



Sierran

To Explore, Enjoy and Protect the Planet



Protecting Georgia's Coast

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Georgia's Coast is Unique and Worth Protecting

By Colleen Kiernan

When I was a young organizer for the Sierra Club, Congress was debating opening up the Outer Continental Shelf for oil drilling. Although preliminary studies off Georgia's coast did not reveal any oil reserves, I was assigned to take a big piece of black plastic up the east coast, roll it out on beaches and talk to reporters about what an oil spill would look like. I got to see every beach between St. Simons Island and Rehoboth Beach in Delaware and I can say (with only a little bit of bias) that the Georgia Coast is the prettiest.

We have already secured permanent protection for several of our barrier islands: Cumberland, Blackbeard, and Wolf as Wilderness; and Jekyll as a State Park. The hard sands on the east side of our islands rise into dunes with are backed up into forests featuring trees such as live oaks festooned with Spanish moss, southern magnolias, pines, and cabbage palms. Pine stands are usually found in the younger, southern ends and ocean sides of the island forests. The trees often are intertwined with woody vines.

Georgians have done a reasonably good job so far protecting the characteristics that make our coast special. But new threats are around every corner. We have recently finished another battle over Jekyll Island, in terms of deciding once and for all, how much land on Jekyll can be developed. The number used to be a percentage and much time and energy was spent



Colleen Kiernan, Chapter Director

debating what was land and what was marsh.

We continue to have grave concerns about both the necessity and the impact of deepening the Savannah River. The Federal Government keeps leaving their share of the project out of their budget, but Georgia seems determined to go it alone. And now we have a little project on the "Spit" on Sea Island in Glynn County which would destroy part of the beach there.

Thanks for everyone who has taken action on any of these issues; we'll need all hands on deck going forward to keep our coast the way it is!

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

Fast and Furious 2014 Legislative Session Draws to Close

**By Neill Herring and
Mark Woodall**

The 2014 Session of the Georgia General Assembly ended at midnight on March 20, the first day of Spring.

Because of changes to the election calendar mandated by a federal court order, the Session was put on a “fast and furious” schedule to allow two full months for legislators to raise money and spend it on primary election campaigns by the May 20 primary date.

The most significant bad bill defeated was Senate Bill 213. SB 213 was an attempt by the Governor and his water war operatives to obtain a superior water right for any augmented flows. The EPD Director said his SB 213 “coalition” consisted of the Chamber of Commerce, GA Farm Bureau and GA Agribusiness Council. Thank you for all your constituent contacts. With your help, the public interest prevailed and the water thieves were defeated.

Following is a short topical summary of bills of interest to the Sierra Club membership and their outcomes:

COASTAL

HB 715 and SB 296 were identical bills that enacted a compromise that permanently limits the acreage on Jekyll Island State Park that may be developed. The compromise, to substitute hard land area numbers for a percentage standard, came after the current Attorney General, Sam Olens, ruled that salt marsh, flooded twice daily on the high tide, is “high ground,” in his judgment.

The salt marsh is high ground decision joins other dubious actions in the AG’s record, such as joining a suit against stopping pollution of the Chesapeake Bay and filing a brief at the Supreme Court supporting more mercury pollution by GA Power.



ENERGY

HB 874, the Solar Freedom and Property Rights Act by Rep. Mike Dudgeon, died, as have its predecessors, in the House Energy Committee chaired by Rep. Don Parsons, a longtime fan of monopoly utilities. The bill enjoyed widespread support, but the Chairman refused to allow a vote on it this session because Southern Company and the Electric Membership Cooperatives oppose it. The bill would allow people to lease solar power units for their homes and businesses, the same way they can lease cars.

HB 257: The current tax credit for electric cars would have been abolished by this bill from Rep. Chuck Martin (R- Alpharetta). The tax credit is taken directly off the purchase or lease price for the vehicles, and at \$5000 each, is a significant boost to their purchase and use. The bill passed the House, but the Senate restored the tax credit but put a \$10 million annual cap on such “tax expenditure.” The program cost less than

\$1 million in 2012. Martin made another attempt to make the bill attractive, by cutting the tax credit to \$5 million a year but failed, and the law continues in force, unchanged.

HB 348 by Rep. Don Parsons gave \$5 million in tax breaks for corporations buying heavy trucks fueled by natural gas. Of course this passed.

HB 757 by Rep. Jay Powell would have added solar power installations to list of activities that don’t cause the violation of a Conservation Use Value Assessment covenant. This bill was defeated on the Senate floor.

HR 1158 and 1159: These urging resolutions by Rep. Chuck Martin opposed the pending EPA carbon regulations for coal fired power plants. One was a House only resolution and the other was a joint resolution. Both passed.

ETHICS

Several Senate Resolutions, including SR 876, by Sen Josh McKoon (R-Columbus) were offered, and defeated in the Senate Rules Committee. SR 876 would have changed the rules of the Senate to require that reports of Committees of Conference be reviewed for a longer period of time.

The Committee of Conference reports are legislation that results from a rewrite of different versions of a bill by a committee of three members of each house. Many times late hour conference reports have been passed that have contained material that would not have passed, had anyone had time to read them. Sen. McKoon was trying to prevent such mischief, and even got 32 Senators to sign one of his resolutions, but the Senate Rules Committee said NO each time.

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SB 255, 353, SB 374, HB 960: These bills are all related by virtue of their location in the Code, in Title 36, Local Government, where the hundreds of notorious development authorities derive their power. SB 255 was yet another “public-private partnership” bill that failed in the House, apparently because of often expressed reservations about who would decide the “winners and losers.”

SB 353 was a naked grab bill, that would remove the ad valorem tax obligations on office buildings and nursing homes that were merely leased by development authorities, while hotels they own would be similar exempt from those taxes. These changes would push up the ad valorem taxes of all the other taxpayers in the affected jurisdictions. The bill also allowed the practice of “phantom bonds” to continue, where there are no securities, but there is a commission for the bond lawyers as if there were. Finally, the right of taxpayers to appeal the “validation” of these bonds would be completely swept away in an unconstitutional thrust. This bill, when finally publicized, died a quiet death.

SB 374, like a similar HB 833, would have changed the word “slum” to “blighted” area in the redevelopment authority law. The change was to accommodate a similar change in federal law, but the bill provided a vehicle for the bond lawyers. They had a Conference Committee version of it ready for the last hours of the Session, but they then failed to move it. HB 960 was a bill that was supposed to provide for public transit on the Atlanta Beltline by adding that to the list of allowable “projects” for redevelopment authorities, but also included provisions for “home cooking,” rigged selection of vendors, permanent financial secrecy for vendors, and ways. That bill failed to pass the House after the Senate passed an altered version of it immediately before the end of the Session, but portions of it were incorporated in the also failed SB 374 Conference bill.

HB 921 and HR 1239 by Rep. Matt Dollar were two attempts to start the much-needed process of reforming development authorities. The bill proposed that these authorities should report on what they are doing to the bodies that appoint their members on a quarterly basis. This grew out of the secrecy surrounding the Atlanta Braves move to Cobb County. The second resolution would set up a study committee to look at the operations of development authorities. Both bills died, before passage, both in the House. The statute was killed by Rep. Chuck Martin, while the second died in the House Rules Committee. There will come a day of reckoning for the development authorities, but not this year.

TRANSPORTATION

HB 195, by Rep Ed Setzler, would allow any two or more local governments to form a transportation project district and

levy a sales tax to fund construction and operation of such a project. The bill was not given a vote this Session, but the ideas raised in it are very likely to be considered in an off-season Study Committee created by HR 1573.

HB 153, by Rep John Carson, would have permitted a fractional sales tax, dividing one percent into 20 equal 0.05 percent increments to fund projects that don't require a full percent of sales tax to execute. The bill passed both Houses, but in differing forms that were not resolved in time for final passage. A fractional sales tax is one of the components in HB 195.

HB 264 and 265 were both introduced last year by Rep. Mike Jacobs, Chair of MARTOC, the MARTA oversight committee. They let MARTA use its sales tax revenue in any proportion for capital and operating costs, instead of hewing to a strict 50/50 division, for three years. This is probably meaningless given current MARTA debt obligations and sagging sales tax receipts. The bills also set up new arrangements for appointing MARTA board members in Fulton and DeKalb counties that rely on “caucuses of mayors,” instead of county commissions. This provision won't kick it until 2017, so is subject to additional tinkering before that time. The “caucus of mayors” concept was first used in the selection of T-Splost projects that were rejected by Metro voters, so it is hardly a tested source for sound policy.

HB 1009 by Rep. Mike Glanton simply lifts the “cap” on the level of sales taxation allowed to be levied in Clayton Co by action of its voters, so that the County Commission may give their constituents a chance to vote to join MARTA this November. This is the first chance for MARTA service area expansion in many years, and is a high priority for the Sierra Club for environmental justice and air quality reasons.

HR 1573 by Rep. Jay Roberts (R-Ocilla), Chairman of the House Transportation Committee, is a joint resolution creating a study committee on transportation. This committee will need attention over the interim.

WASTE/RECYCLING/TOXICS

SB 333 and HB 904 were a project of the chemical manufacturers, creating a right to appeal the listing of property on the state's hazardous sites inventory. This is simply a way to engage the high price stalling of the appeal lawyers in resisting any effort to clean up toxic sites. One practitioner who represents aggrieved property owners who have been victimized by these industrial poisoners once said, “These lawyers will do anything to stay out of court. They do not ever want these clients in front of a jury.”

HB 957 was a joint project of the soon-to-retire Madeleine Kellam of the EPD and lawyer Gerald Pouncey, for the GA Brownfields Association, to expand the number of contaminated sites that qualify for that program, which is attractive because there is no requirement on the Brownfield people to ever

clean up toxic groundwater, which is often the biggest problem at toxic sites. If a site with contaminated groundwater can be redeveloped on the surface with a shopping center, even a parking lot, the public and future neighboring landowners have no reason to know, or assume, that there is a huge problem underneath the stores and asphalt.

HB 908 was a project of the Deal Administration to renew the \$1 per new tire disposal fee that supports the Solid Waste Trust Fund. The bill provides for a 5 year renewal of the fee. Evidence presented to the Natural Resources Committee showed that the funds collected are largely turned over to the General Fund, less than half go to clean up tire dumps, the ostensible purpose for the fee. This impost is simply a tax, pretending to be a targeted fee. There is now in force a law, passed in 2013, that says that the fee is supposed to be reduced next year, to produce just as much money as is being appropriated to the Solid Waste program in the 2015 Budget. Hopefully a suit invoking that law will be filed to force full appropriation to the program.

HR 1087 by Rep. Andy Welch (R-Henry County) is the latest failed constitutional amendment to allow the “dedication” of fees collected for a specific program purpose, a measure designed to address the problem discussed in connection with the Solid Waste Trust Fund.

WILDLIFE/LAND PROTECTION

HB 881 started out as a tag supporting the Grady Health Systems, but it was amended in the Senate to provide for a new fee schedule and distribution for the once-popular Wildlife license tags, which were ruined by a Perdue Administration revision that looted the Non-Game Wildlife Fund the tags supported. This restoration is a welcome action by this legislature, and was prompted by requests from the county tag offices, which also make money of the sales of the specialty plates.

SB 322 is a project of GA's forestry industry, and GA DNR. SB 322 prohibits the use of harassment like smoke and fumes into burrows to kill poisonous snakes. The bill is to preclude US Fish and Wildlife actions against forest landowners for using these techniques, which adversely affect gopher tortoises and indigo snakes.

SR 896 by Sen. Ross Tolleson creates a study committee to look the State's current policies for protecting land from development. This is an area of policy failure that has haunted the state for two decades, with only half steps toward real remedies. Only economic recession has prevented the ruin of thousands of acres of valuable natural areas in several regions of the state.

WATER

SB 213 by faithful Metro Chamber advocate Sen. Ross Tolleson (R-Perry), The Flint River Drought Protection Act was introduced at the middle of the 2013 Session with an aim

to slam it through that year. The bill as introduced would have dramatically expanded EPD's control over water in the state at the expense of the state's property owners whose right to a reasonable use of the water on and under their land would be diminished by the increase in state power. The motive for this power grab is to assure that Metro Atlanta will have as much water as its unrealistic growth projections require. Because Sierra Club and its partner groups in the GA Water Coalition were able to keep legislators informed the bill was stopped cold last Session, and stalled out again this year, until the Governor and the EPD were forced to back away from their ambitious power grab in order to avoid the humiliation of losing a House floor vote on a bill endorsed by the Governor.

HB 1085 by Rep. Delvis Dutton was the pro-environment, pro-farmer, pro-riparian rights alternative to SB 213. Introduced only days before Crossover Day, HB 1085 died in the House Natural Resources Committee but the message sent by the almost 40 signers of HB 1085 was heard throughout the building.

SB 299 by Sen. Steve Gooch would make changes in the size of the vegetated buffers required by the GA Planning Act. These buffers are to protect water quality in water supply watersheds. Sen. Gooch is worried about 150 foot wide buffers on Yahoola Creek and its tributaries in his home county of Lumpkin, where they state funded and the Army Corps permitted a water supply reservoir after the county agreed to the wider buffers. But the people who own those buffers, including a lot of Gooches, have never been happy about that.

They have fought the buffer width rule for years, and this time Sen. Gooch passed a bill that says that the county has to come up with a water supply protection plan approved by the EPD, and he is obviously hoping that the buffers get narrower in that plan, and that it is approved. That is a battle that will be fought out at the EPD and the DNR Board level.

SB 306 would have renewed the current Coastal Aquifer Storage and Recovery moratorium, that is now set to expire on June 30 of this year. The bill, by Sen. William Ligon (R-Brunswick), would have made that moratorium permanent. Senate Natural Resources Chair Ross Tolleson would not allow a vote on the bill, because his bosses at the Chamber of Commerce and the EPD told him not to, and he never disobeys their wishes.

This was a pure abuse of power. The bill was signed by the Republican senators representing the affected counties. Tolleson represents an area in Middle GA completely unaffected by the moratorium, or any ill effects of its removal. As one Republican Senator on the Committee said after the meeting, “You just saw an example of money talking.”

HB 549, by Rep. Jon Burns, requires the EPD to create a permanent Emergency Response program to deal with spills of pollutants into the waters of the state. It also requires that EPD train and coordinate with local responders to meet these

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Savannah's Dubious River Deepening: Still More Questions than Answers

By Steve Willis

An undetermined but large amount of money has been spent by a state agency, the Georgia Ports Authority, to persuade most Georgians that deep-dredging the Savannah River is vital to the state and fated to happen soon. Meanwhile, South Carolina politicians uniformly insist that deep-dredging an already severely compromised river is a bad idea. Georgia politicians explain this away as bias. Perhaps, but there is no shortage of troubling facts which the Ports Authority propaganda fails to address. After almost 20 years of U. S. Corps of Engineers studies single-mindedly focused on overcoming the long list of economic and environmental reasons NOT to deepen the Savannah River, the project now seems more dubious than ever.

First, Savannah is a river port. Nowhere in the world is a river port being used to accommodate the new generation of super-sized container ships. Savannah is the only one being considered for this purpose. The difficulties associated with navigating ships larger than aircraft carriers up a 38 mile long, narrow, winding, silt-prone channel are obvious. Two of the largest ports in the world, Rotterdam and Shanghai, once were river ports like Savannah, but, when confronted with the trend of ever-growing container ships, they moved their deep water facilities downriver to the oceanfront.

Second, every port in the world able to accommodate the largest ships is a hub port. Hub ports follow the same logic as Hartsfield-Jackson Airport. Super-sized planes (such as 747s) connect the world's hub airports, while innumerable spoke lines run from the hubs to regional, state and local airports which



concentrate and disperse the hub's passengers. All existing container port hubs operate the same way. Savannah will never be a successful hub port because it is geographically limited to a single, 38-mile-long spoke. Hartsfield has five runways, Savannah will never have more than one.

Third, the United States, with nine harbors which measure 50 feet or greater, already has enough deep water ports. Counting the Canadian ports of Vancouver and Halifax which also serve the US, we have eleven. China, which moves more containers every day than the rest of the world put together, manages with eight oceanfront deep water hub ports. All of Europe is expected to require no more than five such ports.

The five deepwater hubs on the US West Coast have been accommodating post-Panamax ships for decades, and two co-located ports, LA and Long Beach, together transport 40 percent of all America's containerized shipping.

Still, the Corps of Engineers is seriously considering creating over a dozen additional deep water ports. The only beneficiaries of such excessive overbuilding are the Corps of Engineers' budget and the bottom lines of the giant engineering corporations which enjoy a cozy relationship with the Department of Defense.

If this mismanagement is allowed to happen, billions of tax dollars will be wasted, and unnecessary environmental devastation will wreck coastlines from Maine to Texas. To make matters even worse, these excessive costs will produce an unplanned, overlapping, duplicative port and onshore transportation entanglement which will impede rather than promote future US global commerce.

Those who insist that we need more East Coast deep water ports ought to provide some kind of analysis of our nation's shipping needs and alternatives before impelling us to ill-considered dig-

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ging. The Corps of Engineers has not done this analysis, and has no plans to do so. Objective analysis would almost surely prove the Corps has done enough already.

As one analyst noted, 90 percent of everything moves through our ports. Ninety percent of what we wear, eat, live in or ride in passes through our ports. Ports are important enough to America's economic welfare to deserve thoughtful consideration and planning, instead of the haphazard development spawned by political boosterism.

Fourth, the economic and jobs benefits claimed by the Corps of Engineers and the University of Georgia have been grossly misinterpreted. For example, the oft-touted one dollar spent to produce 5.5 dollars in benefits is almost entirely based on the fact that the largest container ships move boxes at a 20 to 40 percent savings over smaller container ships. This benefit has no direct relationship to the Savannah port and is attained regardless of which port these ships call on.

The UGA's port study claims that Georgia's ports produce \$32 billion in economic impact and 350 thousand jobs. Considering that 90 percent of everything moves through our ports, this is probably true. Many businesses, products and jobs are dependent on goods moving through ports. However, virtually all of these benefits would be little changed if the goods and jobs cited were dependent on Charleston, or Jacksonville, or even Miami. Besides, the Corps of Engineers has stated repeatedly that the volume of boxes moving through Savannah will continue to grow at exactly the same rate whether or not the channel is ever deepened.

Fifth, plagued by \$1.5 billion in overruns and repeated project delays, the financial viability of the Panama Canal expansion is very much in question. The estimated completion date has slipped almost two years and post-Panamax ships won't be arriving via the canal until 2016 at the earliest.

The emergence of 18,000+ twenty-foot equivalent unit (TEU) container ships wasn't even considered when the Panama expansion plans were formulated in the early 2000s, making the expanded canal's maximum capacity of 13,000 TEU vessels a serious limitation. Shippers may prefer to continue the current practice of unloading vessels in California, and transporting the containers across the US in trains and trucks rather than pay more than \$1,000,000 per ship to pass through the canal. This route is cheaper and faster for delivery to all but the East Coast oceanfront states. The Savannah project also keeps running into snags. A Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) must be passed and signed by the president before any dredging can begin. The updated WRDA has been stuck in a joint Senate-House reconciliation committee for months while legislators attempt to resolve thorny disparities between the different bills passed by the two houses. The new

WRDA would authorize the work, but does not provide funding. The Federal share of the Savannah project's cost, about \$400 million dollars, will have to be appropriated in a separate bill which has yet to be written.

Governor Deal has gone on record with his plan to start spending the \$266 million already allocated by the Georgia Legislature whether or not Federal money is available. This will leave Georgia in a self-made trap if the Federal money isn't forthcoming. The Peach State will either have to admit that it irresponsibly wasted the \$266 million by prematurely starting the project, or the Georgia Legislature will have to put the missing \$400 million on the Georgia tax-payers' tab. By the way, WRDA contains a built-in authorization for overruns up to 20%, which means that Georgians may very well be required to come up with an additional \$120 million before the Federal government would be required to step in.

Another obstacle which Governor Deal has glossed over is last year's Federal Court settlement of the suit against the Georgia Ports Authority filed by South Carolina claimants. The settlement includes a court order requiring the Georgia Port Authority to demonstrate that the Speece cones specified in the Corps' plans are capable of maintaining acceptable levels of river oxygenation before dredging may begin between the mouth of the Savannah River and the port.

Speece cones, a.k.a "bubblers," are large fiberglass igloo-shaped machines which pump pure oxygen into the river to offset the oxygen depletion deepening will cause. The current plan proposes installing a dozen, but more may be required. No one knows how many it could take or if they will work, since the cones have never before been used in a large-scale setting like this.

About half of the project's \$660 million price tag is to mitigate environmental damage. It is unclear where the additional funds will come from should the environmental damage significantly exceed current projections. The dredging will foul Savannah's fresh water supply, devastate large portions of irreplaceable fresh water marshes, further endanger the short-nosed sturgeon, adversely affect many other species, and jeopardize the Floridian Aquifer. Regardless of the drawbacks, political and corporate boosters of the Savannah Harbor deepening continue to hyperventilate; Mayor Kassim Reed unabashedly asks, "When was the last time someone offered to give you \$400 million dollars?" (Federal dollars are not a political slush fund, Mayor Reed. That's our money!) The mayor's question might offer some insight into the sense of urgency and enthusiasm expressed by the Georgia bandwagon.

We need to counter the increasingly desperate pronouncements by Georgia leaders by viewing the delays in federal funding and Panama Canal construction as an opportunity to regroup and devise a sound strategy for the development of our commercial ports and related onshore infrastructure. When it comes to America's future global competitiveness, there is nothing more important.

Concerns Persist for Jekyll Island Development

By David and Mindy Egan

The 1971 law limiting Jekyll Island development to 35 percent of the land area that lies above water at mean high tide has been replaced this year by SB 296. The new law limits development to 1,675 acres with 78 acres of those acres eligible for development—12 acres for campground expansion, 46 for public safety, infrastructure and public recreation; and 20 acres eligible for unrestricted commercial development.

Concerns for 2014 and Beyond

Affordability: The Jekyll Island State Park Authority Act (1950) calls for “operation of the public facilities of the park at rates so moderate that all of the ordinary citizens of the State may enjoy them.” The Jekyll Island Authority (JIA) has sanctioned the building of new hotels on the island that are referred to as “upscale.” The Initiative to Protect Jekyll Island (www.savejekyllisland.org) has repeatedly asked the JIA to uphold Jekyll’s affordability mandate: the majority of Jekyll’s lodgings should be affordable for the majority of people. The two hotels currently being built are a Westin and the Jekyll Island Club Hotel Oceanfront. Both will be upscale with room rates at or exceeding those of the historic Club Hotel. Also planned for the Beach Village is an “upscale, limited service hotel.” Finally, Trammell Crow (known for upscale development) will present concept plans for its long-awaited redevelopment of a pair of oceanfront properties to the JIA in May. Concern is growing that most of Jekyll’s lodging will be too pricey for ordinary citizens.



If you would like to help keep Jekyll affordable, please sign IPJI’s Affordability Petition at <http://www.savejekyllisland.org/AffPet.html>.

Density: IPJI and other organizations have for years encouraged the JIA to conduct a professional capacity/density study, but this has not been done even though redevelopment projects are well underway. During the 2012-13 process of revising the island’s Master Plan, all six Task Force groups recommended such a study be an immediate goal. Nevertheless, in the final MP (2014), the JIA, illogically, relegated a capacity study to 60+ months in the future. Obviously, the time for a capacity study is before development plans are

finalized not after the fact, when Jekyll’s unspoiled, peaceful nature may already have been compromised.

Building Height: Glynn County set a building height guideline of 45 feet to “preserve the natural and historic beauty of the area.” Tybee Island’s height guideline is 35 feet. The JIA’s height guideline is 64 feet for occupied areas and up to 72 feet for decorative features. The Westin will rise to 67 feet, towering over what has always been a beach unmarred by tall structures. Jekyll Island State Park has the dubious distinction of having the most liberal height guidelines on the Georgia coast. This needs to be changed if the unique ambiance of the island is not to be relegated to the past.

Further Information

Capacity study link : <http://www.savejekyllisland.org/CapacityStudyNeededMarch2014.htm>

Westin link: <http://www.starwoodhotels.com/westin/property/photos/index.html?propertyID=3764>

Saving Sea Island's Fragile "Spit"

**By David Kyler,
Center for a Sustainable Coast**

As the hundred-some people attending a recent meeting held at the St. Simons Casino found out, there are major discrepancies surrounding a controversial project proposed on the south end of Sea Island ("the Spit"), improperly approved by the Islands Planning Commission back in January.

The Spit has eroded from 200 to 400 feet at various locations in recent decades and roughly 100 feet in just the past 10 years (triple the rate of other eroding Georgia coastal areas).

Sea Island Acquisition's ("SIA") proposed lots are only 150 to 250 feet deep with one-third to two-thirds of each lot lying within a legally required beach/dune setback line. SIA's proposal includes a road, two bridges, eight lots with homes, and utilities including buried sewer, water, and electrical service in a pure sand environment that likely will accelerate further erosion and ultimately destroy the Spit's protective barrier function for St. Simons Island.

The Spit is the only area on Sea Island where FEMA flood insurance and federal disaster assistance are prohibited due to the Spit's extreme vulnerability to erosion and flooding. The drastic erosion taking place on the Spit will cause property owners with multi-million dollar investments to build seawalls that will damage adjacent shoreline and critical wildlife habitat for the endangered loggerhead sea turtle, the endangered Piping Plover, and 143 other species of birds.

Sea Island Company's legally required notice to rezone the Spit as part of the Cloister Planned Development District ("PD District") published in *The Brunswick News* in February 2004 did not include the Spit. Therefore, the rezoning of the Spit is legally invalid. The Cloister PD District approved by the Glynn County Board of Commissioners in 2004, which showed the nature and location of all future development within the PD District, did not show any plans for development on the Spit.

Sea Island Company repeatedly stated to Glynn County officials during the 2004 rezoning to a PD District that the purpose was to "redevelop the Cloister complex and related facilities." The proposed eight lots, despite SIA calling them the "Cloister Reserve," are not part of the Cloister complex, are not related facilities, and are not being redeveloped (as they have never been developed in the first place.)

In approving SIA's Spit project, the Islands Planning Commission ("IPC") improperly failed to identify one of three tax parcels that are part of the project (tax parcel 05-01326). The missing tax parcel includes all of proposed lot 7 and over one-



half of lot 8. In approving SIA's Spit project, the IPC approved amendments to the Glynn County Zoning Ordinance which also must be approved by the Board of Commissioners at a public hearing. The amendments include changes in land use, street access, public areas, and parking spaces by: building a new road, reducing the road right of way from 50 to 40 feet, allowing the road to encroach on a condominium building, subdividing eight lots for construction of houses on vacant land, moving a swimming pool, and eliminating parking spaces. The entire Spit should be rezoned to Conservation/Preservation consistent with the southern portion of the Spit.

At the meeting, GreenLaw attorney Steve Caley presented an authoritative and well-researched series of facts about the history of a 2004 "planned development" (PD) rezoning on Sea Island. According to official records related to explicit requirements of the county zoning ordinance, not only was the current project not mentioned as part of the area affected in the published public notice, but the concept plan approved for the PD excluded the 7-acre site from the mapping of proposed development for the entire project.

As a result, on behalf of two environmental groups, Center for a Sustainable Coast and Altamaha Riverkeeper, GreenLaw is asking County Commissioners to hold a public hearing on the matter.

***For More Information on the Campaign to
Save the Sea Island Spit, Please Visit:
www.facebook.com/savethespit***

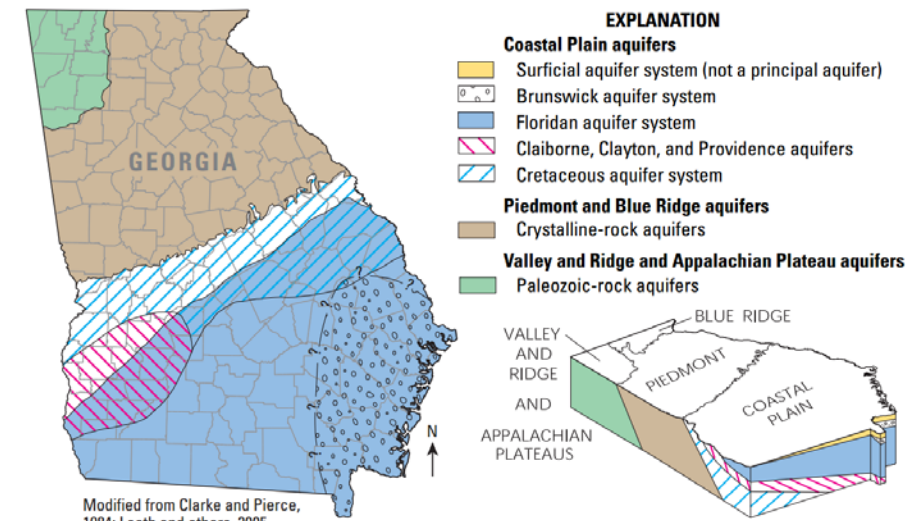
Aquifers: Georgia's Abundant Groundwater Resources Threatened by State Actions

By Neill Herring

Georgia's largest single water supply resource is mostly out of sight, below the ground in aquifers found all over the state. In north Georgia the groundwater is found in spaces, cracks and fissures, in the "basement" rocks, spaces opened by the formation and shifting of the limestones and granite beneath the Valley and Ridge, Blue Ridge and Piedmont provinces of the upper half of the state. While these areas rely mostly on surface water sources these groundwater resources are often important for local and farm water supplies. Of course many people have enjoyed refreshing drinks from springs in these regions, where pure groundwater bubbles from beneath the surface.

Under Georgia's Coastal Plain lie several, much larger aquifers, arranged like layers of lettuce in a sandwich, interleaved with layers of "meat and cheese," in rock formations called "aquitards," that separate the layers of sponge-like water-bearing aquifers. This vast "sandwich" of soils, sands, rocks and water ranges in thickness from about a hundred feet, to many hundreds of feet at its deepest extent, where it tilts toward the Atlantic coast, and runs south into Florida. The largest of these aquifers is named the Floridan. This dynamic aquifer is among the most abundant water resources anywhere, and it discharges fresh water into the Atlantic Ocean off the GA coast, as well as supplying millions of gallons for agricultural irrigation and industrial and municipal uses.

In the 1990s there were proposals to take surface water from coastal streams during flood periods and pump that water into the Floridan aquifer for withdrawal and sale to users during droughts. When the coastal public became aware of this plans there was widespread alarm, particularly as information about the potential for permanent contamination of aquifer water by treated surface water



Principal Aquifers of Georgia (Source: USGS)

became widely understood.

In the late 1990s legislators from the coastal area passed a moratorium on such proposals for "Aquifer Storage and Recovery" (ASR), in 11 coastal counties, and that moratorium has been renewed three times since then. It will now expire on June 30 of this year because Sen. Ross Tolleson, Chair of the Senate Natural Resources Committee refused to allow a vote for a bill making the moratorium permanent.

Meanwhile, ASR has been tried in the northwest GA, where a \$ 1 million experiment funded by Dalton Utilities through an entity called the Etowah Water Bank failed completely at the "recovery" of the "stored" water: they could pump it into the ground, but they couldn't get it back out.

Another expensive experiment is set to begin soon in southwest GA, one that remove water from the Floridan aquifer to try to inject it into deeper aquifers named the Claiborne and Clayton, from which perhaps it can be withdrawn during future droughts to irrigate farmland. There is also a suspiciously vague proposal about a new groundwater supply for Tybee Island that may also involve

aquifer injection, and is possibly the reason Sen. Tolleson killed the protective moratorium in this legislative session.

Georgia's aquifers are an incredible asset, the state's single most valuable mineral resource. It collects, filters and stores huge volumes of clean water at a zero operating cost. Those who need the water only have to pay to pump it out. In earlier times the water actually pushed its way above the surface as soon as a well was driven into the aquifer, but heavy industrial use, starting in the 1930s, has reduced that "piezometric" pressure. ASR experiments are being pursued as an alternative to proven water conservation techniques and technologies—instead of sensibly trying to save water, our state's leaders are constantly trying to find new water to waste, at a risk to the cost and quality of the water we already have.

The GA Water Coalition, in which Sierra Club is a leading member, will soon launch a campaign to protect all of GA's groundwater resources from continuing pollution and misuse, so that this great natural blessing will be available to sustain future generations as it has our own.

Legislative Report

continued from page 5

emergencies. This bill was a project of the GA Water Coalition, and was held over from 2013. It passed with no dissenting votes.

HB 864 by Rep Johnnie Caldwell would have made institutions with surface water withdrawal permits for water supply report on how much of that water they are returning to the source streams, and to provide plans for increasing those percentages to restore dangerously reduced stream flows in many locations. This bill was never even given the courtesy of a hearing by Chair Lynn Smith of the House Natural Resources Committee, who is an ardent defender of the Metro Chamber of Commerce water hogging regimes and plans.

HB 741 by Rep. Kevin Tanner passed. HB 741 provides for local control of the location and conditions for the disposal of sewage sludge, including public hearings in affected areas.

SB 351 by Sen. Rick Jeffares would have abolished the State Soil and Water Commission as a separate agency and transferred it to the Dept. of Agriculture. This project was vigorously opposed by the GA Farm Bureau, and died in the Senate Rules Committee. The S&WC has existed since the 1930s, and offers valuable services to GA farmers and land-owners at a very low cost, and does not deserve to simply be swallowed in the Ag Dept. which is not all that effective at performing its own assigned functions.



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Proposed Sabal Trail Pipeline Threatens Southwest Georgia Communities

By John Quarterman

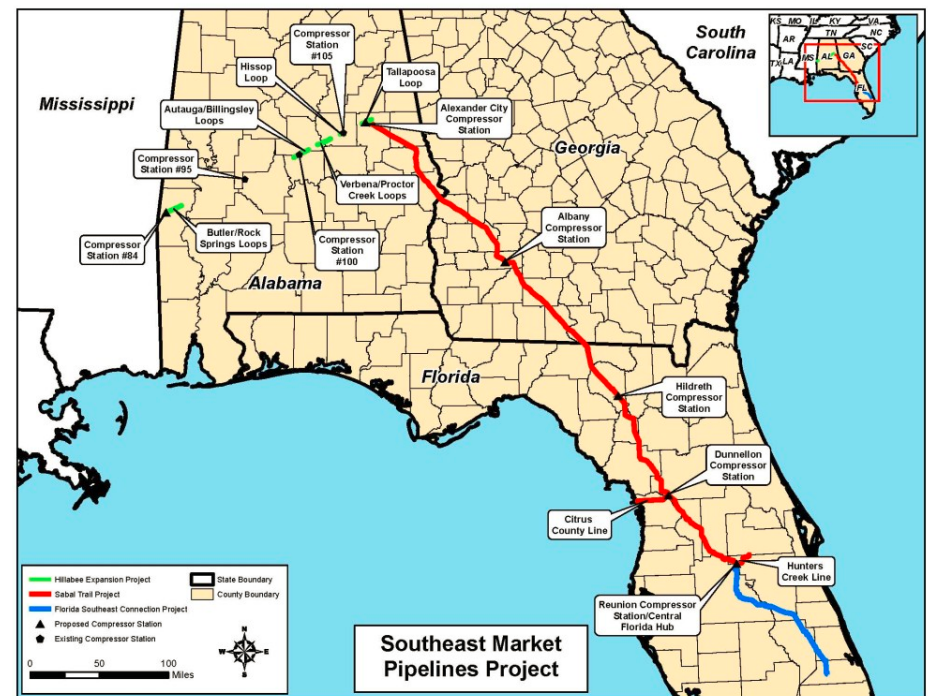
Why should a shell corporation owned by companies in Houston, Texas and Juno Beach, Florida get to take Georgians' property to pipe fracked methane to Florida through our fragile karst limestone drinking water aquifer?

Yet that's what Sabal Trail Transmission, LLC, proposes to do, bringing us only hazards and only one-time land-owner payments, in exchange for ongoing profits to its joint owners, Spectra Energy of Houston and NextEra Energy, parent of Florida Power and Light (FPL), of Juno Beach. The Sierra Club chapters of Georgia, Florida, and Alabama published a joint statement opposing that pipeline, which says in part:

"Spectra Energy and its related companies have been fined repeatedly for safety and environmental violations throughout the United States including one fine of \$15,000,000.

"The proposed pipeline would cut a wide swath through pristine lands with resulting negative impacts on endangered species, critical wildlife habitat, invaluable wetlands, longleaf pine forests, the fragile and irreplaceable Floridian Aquifer, streams, rivers, and springs, and private property rights. Furthermore, expanded reliance on fracked natural gas only serves to feed the increasingly destructive effects of drilling for and fracking of shale deposits that have destroyed drinking water resources and entire communities across the country. The Sunshine State, which will be the sole recipient of the fracked natural gas transported through this pipeline, should expand energy efficiency measures and solar power capacity rather than increase its dependence on natural gas which already accounts for more than 60% of Florida's electricity generation."

That \$15 million fine by the EPA was for leaking PCBs at 89 pipeline sites in 1989. A quarter century later, Spec-



tra's 2013 SEC filing says: "the internal surfaces of some of our pipeline systems are contaminated with PCBs, and liquids and other materials removed from these pipelines must be managed in compliance with such regulations." You wouldn't know this from Spectra's representatives at the recent series of Open Houses required by the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission (FERC) or the FERC-run Scoping Meetings, or Spectra's appearances at several County Commission meetings, at which for months Spectra's reps professed not to be familiar with any fines, until confronted with a list, on camera. You also wouldn't know about the explosions on Spectra pipelines over the decades, destroying buildings, cars, and trees and injuring and sometimes killing people.

Neither Spectra nor FERC has been very forthcoming about the final destination of the fracked gas. For months, when asked if it would be go to liquefied natural gas (LNG) export termi-

nals for sale overseas, FERC merely said this pipeline application didn't ask for export. In Moultrie FERC finally mentioned that it's not the pipeline company that would have to file for export: it's the end user.

Sabal Trail's plan includes an off-shoot pipeline to Duke Energy's Crystal River site on the Gulf Coast. Dolphin LNG already has a permit for an offshore LNG import facility to connect to the Gulfstream pipeline, and that pipeline is required by FPL to connect to Sabal Trail. FPL itself has at least three power plant locations on the Atlantic coast, so any of FPL or Dolphin or Duke could file for LNG export to get higher methane prices from other countries.

Meanwhile, at least one of FERC's own Commissioners has testified to FERC's own U.S. House oversight Subcommittee for LNG exports, and a Congressman from Spectra's hometown of Houston chairs another Subcommittee

continued on next page

continued from previous page

that has held a hearing promoting LNG export and another hearing promoting the Trans-Pacific Partnership so more countries could be export targets.

Why should a Houston company get to use federal eminent domain to ship fracked methane overseas? And even if export is not the plan, FERC's justification for eminent domain rests on its own environmental assessment guidelines. Those guidelines say first the power must be needed, and it is not clear that Florida couldn't simply conserve instead.

Second, there has to be no better way to get the power, and Sabal Trail's document on that makes astonishing assumptions such as that generating the same amount of solar power would require clearing more land than the pipeline would use, without ever mentioning that most solar power goes on rooftops and already-cleared land.

Third, the pipeline should not be too environmentally damaging. Yet Sabal Trail proposes to plow through lands replete with gopher tortoises, fox squirrels, red cockaded woodpeckers, burrowing owls, and indigo snakes. Lands above the Floridan Aquifer, the main source of drinking water for all of south Georgia and Florida, the source of many economically-important springs, in fragile karst limestone prone to sinkholes

when damaged.

FERC admitted in Moultrie, GA that its Commissioners have only ever denied two pipelines, neither standalone ones like this. In Marion County, FL, FERC admitted that FERC staff have never recommended denying a pipeline. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission had never denied a nuclear permit, either: until last year. Now it's time for FERC to start living up to its own guidelines, by denying this pipeline.

Sierra Club in opposing the unnecessary Sabal Trail pipeline allied with SpectraBusters, Inc., a Georgia nonprofit corporation with board members from Alabama, Florida, and Georgia. The rapidly-growing list of allies, already ranging as far as Pennsylvania, New Jersey, New York, and Massachusetts, is on SpectraBusters.org. Together the allies may have the knowledge and the power to stop this corporate boondoggle.

Solar power is already cheaper than any other power source, doesn't require digging into the aquifer, doesn't need any fracked fuel, and doesn't require taking Georgians' land. Stanford University recently released a study showing how to power each and every U.S. state with sun, wind, and water and nothing else. It is time for the Sunshine State (and the rest of the southeast) to get on with solar power. It is time for FERC to deny the Sabal Trail methane pipeline.



photo by Marco Sanna

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John Muir Outings Preview

Saturday, April 5

Fossil Fuel Dinosaurs on the River Bend

We'll convene near Plant Yates in Coweta County, a Georgia Power facility slated for shut-down of five coal units and conversion of the other two units to natural gas in 2015. Though at press time a tour of the facility has not yet been confirmed, we'll at least scout out the plant, its ash pond, and towering ash storage site from the public road and then caravan 10 miles over to Chattahoochee Bend State Park. This is Georgia's newest state park, situated on a large bend of the Chattahoochee River downstream of Plant Yates. We plan to hike 4 miles roundtrip on the Riverside Trail through old growth bottomland hardwood forest enjoying constant views of the river, an active Great Blue Heron rookery, and several wetland areas.



DATE: Saturday, April 5th

TIME: 10:00am - 3:00pm

LOCATION: City of Zion Deliverance Tabernacle
(133 Dyer Road, Newnan, Georgia 30263)

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$25

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy 4-mile hike

DOG FRIENDLY: Only at the State Park portion of the outing, must be on a leash

KID FRIENDLY: Yes (youth under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult)

OUTING LEADER: Laura Breyfogle

FEATURED SPEAKERS: Colleen Kiernan

Saturday, April 12

Hike-Up the Ocmulgee National Monument Expansion

The Ocmulgee National Monument is poised to become middle Georgia's first National Park! The National Parks Service has issued a boundary study report for the Ocmulgee Indian Mounds, which could mean the addition of a whopping 2,100 acres to the monument! This would greatly advance efforts statewide to secure national park designation for the area stretching from the Mounds south through Bond Swamp and along the Ocmulgee Water Trail towards Hawkinsville. Join us for an easy Saturday stroll through the monuments beautiful grounds along the Ocmulgee River, and hear from local leaders about how you can help support a new National Park in Georgia!



DATE: Saturday, April 12th

TIME: 10:00am - 3:00pm

LOCATION: Ocmulgee National Monument, Macon

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$25 (plus rental fees)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy, 3.5 mile hike with stops. Includes museum visit.

DOG FRIENDLY: Yes

KID FRIENDLY: Yes (Youth under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult)

OUTING LEADER: Seth Gunning

John Muir Outings Preview

Friday, April 18

Take a Ride on the Lovejoy Line!

The proposed commuter rail line connecting Atlanta to Macon has been in the works for over a decade. If Clayton were to join MARTA, the missing funding piece would finally be in place for the first segment to move forward. Join us as Representative Mike Glanton leads the conversation while we take a ride to check out some of the stops along the way to Lovejoy. We'll depart via charter bus from the East Point MARTA station and will follow the planned route of the line, including the future stations at Hapeville, Forest Park/Fort Gillem, and Clayton State University. The outing will also include a leisurely hike through the Reynolds Nature Preserve, which is an easy walk from the Clayton State stop.



DATE: Friday, April 18th

TIME: 11:00am - 3:00pm

LOCATION: Meet at East Point MARTA Station

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$25

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy

DOG FRIENDLY: No

KID FRIENDLY: Yes, 9th grade and above

SPECIAL NOTES: To get your John Muir fix, we will do a 1.5 mile hike at Reynolds Nature Preserve.

OUTING LEADER: Brionté McCorkle

FEATURED SPEAKERS: Rep. Mike Glanton

Saturday, April 19

Paddle Against the Pipeline

We'll start our trip between Valdosta and Thomasville Georgia with a light breakfast and coffee, and hear from local residents and energy experts about the proposed Sabal Trail pipeline and the threat it poses to local clean water, property rights, and the future of a stable climate. After breakfast we'll launch our canoes onto South Georgia's beautiful black-water Withlacoochee River passing through largely unspoiled tracts and under the location where the proposed Sabal Pipeline would cross the river. Expect to see unique South Georgia flora.



DATE: Saturday, April 19th

TIME: 7:30am - 11:30am

LOCATION: Withlacoochee River @ Hwy 84

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$25 (plus rental fees)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy/Moderate 7-8 mile down-stream paddle with breaks

DOG FRIENDLY: Yes, if they like water/being in boats!

KID FRIENDLY: Yes (Youth under 18 years of age must be accompanied by an adult)

SPECIAL NOTES: A Sierra Club volunteer will be at the launch site by 7:15am to assist you in unloading boats. The Sierra Club will provide shuttle service back to this site from our take-out. A light breakfast and coffee will be provided

OUTING LEADER: Seth Gunning

To register for any outing, visit:
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/johnmuiroutings>

John Muir Outings Preview

Saturday, April 19

Hike the Origins of the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area

Andy Mycroft and Roger Buerki will lead this 3.4-mile moderate hike in the East Palisades Unit of the CRNA. Roger, a long-time Sierran who helped to create the legislation providing for the CRNA, our local "wilderness" gem, will narrate history and interesting attributes of the CNRA. The hike includes high overlooks of the Chattahoochee River, visiting mill ruins and a bamboo forest. The trail crosses wooden bridges over Charlie's Trapping Creek and Cabin Creek and affords views of the angular shoals of the Chattahoochee's riverbed. A portion of the trail follows the bottom of the "palisades" (a line of high cliffs) from which this area gets its name. Parking requires a NPS pass or \$3.



DATE: Saturday, April 19th

TIME: 10:00am - 2:00pm

LOCATION: CRNA East Palisades Indian Trail
Parking Lot

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$25 (plus rental fees)

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Moderate

DOG FRIENDLY: No

KID FRIENDLY: Yes (youth under 18 years of age
must be accompanied by an adult)

OUTING LEADER: Andy Mycroft

FEATURED SPEAKERS: Roger Buerki

To register for any outing, visit:
<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/johnmuiroutings>

Sunday, April 27

Savannah River Paddle Against Pollution

We'll start our paddle down tidal section of the Savannah River through the scenic and nearly untouched wilderness of the Savannah National Wildlife Refuge, a birder's delight! After a leisurely and beautiful paddle, our group will emerge from the wilderness toward downtown Savannah, Georgia. Over lunch we will hear from experts about the impact of two major projects on the Savannah River; the Deepening at the Port of Savannah and pollution from two local coal fired power plants- Plant Kraft and Plant McIntosh.



DATE: Sunday, April 27th

TIME: 8:00am - 2:30pm

LOCATION: Mill Stone Landing

SUGGESTED DONATION: \$25

LEVEL OF DIFFICULTY: Easy/Moderate, easy 11-12
mile down-stream paddle with breaks

DOG FRIENDLY: Yes, if they like water/being in
boats!

KID FRIENDLY: Yes (youth under 18 years of age
must be accompanied by an adult)

SPECIAL NOTES: A Beyond Coal volunteer will be
at the Mill Stone launch site by 8:15 am to assist
you in unloading boats. The Sierra Club will provide
shuttle service back to this site from our take-out.
Lunch will be provided.

OUTING LEADER: Seth Gunning and Steve Wagner

Chapter Outings Program

*In addition to the special **John Muir Outings** series featured on pages 14 to 16, the Georgia Chapter and its local groups organize outings around the state year-round. Sierra Club Outings provide a variety of opportunities for people to enjoy the beautiful outdoors. To find out more about what outings are being offered, please visit our website at:*

<http://georgia.sierraclub.org/outings>

Outing Report: Moonlight Kayaking the Yellow River Water Trail, March 14

Led by Sammy Padgett, eleven people met in Porterdale about 7:00 PM and then gathered at the river. After a short lecture on how to paddle a sit-on-top kayak, and how to stay on top of it and out of the river, we boarded the kayaks. Entry was down a steep bank and the outfitter assisted everyone by wading on the sandbags that make up the launch. We paddled downstream at dusk, under the bridge and to the head of the shoals the see the mill that had been converted to lofts from the water side. Then, as dark settled in and the nearly full moon illuminated our path, we paddled up the river. Flat water with a very gentle current made the trip easy. A fork in the stream gave us a chance to take the easy way or the hard way. Most took the easy route up the main channel. After turning around about a mile-and-a-half up the river, the return float back to the take-out was easy. The only thing that marred the trip was the occasional cloud that covered the moon.

The trip was enhanced by the outfitter Porterdale Yak Club who provided the clean kayaks, excellent instruction, help in and out of the kayaks and a campfire at the end of the trip.

- Russell Puryear

Tuesday, April 8

Presentation: Women in the Wilderness

Time: 7:00PM

Location: Chapter Office, Decatur (see p. 23 for directions)

Presented by: Georgia Chapter

Leader: Linda Sealey (linda.sealy@armhc.org)

Registration: Optional

Description: Join us in our Decatur office as Linda Sealey, former Sierra Club Outings Leader, covers topics important to women outdoors, such as safety, hygiene & clothes, and being adequately prepared. The presentation will end with information sharing (stories, pictures, trails, contact information), and there will potentially be a follow-up hike the Saturday afterwards. Contact Linda if you have any questions (linda.sealy@armhc.org).

Friday, April 11

Urban Hike at Atlanta's Piedmont Park and the Beltline

Time: 6:30PM

Location: Piedmont Park, Atlanta

Presented by: Georgia Chapter

Leader: Loretta English (loretta_hikes@comcast.net; 678-467-2340)

Registration: Required before April 11, 2014 4:00 PM

Rated: Easy

Description: How small of a carbon footprint can you make to get to Piedmont Park? Will you walk, bike, take the train or a bus? Or perhaps carpool? Our hike will start by exploring the Park's newest expansions. Along the way we can talk about some of the conservation efforts found in the park. Then we will walk across the park and down by the new bike lanes. Along the way we can talk about Atlanta as a bike friendly city. Then we will make it over to the Beltline and hike it down to Krog Street. Along the way we will talk about the beltline and it's impact. Then we will stop and have dinner at an Inman Park restaurant along the beltline. Since it will be dark when we finish dinner we will call a couple of Uber cars to take us back to where we started. This is an easy 4 mile hike. Limit 10. See you there!

Saturday, April 26

Amicalola Falls AT Approach Trail Loop Hike

Time: 8:30 AM

Location: Amicalola Falls State Park

Presented by: Georgia Chapter

Leader: Jake Hardison, Jr. (770-904-4893, jake.hardison@ssa.gov)

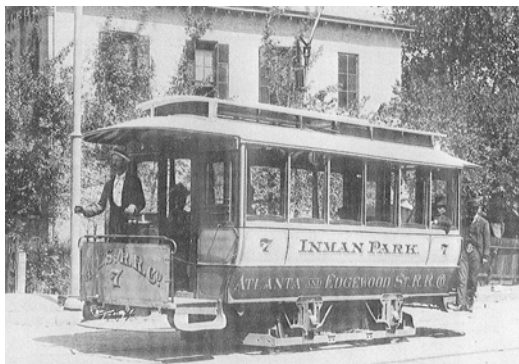
Rated: Moderate

Description: Let's get Spring going by hiking along one of the most popular and diverse mountain trails in North Georgia. We will cross small streams, traverse mild ridges and hike past hickory, pine and oak trees of North Georgia. We will depart from the carpool location at 8:30 am and drive to Amicalola Falls State Park. We will start the hike at the top of the falls, and hike the AT Approach trail for about 4.5 miles with a short stop at Frosty Mtn. We will turn right onto the Hike Inn Trail, and hike a mile to the Len Foote Hike Inn. We will spend some time at the inn for our lunch break (the Len Foote Inn sometimes provides cookies, deserts, coffee, and hot chocolate for a minimal tip). We will continue back via the Hike Inn Trail, which is an easy-to-moderate trail, which takes between 2-4 hours to complete. Please bring lunch and all appropriate day hiking gear, including good hiking boots. We should get back to the trailhead by late afternoon. I will send carpool info to all participants a week prior to the hike. Total of 10 Miles. Elevation Gain is 2,300 feet. Limit 12 people, no pets.

Transit in East Point and Metro Atlanta, Then and Now

Streetcar rails connected East Point and Atlanta when many if not most streets were still dirt—dusty or muddy. “Downtown areas that were once completely accessible on foot began to spread out over greater distances, creating a need for...public transportation to accommodate working and middle-class urban residents who were unable to afford the costs of owning or renting their own horse and carriage for the commute.”¹ The railroads which gave East Point its name had provided people with long distance rail comfort. Streetcars or trolleys moved them from Atlanta to outlying communities, such as Decatur, Marietta, East Point, and beyond—the system map of 1924 shows Line 20 College Park & Hapeville, and by 1946 Atlanta was connected to Atlanta Municipal Airport (Hartsfield).

Atlanta streetcars “began with horsecars in 1871, and electric streetcar service started in the 1880s.”² Also, there were small coal-fired locomotives called steam “dummies” that towed one or two streetcars. At times, there could be self-propelled electric trolleys and others pulled by dummies, horses or mules on different routes. Streetcar lines ran to important places: 1872 to Oakland Cemetery, 1884 to West-



Atlanta and Edgewood St. R.R.—No. 7 Inman Park

view Cemetery, 1891 to the new Hollywood Cemetery, and 1905 to Crestlawn Cemetery.³

As Jim Crow was taking over the South, tensions on streetcars increased. An “1891 Law passed requiring segregation on streetcars ‘as much as practicable’ and at the enforcement of streetcar conductors.”² As we know, this situation continued for more than half a century until the demise of the streetcars.

New developments in the Atlanta area aided the network of streetcars. “In 1902, all of the street railway, electric light and power, and steam properties in Atlanta were consolidated under the Georgia Railway and Electric Company. Among the new tracks was a 1902 extension from East Point to College Park. Within a decade an interurban connection to Fairburn would follow.”³ “The development at Morgan Falls was the first in a series of hydroelectric facilities built to fuel Atlanta’s need for electric traction. In 1912, Georgia Railway and Electric Company reorganized into Georgia Railway and Power Company and later Georgia Power.”⁴

continued on next page

Upcoming Meetings & Programs

Metro Atlanta Group meets the 2nd Tuesday of each month. Snacks at 7:00 PM, program begins at 7:30 (directions at bottom) except for June picnic.

April 8 Meeting: Solar is Getting Cheaper

Sol Haroon of Suniva will discuss the new solar age.

May 13 Meeting: The Elections Are Coming...

Eddie Ehler will tell us who at the Georgia General Assembly is up for re-election, other candidates for those and other offices for the May 20 Primaries.

June 10: Annual Potluck Picnic at Candler Park, Atlanta

Gather at 6:30 PM, eat at 7. **Please bring food to share** at the picnic tables across from the swimming pool. The group will provide hot dogs and hamburgers plus cup, plate and utensils if you don’t bring your own. We will have fire in case you want to grill meat or vegetables. The entrance to the park is at **1502 McLendon Ave.** east of Candler Park Dr. in the Little 5 Points area. See website for further details.

Last year, we had a short hike before the eating and a longer one afterwards. Come at 6 PM for the short hike.

July 8 Meeting: To be Announced

General Membership meetings are open to the public and held at the Episcopal Church of the Epiphany, **2089 Ponce de Leon Ave.** at the intersection with East Lake Drive; the entrance to the church is on East Lake Dr. **MARTA** Bus 2 runs on Ponce de Leon between North Avenue Station and Decatur Station.

For more information, updates, and new events please see: <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/atlanta/>

Metro Atlanta Group

Through the decades, streetcar companies were created, grew, shrank, merged and died, with their rail lines expanding and contracting. Then came the popularity of the automobile, so the bicycle and public transit rail use slowed and then ended as effective transportation options. "While trackless trolleys and the personal automobile would bring an end to their use, funeral parties in many cities honoring 'the last trolley ride' were held testifying to their hold on the public."¹ Thus on April 10, 1949, they disappeared all together, and Atlanta entered the trackless decades until the 1970's.

This was an interesting era to read about. I hope that you will also go to the resources and find new and interesting tidbits of history.

**- D. Gordon Draves
EPHS Vice President**

This was originally written for the East Point Historical Society newsletter. Next time: Rail returns to East Point in the form of MARTA, and Atlanta Streetcars (It has been said that rides on the streetcar will be free for the first 3 months.)

References:

- [1] Historic Streetcar Systems in Georgia: <http://www.dot.ga.gov/Projects/programs/environment/resources/outreach/Documents/Reports/GAStreetcar.pdf>
- [2] Wikipedia: http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Streetcars_in_Atlanta
- [3] Streetcars in Atlanta: <http://railga.com/oddend/stretrail/atlantastr.html>

TransportationCamp South Returns to Atlanta April 12

Following on the success of the sold-out inaugural event in February 2013, **TransportationCamp South** is returning to Georgia Tech on **Saturday, April 12**. TransportationCamp is an "unconference" – where sessions are proposed and led by attendees – bringing together thinkers and doers in the fields of transportation and technology for a day of learning, debating, connecting, and creating. The Georgia Chapter is again serving as a sponsor for the event. Learn more and register at:

www.transportationcamp.org



Savannah River Group

We think Cathy Black, our Outings Chair, is the best ever, but we can't help wondering what she did on our March Cumberland Island trip to put her hikers to sleep on the beach! They must have really enjoyed their wilderness experience to the zzzzzzzth degree.



Cumberland Island Beach



Beach Boardwalk



Dungeness ruins on Cumberland Island

Seriously, Cumberland Island is one of Georgia's wilderness gems and Georgians should be grateful that Sierrans helped protect this barrier island.

Also in March, we had two additional Muir outings: Richard Dillenbeck led a special trip to Congaree National Park where participants were able to see some champion trees. He also led a trip at Mistletoe State Park on the Cliatt Creek Trail which provides seven miles of varied habitat from old hardwoods to pine forests.

Linda McBurney organized a tour of the Richmond County Landfill and discussed how we might partner with them for community clean-ups.

In April our main focus was our annual fund raiser, our joint rummage sale which we partner with the Augusta Unitarian Universalist Church. (Sadly, it does keep us away from trips to sandy beaches, but it provides the \$ to help fund our newsletter.)

Our April monthly meeting featured Trina Morris, Wildlife biologist with Nongame Conservation, GA DNR, speaking to us about bat conservation.

- Judy Gordon, Co-Chair

Centennial Group

Focus on Outings The Centennial Group continues efforts to build interest in and support for outings in our area. We re-activated our Outing Committee that now meets regularly; we identified potential new outing leaders for our group; we scheduled several upcoming hikes in the Chattahoochee National Recreation Area (CNRA) that feature historical commentary from member, Roger Buerki, and include a special Georgia Chapter John Muir Series hike to East Palisades CNRA (April 19). Other outings scheduled, so far: a docent-led botanical tour and picnic at Smith-Gilbert Gardens in Kennesaw (April 26); a Gold Branch CNRA hike (May 17); an Atlanta Beltline bus tour (June 7); and a bike outing in July (TBA).

Monthly Group Meetings Our regular meetings are held every first Thursday of the month (unless otherwise noted) on the campus of Life University in Marietta (Upper Gymnasium, 1269 Barclay Circle SE, Room 311, Marietta GA. For directions please see website or Facebook page). A social with refreshments begins at 7:00pm. Program begins at 7:30pm.

- **April 3rd:** Join us for an Earth Day celebration! We kick off Earth Month with popular and returning guest speaker, Jerry Hightower, CNRA Park Ranger (he often brings a few surprises). We will also have some fun trivia in honor of Mother Nature.
- **May 1st:** Dr. Cornelia Cho, President of the Mushroom Club of Georgia, discusses "Mushrooms as Allies for Care of the Environment".
- **June 5th:** Jim Ries discusses "One More Generation", a nonprofit organization he founded with his children, Carter and Olivia, dedicated to the preservation and survival of endangered species for at least one more generation.
- **July 12th:** Join us for our annual picnic on Saturday (instead of our regular 1st-Thursday meeting). Location and details to be announced in May.

Tabling Events Volunteers are needed for several special tabling events in April. If you want to help table at one of the locations and dates below, please contact Sheri Workman at recyclemom@comcast.net with your contact information and location preference. You can also sign up on our Facebook page: www.facebook.com/Centennial.Sierra.Club

- **Cobb County:** April 12th for "CNC Kid's Fest" at Chattahoochee Nature Center in Roswell. Time: 10:00am till 3:00pm
- **North Fulton County** - April 19th at "Earth Day Fest" in Milton/Alpharetta. Time: 11:00am till 3:00pm
- **Cherokee County** - April 19th at "Greenstock Day" in downtown Woodstock. Time: 11:00am till 3:00pm

In Memoriam Sadly, we lost two dear Centennial friends early this year who were also outstanding community leaders and environmental heroes. We continue to pay tribute to their memories. Rush Netterville, a member of our ex-com, died suddenly in January after a brief illness. Of Rush's many contributions, we especially remember his success in creating a popular walking trail in East Cobb County and his long-time "Adopt-A-Stream" support of Rottenwood Creek. Roberto Moraes, also a longtime member, put many of his special skills to work in speaking up for important environmental and social justice issues and in serving fellow citizens and neighbors in need of assistance. We were looking forward to Roberto's return in February from one of his regular visits to see family in his native Brazil when we learned of his sudden illness and passing. *"Ustedes siempre estan en nuestros corazones, Rush and Roberto."*

Thank You! Our appreciation for the great speakers and programs we have had so far this year: Oren Kleinberger, UGA ecologist and a bio-fuels designer, who spoke in January about veggie oil diesel conversions. Neill Herring and Mark Woodall who provided their timely legislative update in February; and photographer and conservationist Larry Winslett with his splendid Wilderness Act commemorative photo presentation in March. Well done.



Outing Report from Group Chair Lynn Walston

On Saturday, March 8, several Sierrans joined other volunteers in a "privet pull" at an historic and traditionally black cemetery, St Johns, in Vinings, dating from 1866. Sponsored by the nonprofit, River Line (active in preservation of historic sites in SE Cobb County and the Silver Comet Trail), and led by founder Roberta Cook, this was one of several outings and tours planned for volunteers and visitors in upcoming weeks (www.riverline.org). It was a fascinating excursion back into history, with 137 graves marked and many identified with small headstones and a few impressive Veterans markers. It was especially meaningful for me, when the first gravestones I saw were those of "Mr. Marvin Varner" and "Mrs. Mary Varner," both of whom died in 1984. I was surprised because Varner is my family name, and although I knew I have had relatives in the Smyrna area for some time, I was not aware of

continued on next page

LaGrange Group

LaGrange Group Partners with LaGrange College

Collaborating with other organizations serves to make us more effective and better known in our community. Realizing that our group participants are predominantly in the middle aged/older age group, we are making an effort to attract and involve students from LaGrange College.

After engaging Jack Slay, head of the Servant Scholar program at LaGrange College, as a speaker last spring, we were chosen by one of the servant scholars, Reese Hight, as one of his local organizations to focus on for his required volunteer work. Reese has recently accepted an invitation to serve on our board and has agreed to work on engaging LaGrange College students in various Sierra Club activities.

Henry Jacobs, a recent LaGrange College graduate and regional outreach coordinator for Chattahoochee Riverkeeper in the LaGrange office, has been collaborating with our group in stream monitoring efforts. Henry organized an Adopt a Stream training and helped us identify 2 streams that need monitoring. In addition, this spring we will be helping sponsor an event that Henry is organizing which will feature water themed local art as well as a film about the Chattahoochee River.

With the assistance of Dr. Mark Yates, head of the sustainability committee at the college, we were able to schedule our annual legislative update at the college. It was offered as a cultural enrichment credit as well as sustainability credit for attending students. The college requires a certain number of these credits for students before they graduate.



Outing on Chattahoochee Riverwalk in Columbus

One of our board members offered to give 5 free memberships to college students, which hopefully will increase their awareness of Sierra Club's actions on the state and national level. All students attending the legislative update were encouraged to enter their names in a drawing after the meeting, 5 of which were awarded free memberships.

We are encouraging students to participate in local outings and projects. Six students recently biked with us on the Chattahoochee Riverwalk. Several students participated in one of the Georgia Power rate case town hall meetings organized by Seth Gunning. Hopefully in the future we will involve some students in local projects, as volunteerism is a focus of the LaGrange College experience. We may even find students to provide leadership in local projects if we can match passion with community needs!

Centennial Group

connections to this part of local history ... something for further investigation! The River Line nonprofit has made significant inroads into preserving this and other sites, but much work remains. We pulled privet for a couple of hours, but also got a history lesson from Roberta about civil war fortifications and the St. Johns church site in the area. We found very old bottles and trash, but also gravesites with unique memorial tokens: dolls, toys, artificial flowers and pots, etc. We also trekked a few hundred yards to a huge beech tree, which required three pairs of outstretched arms to encircle it. I was happy that three other Sierra Club members joined us, and that two others learned about the event through our website. We hope to join River Line for future events.

Visit our website: <http://georgia.sierraclub.org/centennial>

"Like" us on Facebook:

<https://www.facebook.com/CentennialSierra.Club>

Upcoming Meetings & Events

April 15: Meeting at St. Mark's Episcopal Church (207 N. Greenwood St. LaGrange 30240)

6:30 pm: Welcome/refreshments

7 pm: Dr. William Pascal will present slideshow of the Galapagos Islands

April 26: Tour of Serenbe Farms, certified organic farm nestled in the sustainable Serenbe community, Southwest of Atlanta, Georgia. Contact Eric Simpson (elamar109@yahoo.com) to sign up.

May 9-11 / May 16-18 / May 23-25: Member Stephen Johnson will offer his beautiful spot on Flat Shoals Creek near West Point for public viewing of the threatened shoals spider lilies. Enjoy meeting Stephen at his cabin where he shares information about the lilies and their habitat, then take a easy quarter mile walk to the creek to see these rare beauties up close. The address is 4725 Highway 103, West Point, Ga. 31833. Contact Stephen (706-590-0964) if you have questions. Carpooling is strongly encouraged as parking space is limited. Wear a swimsuit and/or water shoes if you want to do some rock hopping/wading in the shoals.

May 20: Meeting at St. Mark's Episcopal Church (207 N. Greenwood St. LaGrange 30240)

6:30 pm: Welcome/refreshments

7 pm: Terry and Alicia Williamson, local beekeepers, will speak on "The Plight of the Honeybees"

June 14: Organic Farm Tour (2nd annual). Tour 3 local organic farms. Contact Joanna Baxter (joanabbaxter@yahoo.com) to sign up.

Chapter Contacts

Executive Committee

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

Vice Chair - Administration: Midge Sweet,
404-667-4476, sweetmidge@gmail.com
At-Large Elected Member

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

Sara Black, 205-612-3204
saratoblack@gmail.com
At-Large Elected Member

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

Jackie Echols, 678-974-7927
jmechols@bellsouth.net
At-Large Elected Member

Eddie Ehler, 770-402-0087,
edeherlert@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

Norman Slawsky, 404-299-1211 x25
nslawsky@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,
gasieran@gmail.com

Outings: Sammy Padgett,
sammypadgett@comcast.net

Political Chair: Eddie Ehler,
edeherlert@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 Monday, 7 p.m., chapter office.
Committee sometimes skips months. E-mail first.

Smart Energy Solutions:

Eleanor Hand, eghand@bellsouth.net and
Cecilia Harris, ceciliaharris@gmail.com
Meeting: 1st Monday, 7 p.m. chapter office

Wildlands and Wildlife:

Mike Murdock, murdock1@mindspring.com
Meeting: 3rd Monday, 7:00 p.m., chapter office.
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: Steve Willis,
snwillis@yahoo.com

Coastal Marsh: Karen Grainey,
karengrainey@bellsouth.net

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

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: Steve Willis,
snwillis@yahoo.com

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

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

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

Chapter Program Assistant:

Brionte McCorkle, 404-607-1262 x.232
brionte.mccorkle@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

Contact Naomi Bock (atlantaico@gmail.com) for more information.

Fundraising Committee

Fourth Tuesday of the month, 6:00 p.m., Chapter Office. Contact the Chapter office at 404-607-1262 x221 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

Outings Chair: Anderson Mycroft, 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 Lynn Walston, lynnwalston22@yahoo.com.

Coastal Group

Serving Savannah & surrounding counties

Chair: Karen Grainey, karengrainey@bellsouth.net

Outings Chair: Steve Wagner, sjwgnr@hotmail.com

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

Greater Gwinnett Group

Serving Gwinnett Co.

Chair: Dan Friedman, dan3688@aol.com

Conservation Chair: Art Sheldon, asheldon.cp81@gtalumni.org

Outings Chair: Jake Hardison, 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

Conservation Chair: Sim Blitch simblich@charter.net

Outings Chair: Joanna Baxter, 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

Co-Chair: Gordon Draves, (404) 766-3456 nonsmoke4ga@hotmail.com

Co-Chair: Konrad Hayashi, rainingatl@gmail.com

Outings Chair: Martin McConaughy 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

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

Conservation Chair: Frank Carl, frankcarl@knology.net

Outings Chair: Cathy Black, 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

Forsyth County

Jim Callison, callisonjim@bellsouth.net

Macon

Fletcher Winston, winston_f@mercer.edu

North Georgia

Larry Winslett, winfog@windstream.net

Valdosta

Brian Day, bjday@valdosta.edu

Looking for a Group near your home?

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

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Georgia Chapter Office

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

Your message should read:

SUBSCRIBE LISTNAME FIRSTNAME LASTNAME

LIST NAMES:

GA-OUTINGS (chapter outings list)

GA-NEWSLETTER-ANNOUNCE (online newsletter updates)

GA-RAIL-NEWS (RAIL/Transit Advocacy Committee)

Subscribe to the Smart Energy Solutions listserve at gasmartenergycommittee@googlegroups.com

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

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

Chapter ExCom Meeting

The next meeting will be Saturday, May 17th at the Tybee Island YMCA. Meetings are open to the membership. For more information, call the Chapter office at 404-607-1262 x221.



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JOHN MUIR OUTINGS

Celebrate Earth Day – and Georgia’s spectacular beauty – all month long. Each Saturday in April, we’re hosting an outing where you can learn about our state’s threatened areas and how to protect them. To support the Georgia Chapter’s work, a donation of \$25 per person per outing is requested. What better way to honor Earth and our founder, John Muir?

Complete details on pages 14 - 16 and online at
georgia.sierraclub.org/johnmuiroutings



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