

Become an Active Player

By: Lisa Williams, Sierra Club Executive Committee

For some, politics is a topic to be totally ignored. It is often perceived as a tainted realm that encompasses only liars and cheaters. Unfortunately, this kind of thinking leads to not voting or tribal voting without understanding how the tribe may not actually represent our interests. This voter apathy allows politicians to stay in office and push even more laws that we find abhorrent, making us hate politics even more.

Do you want the EPA to disappear or do you want a healthy EPA that can adequately regulate pollution that might hurt us and our children? Do you want our public lands to be sold off for private use? Do you want to abolish laws that allow the president to designate certain lands to be set aside as National Monuments to be used by all people? These are the kinds of laws that are being debated and pushed by our President and members of our Congress at this very time.



Unlike a spectator sport where we sit in the stands and yell for our favorite team but actually have no ability to make change, in politics we are on the field playing whether we like it or not. Politicians make the laws which are the rules by which we *all* have to play. Therefore, it is vital to become and remain educated about the issues and how your representatives vote.

It's tough to keep up with all the laws being debated. Sierra Club is one of many organizations that send out emails to educate you on current environmental issues so you can contact your representative to let him/her know how you feel about what they're doing. Letting your representative know how you feel is important because your rep likes his job and wants to keep it. All forms of communication from emails to faxes to phone calls are considered effective because what the staffers are looking for are tallies, turning constituent input into a count of support for or against.

Here are some easy ways to contact your representatives:

- Sierra Club- We send out alerts on issues being considered and ask our members to call or email their reps using the template provided. Emails must be personalized in order to receive attention by our reps. To join our Action Alert list, go to <http://www.sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida>.
- Daily Action- This method makes phone calling your rep painless by connecting citizens to their reps with a quick swipe of their phone. To join, text DAILY to 228466 (A-C-T-I-O-N)
- Indivisible- This organization is rooted in the Women's March and encompasses many issues including the environment. Sign up and get regular emails on current issues as well as contact information for your reps: <https://www.contactingcongress.org/>
- Resistbot- Resistbot faxes users' texted messages to officials. Just type "resist" and hit send to 50409, and the automated bot will ask your name and your zip code. The zip code is used to determine who your public officials are. Then you type in your message. If it's an especially good message, the bot will ask you if it can be sent as a letter to the editor to certain newspapers as well.

You might think that calling and emailing doesn't make a difference but thus far, our collective efforts exhibited since President Trump took office has slowed the destruction of Obamacare and stopped the nullification of the Bureau of Land Management's methane waste prevention rule.

With your *active* resistance, we can keep on top of our elected officials and make sure they're playing the game we want them to play. Or vote them out in 2018!

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Meetup: www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group
Facebook: <http://tinyurl.com/29v9hsd>
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/sierranefl>

Sierra Club Outings

No pets allowed on outing except where designated in the outings description. Outing participants are required to sign a waiver and release of liability at the start of the outing. The waiver can be found at: sierraclub.org/outings/national/participantforms/forms/individual_waiver.pdf

JOIN US ON MEETUP: OUTINGS HAVE BEEN FILLING UP FAST!

For the most up to date information and to ensure your spot, join our MeetUp site. Details of all outings can be found there with easy access to programs and interactions, or check our website.

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group

Saturday, June 3, 9:00 a.m.: Hike the Florida Trail in the Ocala National Forest

It's National Trails Day, so let's hike a National Trail. We'll hike for about 7.5 miles from Rodman Dam to Lake Delancy. FloridaHikes.com describes this hike: "One of the most awe-inspiring sections of the Florida Trail ... (it) immerses you into longleaf pine forests that seem to go on forever ... the Florida Trail through this area is simply superb." I agree; it's beautiful!

This is a long 7.5 mile hike in June weather with some ups and downs and with no shortcuts to bail out early. We'll meet at the Rodman Dam Florida Trailhead at 9:00 a.m. Some of us will then shuttle a few cars to our endpoint at Lake Delancy. Once we return, we'll begin our hike. Bring water, bug spray, and sun block. Please bring dollar bills to help pay for parking at Lake Delancy (\$6 per car). Restrooms are available at Rodman Dam and at Lake Delancy. No pets.

Travel time is about 1 1/2 hours. Please arrive by 9:00 a.m. so we can get cars shuttled and start our hike by 10:00. Arrange carpools here on Meetup. After our hike, we can go to Corky Bell's in Palatka (185 US-17, East Palatka) for lunch. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Bill Armstrong, armsfam@yahoo.com.

Saturday, June 10, 11:00 a.m.: Kayak Pottsburg Creek

We'll put in at the boat ramp next to All Wet Sports at 8550 Beach Boulevard. We'll paddle up the creek (south) for about a 2 1/2 hour round trip. If we want, we can then paddle north toward the St. Johns River.

Bring your own kayak/canoe or rent one from All Wet Sports (first-come, first-serve; limited number of single and tandem kayaks available). You can usually find a coupon on Groupon or Living Social for an all-day kayak rental for \$20. PFD and whistle required. You must WEAR your PFD. If renting, please be there at 10:00 a.m. to rent your kayak so you are ready to go by 11:00 a.m. There are a limited number of kayaks available.

RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Bill Armstrong, armsfam@yahoo.com.

Sunday, June 25, 9:00 a.m.: Hike Bayard Conservation Area

We will meet at the Bayard Conservation Area, part of the St. Johns River Water Management District. After sign-in and a welcoming address in the parking lot, we will start hiking at 9:00. We will walk about 2 miles to an intersection where there are some tables and a composting restroom (no potable water). Along the way there is an observation platform that provides nice views of the forest.

We will start off on the second trail, walking about 1 mile to the shores of the St Johns River. Great river views and picnic tables are available there, but no other facilities. We will return by the same trails in reverse order. Total time will be about three and one-half to four hours. Mostly level and well cleared, the trails may have a few rough spots and become muddy following rain. Bring your usual hiking gear: insect repellent, sunscreen, ample water, and wear weather-appropriate clothing. By leaving at 9:00 AM, we should avoid high temperatures. As always, car pooling is recommended. There are no fees for parking. This outing is not recommended for children. No pets allowed. For additional information about the park: <http://www.sjrwmd.com/recreationguide/bayard/index.html> RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Mike DiAngelo at mfidian-gelo@gmail.com.

Citizens of Northeast Florida Joined Hands Against Dirty Fuels



Over 100 PEOPLE Joined Hands Against Dirty Fuels at Jacksonville Beach /near the pier as part of Eighth Annual International "Hands Across the Sand/Land"

Jacksonville Beach - As part of the international Hands Across the Sand/Land day of action, residents of Northeast Florida met on the beach near the Jacksonville Beach Pier today to raise awareness about the dangers of dirty fuels and the need to speed the transition to available, affordable clean energy solutions. The line of people joining hands across the beach was a strong show of support for clean energy at a time when a host of new dirty fuel proposals are under consideration.

Similar events were held across the country and around the world. Thousands of citizens joined against a range of dirty fuel projects from offshore drilling and seismic testing to hydraulic fracturing, tar sands and coal. The global response was a clear indication that the future of our planet rests on the protection of ecosystem services and the switch to economies powered by renewable energy. Participants voiced their concern about Seismic Testing and Oil drilling of the first coast.

The Hands Across the Sand/Land events are aimed at steering America's energy policy away from its dependence on fossil fuels and towards clean energy. The goal is to show leaders in all levels of government, that public support is strong for moving away from dirty fuels and adopting policies that encourage clean energy instead. This local event was partnered by the Northeast Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club, The First Coast Surfrider Foundation and Sea Shepherds. The event was preceded by a beach cleanup sponsored by First Coast Surfrider Foundation.

No Florida Forever funds in Budget

The Florida Legislature has again ignored the will of Florida's voters by not authorizing any money in the latest budget to purchase and protect endangered lands and waters as authorized by the Amendment 1 Constitutional Amendment passed overwhelmingly by voters in 2014.

The Sierra Club is part of a group that has sued the legislature to compel the funding of Florida Forever.

Please let your legislators know that you are unhappy with the decision not to provide funding for Florida Forever.

Land and Water Conservation Fund needs to be Reauthorized

The LWCF permits the Federal Government to purchase private lands from willing sellers instead of allowing such vulnerable lands to fall into the hands of private developers. National Parks that have benefited from LWCF include Rocky Mountain, Grand Canyon and Great Smoky Mountain.

There are three reauthorization bills pending in Congress, namely HR 502 and S896 and S.569.

Please ask your legislators to co-sponsor and otherwise support these bills.

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Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
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.

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

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Meeting Calendar

Monday, June 19 @ 6:30pm

Combined Executive Committee and Conservation Committee Meeting

South East Branch Public Library Meeting Room

10599 Deerwood Park Blvd.

Jacksonville, FL 32256

Our normal program meeting schedule will resume in September.

“We cannot always build the future for our youth, but we can build our youth for the future”

—Franklin D. Roosevelt



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General Programs

Visit our websites for maps to all meeting locations:

florida.sierraclub.org/northeast

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group

Both the Ponte Vedra and Jacksonville Programs will resume in September following a well-deserved summer break.

Attention Sierra Club Members!

We are currently in the process of starting a Northeast Florida Chapter of the Sierra Student Coalition. The Sierra Student Coalition (SSC) is a broad network of high school and college aged youth from across the country working for environment, climate, and social justice.

The SSC will serve as a youth-led division of the Northeast Florida Sierra Club Chapter. We will have monthly meetings and participate in environmental projects, campaigns, and outings throughout the year. If you are interested in joining the student coalition, or know someone who may be interested, please contact Nick Famularo for more details.



Thank you!

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