



Broward Sierra News

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WHAT'S HAPPENING TO FLORIDA'S ENVIRONMENT?

– By Stan Pannaman, Broward Sierra Conservation Chair



Coral smothered by sediment

In September, the Broward Sierra Club, and over a dozen businesses and environmental organizations joined Miami Waterkeeper and the Center for Biological Diversity in demanding that the Army Corps of Engineers reevaluate its Port Everglades expansion plan in light of the impacts to Miami's reef during its recent port construction. In a 15-page letter, the groups detailed

the Corps' multiple failures to protect coral reef resources during the Port of Miami Deep Dredge Project – how hundreds of acres of corals were smothered, and how "lessons learned" have not been incorporated into plans to expand Port Everglades. Since receiving this document the Corps was forced to postpone the dredging of port Everglades in Fort Lauderdale for at least six months. Luckily for us, this postponement brought us into turtle season when dredging cannot be done, since it would interfere with the nesting of sea turtles on Broward County beaches, which includes port Everglades. As of January 20, we have not received a response from the Army Corps of Engineers to our complaints in this letter. (You can read the entire letter at <http://tinyurl.com/PortEvergladesLetter>.)

Touted as an environmental breakthrough, the water-policy bill passed last week by the Florida Legislature is actually a major win for polluters and the politicians they own. Again, the Florida legislature has rewarded big agriculture, ranchers, and the sugar industry. Enforcement of clean-water rules is being replaced by the honor system. And you know what that means. The polluters will continue to pollute, and we the taxpayers will be forced to pay to clean up the messes they create.

Finally, some good news for us in Broward County. Commissioner Beam Furr has sponsored an ordinance to prohibit extreme well stimulation for purposes of resource extraction ("fracking") amending section 27-193 of the Broward County code of ordinances ("CODE"); and providing for the Severability, including in the code, and an effective date. This legislation will be brought up for a vote on the Broward County commission meeting on Tuesday, January 26, 2016.

KING MANGO STRUT 2015

– By Ina Oost Topper, Broward Sierra Excom Chair



As you all know by now, Sierra members of both Dade and Broward Counties always participate in the great tradition of the yearly tongue-in-cheek parade in Coconut Grove, the King Mango Strut. Our totally committed, enthusiastic group gets together weeks before the actual event, painting a new banner, putting together many props and, most challenging of all, coming up with a new environmental theme.

This year's theme was meant to bring public awareness to FPL's very troubling stand on solar panels. For some time the big power companies of our state have been looking for ways to curtail the now vastly increasing numbers of solar power users. In all likelihood, it's again the almighty dollar behind this discomfiting approach. After all, it doesn't take a rocket scientist to understand that the sunny state of Florida should be channeling our abundance of solar energy into environmentally clean energy for every Florida citizen. The fact that, of all regions of the world, our state is at the bottom of the pole in this regard, is not just appalling, it's an environmental embarrassment! Just think: even Germany, a country not exactly known for a year round sunny climate, is already using MORE solar power than most of Florida.

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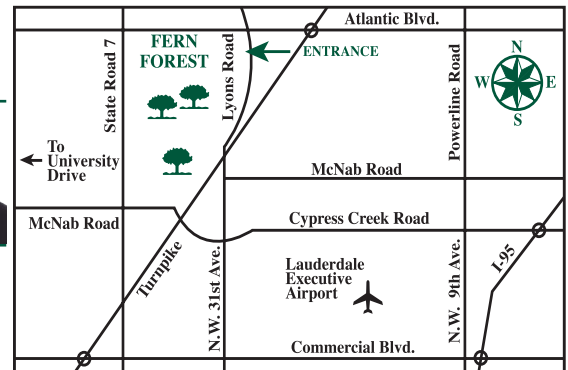
Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings - Each month we have an educational program on conservation or environmental issues.

DIRECTIONS: Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek is just south of Atlantic Blvd. on the west side of the street. (From the south, NW 31 Ave. becomes NW 46 Ave., and then Lyons Rd. as you pass under the turnpike.) Committee reports begin at 7:30, and the program begins at 8:00. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.

Thursday, Feb. 4: Our speaker will be **Broward County Commissioner Beam Furr**, who will be speaking about environmental issues, including the steps that the Broward County Commission is taking to **ban fracking in Broward County**.



NatureScape Broward **Thursday, March 3:** A joint meeting with the South Florida Audubon Society at Fern Forest Nature Center on March 3, 2016. The featured speaker will be Natural Resource Specialist Diana Guidry from the Broward County NatureScape.



Local Sierra Club Outings & Events

To preserve a place, you must believe in it.
To believe in it, you must see it.



JAN. 30, SAT. BIKING AT RIVERBEND PARK IN JUPITER. Leisurely morning bicycling in the woods at Riverbend Park. Rentals available. See www.pbcgov.com/parks/locations/riverbend.htm#.VkoqOspm0bE. Bicycle helmets are REQUIRED on all Sierra Club bicycle outings. Limit 10. Rated moderate. Suggested donation: \$3 members, \$5 non-members. Leader: Ron Haines, 561-315-0528, RonaldHaines@bellsouth.net.



FEB. 6, SAT. STAR GAZING IN THE BIG CYPRESS. Explore constellations, planets and more with park rangers and astronomers from the S. Fla. Astronomers Assoc. at the 4th annual Big Cypress Star Party. Big Cypress Preserve is applying to be an international "dark sky park". There are only 20 in the world. A dark sky is a place where human's get clear starry skies and can view nocturnal animals. Viewing starts at about 7pm. and the ranger presentation is at 8pm. Carpooling is recommended (though not a responsibility of the club) as this event is at least a 1-1/2 hour ride from the Ft. Lauderdale airport via I-75. Suggested \$3 donation to cover snacks. Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 judykuchta@yahoo.com.



FEB. 20, SAT. CANOE/KAYAK THE WINDING WATERS NATURAL AREA IN WEST PALM BEACH. Leisurely morning paddling in this newly opened area. Sorry, no rentals available. See it at www.pbcgov.com/erm/natural/natural-areas/winding-waters/. Limit 10. Rated moderate. Suggested donation: \$3 members, \$5 non-members. Leader: Ron Haines, 561-315-0528, RonaldHaines@bellsouth.net.



FEB. 27, SAT. HIKE BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE. We'll hike approx. 6-8 miles on a wilderness trail, off a section of the Florida National Scenic Trail, north of Alligator Alley (about an hour from downtown Ft. Lauderdale). You'll learn the difference a few inches of elevation makes to the local flora, as you trek through cypress forests, hammocks and prairies. We'll walk at a leisurely pace, allowing for identification of birds, wildflowers, plants and butterflies. Bring your own lunch to eat on the trail. Rated moderate, due to distance and uneven footing. This is a MOSTLY dry hike. Suggested donation: \$5 members, \$7 non-members. Leader: Jackie Fisher, 954-434-2855 jfsf812@bellsouth.net.



MAR. 5, SAT. OKEECHOBEE RIM BIKE RIDE. A 15 to 25 mile ride on a paved trail on top of the Okeechobee Lake Dam. The outing will start at a designated area on the dam and end at the same location near Port Mayacca. You will need a cruiser or mountain bike, a spare inner tube, appropriate tool to remove tire, plenty of water and a snack lunch. It is suggested that you wear a large brimmed hat for sun protection. Wildlife will consist mostly of various kinds of birds and alligators. We will see the renovations being made to the dam which will cost an estimated 1.5 billion dollars. Afterwards the participants may want to share beverages at a local spot and even go to dinner at a nearby restaurant. This outing could take most of the day. Suggested donation: \$5. Leader: Darryl Rutz, 954-892-1740 dmrtz2@msn.com.



MAR. 12, SAT. BROWARD WATER MATTERS DAY. Treetops Park in Davie. This year's theme is "Commit to Conservation." Activities, Giveaways, Interactive Educational Displays/Booths, Water Conservation Tips, Landscaping for Water Savings, Eco-Friendly Ideas, Food Truck Invasion. Park admission: \$1.50. For more info, see www.broward.org/WATERMATTERS/Pages/ProgramsWMD.aspx. Stop by the Sierra Club booth and say hi.



MAR. 26, SAT. EAST RIVER CANOE. Paddle approximately 8-10 miles while exploring several mangrove tunnels and small "lakes" south of Tamiami trail and Route 29. Learn what inhabits this unique ecosystem. Paddles, life vests and canoes included. Afterwards we'll have a meal at a restaurant on the Baron River in Everglades City (not included). Rated moderate. \$25 members, \$30 non members. Ages 18 to 25 only \$10. Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 judykuchta@yahoo.com, Assistant Leaders: Mark.walters@sierraclub.org, and manuel_monteiro@yahoo.com. Please reply by email.



MAY 21, SAT. SHARK VALLEY FULL MOON BICYCLE RIDE AND FUNDRAISER. If you haven't done this before, you'll marvel at the beauty of the Everglades' open space and mysterious wildlife. During this 15 mile ride you will see the sun set and the moon rise. We'll start at 6pm. Cost \$10 and for your contribution we'll have delicious snacks at the lookout tower. Rated moderate. Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 judykuchta@yahoo.com.

King Mango Strut, cont'd from previous page

And many northern states, especially in New England, are already ahead of us in promoting solar panel usage.

And now FPL is in the process of getting measures in place which would actually PUNISH solar power users by forcing them to reimburse FPL for NOT paying regular electric bills.

Our signs with slogans like, "Sunshine State? 1/10th of 1% use of Solar" brought the message across loud and clear. FPL was portrayed as 'the vampire', with half of our participants dressed like Draculas, and others dressed as bright yellow suns.

It's just one way to bring our message across in a fun and satirical way. All Sierra members and friends are welcome to participate next year!

To see more photos, click on the King Mango Strut link in our photo gallery at www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/photo-gallery



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet