "telework" reduced vehicle traffic even more.

"To us, sustainability means sustaining the mission of the base," Sargent said. "When you repair aircraft on a large scale, like we do, preserving environmental quality is crucial. When we take care of the environment, we preserve quality of life, and that supports the base mission."

Such an effort also includes cutting down on waste sent to landfills. "Last year, we diverted over 50% of solid waste through recycling and re-use programs, and one-third of hazardous waste," said Sargent. "The recent award was a great recognition, but we see it as an incentive to become even more creative in all of our environmental efforts. Plus, we look at the details of the programs of all the other award winners and get ideas for more measures that can be implemented here as well. The key, we've found, is communication and collaboration."

Such collaboration has not only helped keep Robins AFB and the surrounding wetlands green. It's also making a great contribution to keeping Georgia's skies blue.

*Rudi Kiefer, Ph.D., is a professor of physical science and director of sustainability at Brenau University. His email is rkiefer@brenau.edu*

## Victory for Solar at the PSC!



Sierrans rally for solar at the State Capitol

It's been quite a wild ride if you've been following the Public Service Commission and Georgia Power's Integrated Resource Plan (IRP).

Georgia Power's January announcement that they would be retiring about 25% of their coal fleet did not come as a surprise. Major disappointments were the decision to switch coal types at Plant McIntosh, from Central Appalachian coal to Powder River Basin coal, and the fact that the plan included no additional renewable energy. We prepared to make the case for a wind purchase from the Midwest, because it is just amazingly inexpensive right now.

But three things happened that we weren't expecting. First, Georgia Power announced that they would be making a 250 MW wind purchase from Oklahoma. While this was great news, we had to adjust our case to focus instead on the coal-biased assumptions that are keeping Plant McIntosh from retiring.

Second, there was a major explosion at Plant Bowen Unit 2 in April. Both Units 1 and 2 have been down since then, and you haven't noticed, right? We think that Georgia Power should defer deciding whether or not to repair it until the 2016 IRP.

Finally, the Georgia Tea Party Patriots jumped in feet first supporting solar, generating a ton of media attention, including an AP article that got picked up all over the world and in the AJC Political Insider.

Commissioners Lauren "Bubba" McDonald, Tim Echols and Doug Everett supported the program, while Commissioners Stan Wise and Chuck Eaton voted against it.

# Join the Sierra Club this Summer as We Save Power and Reduce Kilowatts!

**By Brenda Constan and the Energy Efficiency Team (Diane Shearer, Elke Brandes, Cecilia Harris, and Camissa McCurdy)**

In case you haven't read your own power bill lately, higher summer rates are officially in effect in many parts of Georgia. And they will continue to affect what you pay for electricity through September. During these months Georgia Power, for example, charges their customers based on a tiered system. Use more than 650 kilowatts, and your cost per kilowatt increases by nearly 68 percent; use more than 1000 kilowatts, and your cost per kilowatt increases by nearly 74 percent.

But of course, there is more at stake here than the shrinking contents of your wallet. This news presents a good opportunity to get serious about using less electricity for the sake of the planet as well as the sake of taking control of your household expenses.

During August and September, the Georgia Sierra Club is inviting all electricity ratepayers to save money, save electricity, and save the environment by participating in our SPARK, or Save Power and Reduce Kilowatts, campaign. Georgians have an opportunity to lead the country in being better stewards of our world by decreasing consumer demand for electricity and perhaps even reducing the need for new power plants to be built in our state.

Participation is easy!

Just visit our web site at [www.action.sierraclub.org/GaSPARK](http://www.action.sierraclub.org/GaSPARK) to register and pledge to reduce your energy consumption this summer. Each month when you receive your power bill, merely click on the web site, record the number of kilowatts of electricity you use in August and September of 2013, and record and compare each month's results with last year's results during the same month (you'll find this info on each monthly bill).

While visiting our website, you will also be able to share your results as well as your energy-saving ideas.

Invite your place of work to get involved in the event, and encourage your friends to participate by putting the SPARK website on Facebook and in newsletters of other organizations that might be interested.

At the end of the summer, we'll announce the number of kilowatts that Georgians saved and show how that translates into the amount of fuel that wasn't burned in power plants during August and September.

And, there will be prizes! In October, we'll have a drawing of names of those who participated, and several participants will receive a free Kill-a-Watt, a device that measures the number of kilowatts of each appliance in your home or office.

Visit [www.action.sierraclub.org/GaSPARK](http://www.action.sierraclub.org/GaSPARK) to sign on to the SPARK pledge. Visit often for more energy-saving ideas.



## How I Got into Energy Conservation

**By Elke Brandes**

*The article below tells of one woman's decision to become pro-active in taking control of her family's energy consumption and invites you to join the Sierra Club this summer in the SPARK program.*

I have always thought that saving energy was a good idea. I am convinced that as a global society we must overcome our tendency to produce enormous amounts of electricity from finite sources that pollute our environment.

After I joined a CO2-saving campaign in Freiburg, Germany, where I lived for the last nine years, my concern turned into action. The city administration started a campaign for 200 households willing to reduce their environmental, namely CO2, footprint.

An energy efficiency specialist team came to each of the participant's homes to check the potential electricity and/or heating savings. To ease measuring and calculation, we were given a free electricity-measuring meter.

By using the meter, I learned the details of my own electricity consumption and was able to better control my usage. I paid attention to my electric power meter, visited it regularly, and detected the source of any large peaks. Sounds weird? In fact, it was fun to become an electricity detective, to track the number of kilowatts each single electric device in my household used, add up the consumption and compare it with the monthly electricity rates. I soon discovered there were energy hogs in my home I was unaware of. I searched the web for a similar device in the United States and found a meter called the Kill-A-Watt, which can be purchased on-line or borrowed from any Georgia library.

Since my purchase I have made some startling discoveries. For example, the clothes dryer uses more kilowatts per load than my husband and I use during a whole day. We abandoned this appliance and installed a laundry line in the back yard. The washer uses warm water from the faucet – a feature that makes it much more efficient than machines that internally warm up water. I also discovered that fluorescent light bulbs use much

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**Brandes, continued from previous page**

more electricity during the first 5 minutes than noted on the package. So I began to avoid switching them on and off.

Electric idling, or stand-by electricity, is common in most homes. Even devices with no colorful little lamps draw power constantly unless you unplug them or install a switchboard. A friend who also participated in the program came up with an interesting calculation: Over a year's course, his rarely used microwave consumed more power during stand-by than during the times he actually cooked food in it.

Another saving that is easy to implement is to turn up the temperature in your fridge a degree or two. During another audit in the Freiburg project, the efficiency consultant proposed that to one of the families participating in the project. They rejected that advice with a – well - understandable reason: Their turtles who were hibernating in the fridge needed a temperature of exactly 39°F!

Aside from such unusual energy needs, most of us can, with a little effort, reduce our energy costs and most importantly our carbon footprint.

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**Southern Co., continued from page 12**

one expected.

Since the Southern Company shareholder meeting, Southern Company projections and stock have been downgraded by multiple institutions like Wells Fargo, Zacks Investment, and Jefferies, saying "Southern Company's heavy reliance on coal-generated energy supply and a lack of meaningful contribution from renewable energy is a matter of concern. In the current age of growing emphasis on 'environment friendly or green' energy, the company may be forced to divert cash flow to ensure regulatory compliance, which can adversely impact profitability."

At the Smart Energy Task Force of the Georgia Sierra Club, we will continue to encourage Southern Company to do the right thing by shutting down all fossil fuel generation as soon as possible.

# Beyond Coal Comes to UGA

**By Anastasia Schemkes  
and Tyler Faby**

The University of Georgia is a flagship institution of higher education for the State of Georgia and for the whole Southeastern United States. As much as we lead on the field and in the classroom, our campus' image and reputation are marred by one grotesque fact: we are one of the last university campuses in the nation to still be burning coal. The University of Georgia coal boiler is the largest source of air pollution in Athens, and contributes to increased rates of asthma and respiratory illness amongst University of Georgia students and community members in the surrounding Athens-Clarke County area.

For four years the students of UGA Beyond Coal have pushed the Administration to retire the almost 50-year-old campus coal boiler in favor of clean energy solutions. They've garnered support from over 5,000 students, 150 faculty members and 200 community groups and have been continually met with opposition from outgoing President Michael Adams.

The UGA Beyond Coal group has been very busy in the past four years, hosting several flash mobs, panel events, documentary screenings, and meetings with high-profile administrators. The campaign has been a regular feature in local newspapers and has received a mention in the Atlanta Journal Constitution. Two different Student Government Association resolutions passed in the last two years reiterate the student body's push for cleaner energy at UGA.

The campaign is reaching a fever pitch as the administration looks to make good on its promise to decrease campus carbon emissions by 20 percent and increase energy efficiency by 25 percent both by year 2020. In March, the University assembled a committee tasked with finding a more efficient replacement to the boiler. A student currently sits on that committee.

As progress is made in finding a so-



lution, another equally important decision could determine how quickly such an alternative is put into action. The boiler's Title V Operating Permit, the coal-plants air permit, is up for renewal and the Georgia Environmental Protection Department holds the power to reissue the permit. As it is written, the permit would allow four times more mercury emissions allowed by law.

UGA Beyond Coal and the local Sierra Club acted quickly to organize students, alumni and community members to push the EPD on two fronts. Over fifty people wrote individual letters to the director of Georgia EPD demanding a voice in the permitting process through a public hearing this summer. And hundreds more submitted comments urging the EPD to only re-grant the permit with a clear and timely path to retirement. The response from Georgia EPD was immediate and promising, granting a public hearing for July 30th to be held in the Athens-Clarke County public library. Community members and other interested stakeholders are invited to attend the hearing beginning at 6:30pm.

Students, faculty, alumni, and community members will convene at this hearing to push for the administration and the Board of Regents to develop a binding retirement timeline for the coal boiler.

Join Us!

**<http://tinyurl.com/UGABeyondCoal>**

**Tuesday, July 30th 6:30pm-8:00pm**

**Athens-Clarke County Library**

**Multipurpose Room A**

**2025 Baxter Street, Athens, GA 30606**

# Reserve Your Spot at the 2013 Chapter Retreat!

**Registration is now open** for our 2013 Georgia Chapter Fall Gathering for members, families, and friends. Our bi-annual event returns this year to Camp Wahsega in the beautiful north Georgia mountains near Dahlonega, the weekend of October 4 – 6. Join us for workshops, hikes and outings. On Friday night we'll start things off with a chili potluck reception and the return of our "Owl Prowl". Saturday's events will include kid's activities, workshops, hikes and plenty of time for fellowship and relaxation. Our traditional Saturday evening awards banquet and entertainment will include a keynote speaker (read further). You may choose another outing or workshop after breakfast on Sunday morning before heading for home. Optional weekend activities include biking, fishing, and canoeing. Tentative workshops include conservation and political updates, "Energizing Your Group", and "Back-Country Cooking."

We welcome participants of all ages, and are very pleased that twelve Boy's and Girl's Club members will join us through the Atlanta Inner City Outings (ICO) program. We are also pleased that several Sierrans from neighboring states are planning to attend.

"Exploring, enjoying, and protecting the planet through conservation and outings" is our theme. Allison Chin, former Board of Directors member and immediate past president of the Sierra Club, will be our keynote speaker on Saturday evening. Describing herself



as an "ambassador and spokesperson for the Club" for more than 20 years, Allison is also an experienced ICO leader and conservation leader with special insight to share with us about the state of the Sierra Club. Listen to Allison tell her story at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/clubhub/stories/allison-chin.aspx>.

Camp Wahsega offers a wonderful dining hall, classrooms for our workshops and a variety of trails for hiking or biking. The cabins are rustic, dorm-type buildings grouped around the 2 bath houses, one for women and one for men. You may visit their website at <http://www.wahsega4h.org> for more information. Limited tent camping is available on campus, but with no electric or water hookups.

Alternatively, you may choose to stay in a motel in Dahlonega. We have arranged for a discount rate at the Super 8 Motel, 706-864-4343. You must call directly to get the discount, and tell them that you are with the Sierra Club. They have a limited number of rooms, so please call now. For other lodging op-



tions, you may visit the Dahlonega Visitors Center website: <http://dahlonega.org/index.php/where-to-stay.html>.

Registration prices below include the following: lodging (except for offsite motel lodgers), meals (breakfast, lunch and banquet on Saturday plus breakfast on Sunday), workshops and outings. Please note that registration/meal/workshop fees are required for all participants regardless of your lodging choice.

- Onsite cabins or tent camping: \$125 per person registration.
- Kids under 12: \$85.00 per child registration
- Offsite motel lodging (on your own): \$95 per person registration
- Saturday Night Banquet Only: \$50 per person; \$35 for kids under 12

**To register:** Online registration is preferred. Please visit the Chapter website at <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/> and click "Register for Fall Gathering."

Or, you may complete the registration form on the opposite page and mail, with your check, to:

Georgia Sierra Club  
Attn: Fall Gathering  
743 E. College Ave., Suite B  
Decatur, GA 30030.

The deadline for registration is September 20, 2013. Please register early!

Questions? Call the Sierra Club office at 404-607-1262 Ext 221 or email [georgia.chapter@sierraclub.org](mailto:georgia.chapter@sierraclub.org).



# Georgia Chapter Fall Gathering Registration Form

Wahsega 4H Center, Dahlonega, October 4 – 6, 2013

Deadline for registration: **September 20, 2013**. NO refunds after this date.  
Any registration mailed after September 15 must include \$20 late fee.

Name(s): Please print names of all persons age 12 and older in party: \_\_\_\_\_

Children under 12 (include child's age): \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Phone: \_\_\_\_\_ Email: \_\_\_\_\_

We have 3 levels of registration for the weekend: (1) full weekend with onsite lodging in cabins or tents; (2) full weekend with offsite lodging on your own; (3) Saturday night banquet only. See below for details.

## **(1) Full conference registration, staying onsite – lodging in cabins or tents - \$125 per person**

Number staying in onsite cabins or tent camping: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$125 = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Number of children under 12 staying onsite, in cabins or camping: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$85 = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Price includes full conference registration fees and all 4 meals including the banquet. Cabins have bunk-style beds. Most cabins are gender specific, with a few cabins reserved for couples or families. Gender-specific bathhouses are nearby. A limited number of campsites available (no electricity or water).*

Roommate preferences if not registering with you: \_\_\_\_\_

## **(2) Full conference registration, staying offsite – lodging on your own - \$ 95 per person**

Number attending conference, but staying offsite: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$95 = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

*Price includes full conference registration fees and all 4 meals including the banquet. Lodging is on your own.*

*LODGING NOTES: Hotels, motels and B&Bs are in short supply because of other events in area and it is their high season. We suggest you MAKE RESERVATIONS ASAP. Super 8 Motel is offering a discount if you tell them that you are with the Georgia Sierra Club.*

## **(3) Saturday night banquet only - \$ 50 per person (includes registration fees)**

Number for banquet only: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$50 (Children under 12: \_\_\_\_\_ x \$35) = Total \$ \_\_\_\_\_

**GRAND TOTAL DUE = \$ \_\_\_\_\_**

*Mail form and check to:*

Georgia Sierra Club, Attn: Fall Gathering  
743 E. College Ave., Suite B, Decatur, GA 30030

Names of person(s) requesting vegetarian meals\*: \_\_\_\_\_

\*Any other dietary restrictions? We will do our best to make accommodations. \_\_\_\_\_



### Chapter Office Now Features Electric Vehicle Charging Station



We are excited to announce that the Georgia Chapter's building management team, FRA Management, recently installed an Electric Vehicle Supply Equipment (EVSE) or charging station in front of our building, increasing the number of Alternative Energy Fueling Stations (Electric) to 5 for the Decatur area according to the US Department of Energy's Energy Efficiency & Renewable Energy website (<http://www.afdc.energy.gov>). What's even more exciting is that we are not alone. In the past 3 years, Alternative Fueling Stations have increased across the country from 541 in 2010 to 13,392 in 2012! If you own an EV and plan to be in the Decatur area, stop by!

### John Muir Outings Recap

For the third straight year, the Georgia Chapter organized the John Muir Outings series in April, coinciding with both Earth Day and the birthday of the Sierra Club's founder, John Muir. The series allows Sierrans to experience up close the places that are at the heart of the Chapter's conservation efforts. This year's destinations included the Etowah River, the Ellicott Rock Wilderness, and the Skidaway River and Institute of Oceanography.



### Call for Chapter Excom Nominations

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 that it is carrying out our mission productively. If you know of someone who would be a good ExCom member, or if you are interested in serving yourself, contact Kelly Jordan at [kellyjordan@earthlink.net](mailto:kellyjordan@earthlink.net) no later than August 15, 2013. Chapter and Group candidate statements and any nomination petitions for petition candidates must be submitted by September 1, 2013. You may refer to the Chapter website ([georgia.sierraclub.org](http://georgia.sierraclub.org)) to review the responsibilities of ExCom.

Complete rules for the election are posted on the Sierra Club website. Ballots with candidate statements will be mailed by October 15th. Ballots must be received by 5 PM, Thursday, November 14th and will be counted at 6:30 PM on November 14 in the Chapter Office in Decatur. Details for returning ballots and ballot counting will be published in the Oct./Nov./Dec. *Sierran*.

A graphic for EarthShare Georgia. It features a large green tree silhouette. Inside the tree, the EarthShare Georgia logo is displayed, along with the tagline "One environment. One simple way to care for it." Below the logo, the text reads: "Working for the day when our Air, Land and Water are clean, abundant and healthy." At the bottom, it says "Start an EarthShare of Georgia employee giving campaign today!" and provides the phone number "404.873.3173" and the website "www.earthsharega.org".

**EarthShare**  
Georgia

One environment.  
One simple way to care for it.

**Working for the day  
when our Air, Land  
and Water are clean,  
abundant and healthy.**

Start an EarthShare of Georgia employee  
giving campaign today!

404.873.3173      [www.earthsharega.org](http://www.earthsharega.org)

## Savannah River Group



Scenes from recent Savannah River Group activities

With the warmer weather slightly crimping our style, the Savannah River Group takes a vacation and has no formal monthly programs in July and August; September will find us back in action.

Our monthly programs this spring have focused on promoting our outings offerings. In May several of our Group Outings leaders put together a PowerPoint program complete with maps, to encourage our members to hike, bike, and canoe in our local parks and natural areas. We have the advantage of access to trails and waterways in both Georgia and South Carolina, from the local Augusta Canal to the Foothills Trail in northern South Carolina. The photos show some of the areas where we have been enjoying outdoor adventures. Most of our outings have been full, so a bit of advertising pays dividends! We already have scheduled our annual hike to Heggie's Rock in late September to enjoy the Confederate Daisy display. (Hey Atlanta- we think it's much better than Stone Mountain's display!)

In July we will again be visiting Mistletoe State Park to swim, canoe, and hike, all as part of our annual picnic. Even though we will be enjoying the usual picnic fare, some of the table conversation will focus on a discussion of a future monthly program in which we hope to talk about camping cuisine, complete with demonstrations on what and what not to bring when planning meals for backpacking and other kinds of camping activities.

Have fun this summer, Sierrans!

**- Judy Gordon, Co-Chair**

## LaGrange Group

### LaGrange Sierra Club Group Conducts Survey

In January our executive committee met with three chapter representatives to discuss how we could attract a greater number of members, as well as a wider variety of members, to our meetings, outings and projects. We collectively agreed to survey our area Sierra Club members and list serve members to see what their interests were. Since compiling the results, we have planned accordingly.

### Upcoming Activities

**September 17 Meeting** – Speaker Dr. Mark Yates, professor at LaGrange College, will share with us the majesty of the Amazon! Please contact Laura Breyfogle [breyfogle@charter.net](mailto:breyfogle@charter.net) for details.



Scene from a recent LaGrange Group outing

## Greater Gwinnett Group

Today is Memorial Day, the official unofficial beginning of summer. Last week the highs were in the 70s, this week the forecast is that we will be close to 90. This weekend has been marvelously filled with family, BBQ and a few drinks of the potent potable variety.

Around the world, events are moving along that will shape our future. In California (of course) there is a 153 MW addition to a wind farm that will be producing over 1500 MW of energy. Who knows, Georgia Power may purchase some of this power. In England, there is a 300KW tidal power test project being implemented with the potential for capacities reaching 10GW or about half of the entire UK nuclear industry and that is along one coastline.

Closer to home, the Gwinnett Group had a great social that was hosted by Jake Hardison at his home. Our group will hear presentations on dolphins, solar power and wind power this summer. Our stream monitoring group is hard at work on and in Suwanee Creek. We are busy and as we get into the heat of summer, we will be even busier. Come and join us. We won't bite. I promise. Now back to my BBQ and drink.

**- Dan Friedman**



## Connally Nature Park Update

By D. Gordon Draves

Before the Creek Indians sold their land in 1821, the area now in the City of East Point was wild forests. By the end of that year, Georgia had five new counties, and most of those were parceled out via the land lottery in 202.5-acre homesteads. The 27 acres of Connally Nature Park (Park) were in Henry County until 1822 when DeKalb County was formed from parts of Henry, Gwinnett and Fayette counties. David Connally and his two brothers Abner and Christopher Columbus Connally bought land in the western part of that county.

Soon, much of the forests were stripped and plowed to make David's plantation. His slaves constructed buildings and a grist mill on another



branch of Utoy Creek, harvested wheat and other crops. Fulton County was established in 1853 out of DeKalb. East Point became a city in 1887. From fields, the land became developments for houses and some to forest again.

The Mulberry Court entrance area to the Park saw houses built and removed.

In 1974, "core samples of trees taken by Emory professors indicate white oaks to be over 250 years of age"—Chronology of the Thomas W. Connally Nature Park. Hence the age is now approaching 300. The heirs were fed up with the city water works encroaching on the property by 1991, and eventually sold it to the city. The very next year, the city was prepared to clear cut and put in ball fields, but didn't.

In 1998, Fulton County Board of Education (FCBE) was blocked in search for school site. They turned to East Point, which sells Park to them. Residents are upset—some dislike the idea of yelling kids across the street,

*continued on next page*



photo by Marcelo Saurat

### GOING, GOING... GONE?

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

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

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Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

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.

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or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)



# Metro Atlanta Group

## *Connally Park, continued from previous page*

while others want to keep property as a park.

The next year, sees the battle heat up. Sierra Club, Upper Chattahoochee Riverkeepers, and other groups come in to support keeping it Park. FCBE asks Georgia Environmental Protection Division (EPD) for permit to put the Utoy Creek branch underground. There are demonstrations and court dates, and with complaints ringing in their ears, the FCBE agreed to move the school footprint westward across Mulberry Street so stream buffer would not be affected (this was a separate buy and afterwards, the new purchaser took down five houses to build the Sheltering Arms Early Education complex).

In January 2000, new members joined city council with some supportive of the Park. But it was a long year of citizen and court actions.

Sierra Club filing suit against the EPD and FCBE definitely helped save the trees and the plant communities. The school plan would have saved up to seven of the 25+ old oaks. Even if they saved those trees, can you image keeping 500 kids from trampling around the trees and compressing the soil?

Also, would the area around the trees have been large enough to support the needs of the trees or would it have just been a slow death?

In the 13 years since the major battles, we have seen the death of the huge white oak near the entrance to the forest due to tractor work done at the very beginning clipping the roots. Invasive plants are running wild, with English ivy running up trees, and covering wide areas of the forest floor killing native plants. Someone has a trash camp not far from Connally Drive. The city is unable to keep up, but has been less than friendly to groups that might help.

Because the winter had periods of cold, warm, then cold again -- the plants were later this year than last. Pink ladyslippers weren't in bloom during the first week in April. However, there were many surprises for the groups that hiked in April. Several ladyslippers were in more areas than before. There were more than a half dozen fern species and both Solomon seal and Solomon plume in good display. For updates and more photos from this year, go to our Metro Atlanta Group website.

## Upcoming Meetings & Programs

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

### **August 13 Meeting: Edible and Medicinal Wild Plants**

Ranger Jerry Hightower of Chattahoochee River National Recreation Area will discuss local edible and medicinal plants: how to find them, how they were historically used, what they're good for today, and how to identify them.

### **September 10 Meeting: Patagonia's 1% for the Planet**

Leigh Bost of Patagonia will talk about Patagonia's pioneering 1% for the Planet program. Since 1985, Patagonia has pledged 1% of sales to the preservation and restoration of the natural environment.

The largest problem most environmental NGOs face is not enough funding to accomplish their mission. Patagonia realizes this and is doing something about it. For more information, try their founder/president's classic book, *Let My People Go Surfing: The Education of a Reluctant Businessman* by Yvon Chouinard. Go to our website for an excerpt.

## **Adopt-A-Stream Program events**

- **Saturday, August 17** (Chemical monitoring)
- **Saturday, September 21** (Biological & Chemical monitoring)

We meet 10 AM to noon on South Fork of Peachtree Creek in Medlock Park, north of Decatur. For biologic monitoring, we need many eyes to find the critters found in the creek.

From Clairmont Rd. (between N. Decatur and N. Druid Hill roads.) take Desmond Dr. (third street north of N. Decatur Rd.) until it intersects with Willivee Dr. Turn left and follow Willivee around to Scott Circle where you turn right. Parking is on your left when you reach the park.

Park in the middle, and walk the dirt road with the 2-story building on your left and ball fields on either side, go into the woods behind ball field #5. Bear left and you will see us at a picnic table by the stream.

For information about chemical monitoring and dates, call Larry Kloet at 404-636-7226. For more details about biological monitoring, call Nancy Wylie at 404-256-1172.

**Meeting Location:** 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 East Lake Dr. From MARTA's East Lake station, it's a 15 minute walk northeast along East Lake Dr. MARTA Bus 2 runs on Ponce de Leon between North Avenue Station and Decatur Station.

**For more information see: <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/atlanta/>**

# Chapter Contacts

## Executive Committee

**Chair:** Mark Woodall, 706-674-2242,  
woodallmark8@gmail.com  
*At-Large Elected Member*

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

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

Laura Breyfogle, 706-845-7235,  
breyfogle@charter.net  
*LaGrange Group Delegate*

Todd Daniel, 678-567-2052, todddan@mac.com  
*At-Large Elected Member*

Eddie Ehlert, 770-402-0087,  
edehkert@bellsouth.net  
*Metro Atlanta Group Delegate*

David Emory, 404-433-4914,  
david.emory@gmail.com  
*At-Large Elected Member*

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

Bettye Harris, 770-578-1186,  
bettyeharris@gmail.com  
*Centennial Group Delegate*

Thomas Jackson, 404-607-1262 x221,  
tj31975@gmail.com  
*At-Large Elected Member*

Bruce Morton, 404-569-5896  
brucekmorton@gmail.com  
*At-Large Elected Member*

Norman Slawsky, 404-299-1211 x25  
nslawsky@gmail.com  
*At-Large Elected Member*

Midge Sweet, 404-667-4476,  
sweetmidge@gmail.com  
*At-Large Elected Member*

## Appointed Officers & Chairs

**Secretary:** Todd Daniel, todddan@mac.com

**Treasurer:** Tom Neff, tsneff2003@yahoo.com

**Assistant Treasurer:** vacant

**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:** vacant

**Human Resources:** Norman Slawsky, nslawsky@gmail.com

**Inner City Outings:** Naomi Bock, atlantaico@gmail.com

**Legislative:** Mark Woodall,  
woodallmark8@gmail.com

**Litigation:** Norman Slawsky,  
nslawsky@gmail.com

**Membership/Outreach:** Ross Cheairs,  
cheairsjr@aol.com

**Newsletter Editor:** David Emory,  
gasierran@gmail.com

**Outings:** Scott Sanders,  
thebrittinggroup@gmail.com

**Political Chair:** Eddie Ehlert,  
edehkert@bellsouth.net

**Sierra Student Coordinator:** Ian Karra,  
ikarra23@gmail.com

**Webmaster:** Charlotte Gardner,  
ga\_sierra\_webmaster@yahoo.com

## Conservation Campaigns

**RAIL Committee:**

David Emory, david.emory@gmail.com  
*Meeting: 4th Mon., 7 p.m., chapter office.*  
*Committee sometimes skips months. E-mail first.*

**Smart Energy Solutions:**

Eleanor Hand, eghand@bellsouth.net  
and Robert Fera, rheria@gmail.com  
*Meeting: 1st Monday, 7 p.m. chapter office*

**Wildlands and Wildlife:**

Mike Murdock, murdock1@mindspring.com  
*Meeting: 3rd Tues., 7:00 p.m., Location TBA*  
*Committee sometimes skips months. E-mail first.*

## Issue Leaders & Contacts

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.net

**Clean Air:** Curt Smith, chsmith@speakeasy.net

**Coastal:** Judy Jennings,  
judyjennings@comcast.net

**Coastal Marsh:** Mark Mosely, msmosely@aol.com

**Cumberland:** vacant

**Factory Farms:** Leah Garces,  
leah.garces@ciwf.org

**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 Port:** 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:** David Emory,  
david.emory@gmail.com

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

**Water Sentinels / Adopt-a-Stream:**  
Sam Booher, sbooher@aol.com

## Georgia Chapter Staff

**Chapter Director:**

Colleen Kiernan, 404-607-1262 x.224  
colleen.kiernan@sierraclub.org

## National Staff

**Associate Press Secretary:**

Jenna Garland, 404-607-1262 x.222  
jenna.garland@sierraclub.org

**Beyond Coal Organizer:**

Seth Gunning, 404-607-1262 x.233  
seth.gunning@sierraclub.org

## Standing Meetings

**Inner City Outings**

Fourth Tuesday of the month, 7:30 p.m., Chapter Office. Contact Naomi Block (atlantaico@gmail.com) for more information.

**Fundraising Committee**

Third Wednesday of the month. Contact Sybil Cypress (sybil.cypress@sierraclub.org) for more information.

# Local Group Directory

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 / Meetings Contact:** Lynn Walston, [lynnwalston22@yahoo.com](mailto:lynnwalston22@yahoo.com)

**Outings Chair:** Anderson Mycroft, [awmycroft@yahoo.com](mailto:awmycroft@yahoo.com)

**Meetings:** 1st Thursday, welcome/refreshments 7:00 p.m., program 7:30 p.m.; Life College, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta. For directions contact Carina O'Bara at [carina\\_do@yahoo.com](mailto:carina_do@yahoo.com).

## Coastal Group

*Serving Savannah & surrounding counties*

**Chair:** Steve Willis, [snwillis@yahoo.com](mailto:snwillis@yahoo.com)

**Outings Chair:** Steve Wagner, [sjwgnr@hotmail.com](mailto: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:** Dan Friedman, [dan3688@aol.com](mailto:dan3688@aol.com)

**Conservation Chair:** Art Sheldon, [asheldon.cp81@gtalumni.org](mailto:asheldon.cp81@gtalumni.org)

**Outings Chair:** Jake Hardison, [jake.hardison@ssa.gov](mailto:jake.hardison@ssa.gov)

**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](mailto:breyfogle@charter.net)

**Conservation Chair:** Sim Blitch [simblich@charter.net](mailto:simblich@charter.net)

**Outings Chair:** Joanna Baxter, [joannabbaxter@yahoo.com](mailto:joannabbaxter@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, (404) 766-3456 [nonsmoke4ga@hotmail.com](mailto:nonsmoke4ga@hotmail.com)

**Outings Chair:** Martin McConaughy [mcmarty@bellsouth.net](mailto:mcmarty@bellsouth.net)

**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](mailto:gordonjudith@att.net)

**Co-Chair:** Sam Booher, [sbooher@aol.com](mailto:sbooher@aol.com)

**Conservation Chair:** Frank Carl, [frankcarl@knology.net](mailto:frankcarl@knology.net)

**Outings Chair:** Cathy Black, [sonnyandcathyblack@gmail.com](mailto:sonnyandcathyblack@gmail.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.

Terry Jones, [wolpers4@aol.com](mailto:wolpers4@aol.com)

### Forsyth County

Jim Callison, [jimcallison@juno.com](mailto:jimcallison@juno.com)

### Macon

Fletcher Winston, [winston\\_f@mercer.edu](mailto:winston_f@mercer.edu)

### North Georgia

Larry Winslett, [winfog@windstream.net](mailto:winfog@windstream.net)

### Valdosta

Brian Day, [bjday@valdosta.edu](mailto: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](mailto:georgia.chapter@sierraclub.org)  
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org>

## Directions to take MARTA to the Sierra Club

**office:** Our office is an easy 3-4 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](mailto: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](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 will be Sunday, Oct. 6th during the Chapter Retreat at Camp Wahsega. Meetings are open to the membership. For more information, call the Chapter office at 404-607-1262 x221.





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## Outings & Events

**November 9 to November 16, 2013**

### ***Backpacking the AT in Georgia***

**Leader:** Sammy Padgett, 770-786-3100, sammypadgett@comcast.net

**Rated:** Strenuous

**Registration:** Required before October 31, 9:00 AM

**Description:** We will spend a week backpacking the AT in Georgia. Saturday we will leave our cars at Amicalola Falls state park. A shuttle takes us to Dicks creek gap on US 76. Then we hike back to our cars some 75.4 miles away. With a re-supply at Neels gap 36 miles into our trip. I will have a couple of informational meetings over the spring and summer. There is plenty of time to train and get ready for this trip. I will be available to answer any questions about gear, training or whatever you need to get ready for this trip. If you have never done a multi-night trip this is the perfect trip to start with. Limit of 6 people. Contact Sammy 404-775-7660

Find your local chapter outings  
@ [www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter](http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter)



### **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, August 24th** 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.

Go to [georgia.sierraclub.org/sc101](http://georgia.sierraclub.org/sc101) to RSVP or contact the Chapter Office at [gasierraclub101@gmail.com](mailto:gasierraclub101@gmail.com) if you have questions.

### **JOIN US FOR SIERRA CLUB & BEER**



Join us on July 31st for a discussion on progress on transportation issues in the 12 months since the T-SPLOST vote.

Wednesday, July 31st  
7:30 - 9:30 pm  
Edgewood Speakeasy  
327 Edgewood Ave SE  
Atlanta, GA 30312

Suggested Donation: \$5