



Adventure Coast Group // Florida Chapter

## **Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group November 2024 News, Events & Action Alerts**

*Check out all that's going on!*

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**Sierra Club Pasco Conservation Committee  
ZOOM Wednesday, Nov. 6th**

**Adventure Coast Meetup Wed. Nov. 13  
With Mike Wright of JustWrightCitrus.com**

**Withlacoochee State Forest Outing with  
Vince Morris Tuesday, November 19th**

**Withlacoochee State Forest Land Swap**

**Saving Our Springs! BMAP Hearings  
Be there Nov. 7th at 10 am & 1:30 pm**

**Vote No to Amendment 2  
Protect Wildlife and Fish Population**

**Adventure Coast Group Executive Committee Annual  
Elections for Executive Committee Members**

**December 11th Holiday Party**

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**Sierra Club Pasco Conservation Committee  
Zoom Wednesday, November 6th**



Sierra Club Pasco Conservation Committee is dedicated to preserving, protecting, exploring and enjoying nature in areas of Pasco County. The Pasco Conservation Team is working towards spinning off into its own Nature Coast Sierra Club Group. If you would like to join us in leading the way to educate and protect Pasco's natural open spaces, please email [sashabuddha@gmail.com](mailto:sashabuddha@gmail.com).

You're invited to join our ZOOM meeting the first Wednesday of each month at 8:00PM at this link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7674695843> with the Zoom ID: 767 469 5843.

**SIERRA CLUB ADVENTURE COAST MEET UP**  
**NOVEMBER 13TH**

With Mike Wright of  
*Just Wright Citrus*



Mike Wright is the owner and publisher of Just Wright Citrus, a daily blog of Citrus County politics and local issues. Now in its fourth year, Just Wright Citrus has about 7,000 Facebook followers, and is considered THE place in Citrus County for community discussion on issues of significance. Mike retired from the Citrus County Chronicle in 2020 after nearly 35 years in the newsroom.



Join us for an fun and informative evening! Public welcome. Attend in person or remotely via Zoom. The meeting will run from 7-8pm at the South Brooksville Community Center, 601 East Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Boulevard in Brooksville, FL.

To participate remotely via Zoom, please register in advance at:  
<https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJErde6urD0tEtKumhIKVf1YmtlgnhEsggPd>  
After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

More info at [adventurecoast@florida.sierraclub.org](mailto:adventurecoast@florida.sierraclub.org) or call 352 277-3330, check out our website at [www.sierraclub.org/florida/adventure-coast](http://www.sierraclub.org/florida/adventure-coast).

To participate remotely via Zoom, please register in advance at: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/tJErde6urD0tEtKumhIKVf1YmtlgnhEsggPd>

After registering, you will receive a confirmation email containing information about joining the meeting.

## Withlacoochee State Forest Outing with Vince Morris Tuesday, November 19th



Image by Florida Trailblazer

**Vince Morris**, Resource Administrator with the Withlacoochee Forestry Center will lead a field trip to the Withlacoochee State Forest Citrus Tract on Tuesday, November 19th at 9 am. This will be a joint field trip with the Citrus and Hernando Chapters of the Florida Native Plant Society and Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group organized by Outings leader Ben Berauer.

Meet at the FR 13 entrance to the Citrus tract of the forest off of SR44/ E Gulf to Lake Blvd, Inverness, FL. We will visit the most perfect sandhill in the forest with excellent ground cover, good stocking of longleaf pines, and red-cockaded woodpeckers. Vince will discuss forest restoration, Red Cockaded Woodpecker re-establishment, and point out other significant natural features and issues there.

We will do some walking either way so bring the usual items like warm/cool clothing, Insect repellent, sunscreen, long pants, sturdy shoes, hat, snack, water, etc. The walk will be complete before noon. Please RSVP with Sierra Club Adventure Coast Outings Leader Ben Berauer, [bfberauer@aol.com](mailto:bfberauer@aol.com), (c)727-217-5971.

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**Withlacoochee State Forest Land Grab**  
**Opposition to proposed swap of 324-acres of Conservation Lands**





Withlacoochee State Forest parcel earmarked for land swap

This past June, without any public input, nor any discussion on the part of its members, the Florida Governor and Cabinet voted to approve transfer of 324 acres of land within the Withlacoochee State Forest in Hernando County to Cabot Citrus OpCo LLC, a Canadian corporation, to expand its adjoining luxury golf course/resort development in exchange for 861 acres of pine plantation in Levy County. It had obtained approval earlier from the Hernando County Commission to build 1770 residential units and a large area of commercial development on the land it already owns adjacent to this part of the Withlacoochee State Forest.

Click below to see the video produced by the Sierra Club Florida Chapter:

[Play Video](#)

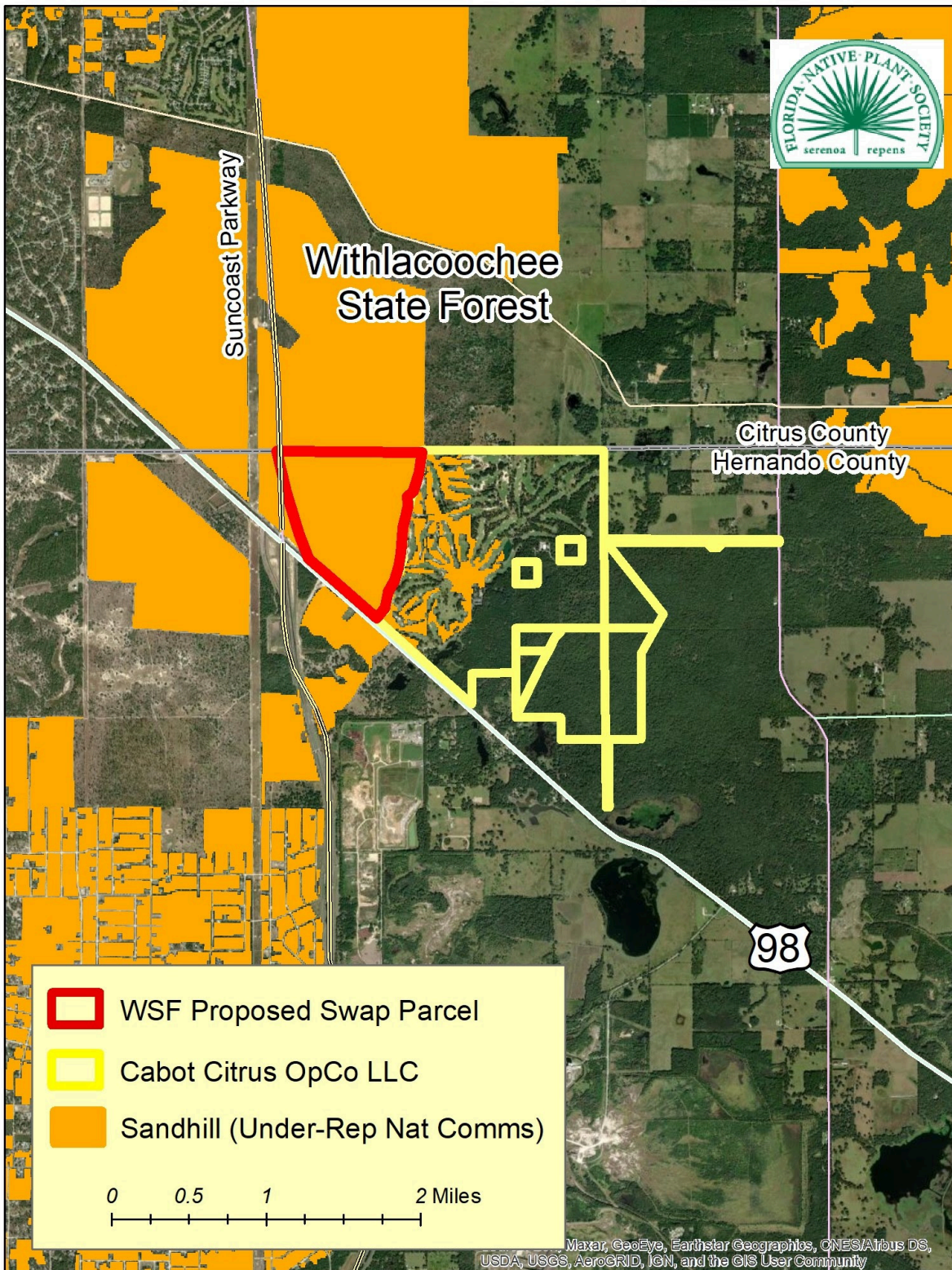
Numerous letters of opposition have been sent to Rick Dolan, Director of the Florida Forest Service and his direct supervisor Wilton Simpson, Florida Secretary of Agriculture & Consumer Affairs including [Sierra Club Florida Chapter's letter](#) with 67 sign-ons from other organizations, Sierra Club Florida Chapter Conservation Committee's letter enclosing an expert assessment of the value of these conservation lands ( [Eval Withlacoochee State Forest Tract Being Considered in Land Swap](#)), Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group's, one from Sonny Vergara - former Executive Director of SWFWMD, and letters from many other conservation organizations and individuals. We have all been stonewalled and no replies nor even acknowledgment has been received to our letters.

Adventure Coast Group noted our three major objections: The proposed land swap establishes a dangerous precedent for other public lands desired by developers. The Withlacoochee State Forest Parcel has considerable conservation value due to its contiguity with other public conservation lands and its role as a link in the Florida Wildlife Corridor. Value as a High Groundwater Recharge Area within the Chassahowitzka Springshed, a declared Outstanding Florida Spring.

The land swap is contingent upon review and approval by both the Florida Forest Service (FFS) and the



Acquisition and Restoration Council (ARC). This item was not included in the agenda of their October meeting that was canceled due to weather, nor is it on the agenda for their November meeting.



This land swap is contrary to good public policy and Government in the Sunshine. It is contrary to the goal of Florida Forever—protecting lands with significant natural resource values in perpetuity for all Floridians. It undermines a long record of successful conservation of Florida’s valuable lands that protect our environment, support our tourist-based economy, and provide clean water to support both nature and people. We hope that input from the conservation community will encourage state officials to



end this ill-advised gift to private development interests. Stay tuned! When we learn more, we'll let you know.

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## **Saving our Springs: BMAP Meetings Be there Nov. 7th 10 am and 1:30 pm**



As required by the Clean Waterways Act, the Florida Department of Environmental Protection must prepare updates to its nutrient BMAPs (Basin Management Action Plans) by July 1, 2025. After delay and litigation by the Florida Springs Council, FL DEP created the BMAPs. Now it is time to review the progress and revise the goals to meet clean water standards for our springs. In all but a few instances, the goals to reduce nutrients have not been met. The challenge is to provide a more robust approach to achieve success.

Local springs including the Kings Bay/Crystal River/Homosassa/Chassahowitzka Springs Groups Basin and the Weeki Wachee Basin are among this statewide effort. The public hearings scheduled for October 2 and 3rd for these spring basins were cancelled due to weather. Here are the announcements for the new dates:

### **SAVE THE DATE: November 7th 10 a.m.**

**To Weeki Wachee Basin Management Stakeholders:** A public meeting will be held in-person on **Nov. 7, 2024, at 10 a.m. EST**. The presentation will focus on the upcoming BMAP updates, including, but not limited to, topics on responsible entity requirements and BMAP update next steps. This meeting is open to the public and will be held in-person at the following location: *Withlacoochee Training Center – Main Classroom, 24059 Childs Road, Brooksville FL 34601*. The meeting agenda is now [available](#). Please email [Chandler Keenan](mailto:Chandler.Keenan@fl.dep.state.us) or call 850-245-8555 with any questions.

### **SAVE THE DATE: November 7th 1:30 pm**

**To Kings Bay/Crystal River and Homosassa/Chassahowitzka Spring Groups Stakeholders:** A

public meeting will be held in-person on **Nov. 7, 2024, at 1:30 p.m. EST**. The presentation will focus on the upcoming BMAP updates, including, but not limited to, topics on responsible entity requirements and BMAP update next steps. This meeting is open to the public and will be held in-person at the following location: *Withlacoochee Training Center – Main Classroom. 24059 Childs Road, Brooksville, FL 34601*. The meeting [agenda](#) is now available. Please email [Chandler Keenan](mailto:Chandler.Keenan@floridawildlife.com) or call 850-245-8555 with any questions.

**Please try to attend.** This vital framework for restoring water quality identifies strategies to achieve the pollutant reductions set by a TMDL (Total Maximum Daily Load) goal. They set permit limits for regulated facilities, implementing best management practices in urban and agricultural settings, enhancing wastewater and stormwater infrastructure, and developing regional projects and conservation initiatives. Unless the new plan includes accelerated efforts to reduce nutrients, our springs will continue to decline.

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## Vote No to Amendment 2 Protect Wildlife and Fish Population



**Florida law already recognizes that hunting and fishing are part of Florida’s cultural heritage and traditions;** albeit, in concert with the conservation and protection of those species and their habitats through science-based, hunting and fishing regulations promulgated and updated as needed on an annual basis by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC).

The proposed amendment includes ill-conceived elements that conflict with FWC’s constitutional and statutorily mandated role to manage hunting and fishing and threatens the conservation of Florida’s fish and wildlife and their habitats. **The Amendment would:**

1. Designate hunting as a preferred method of managing wildlife and appears to allow hunting at city parks, county parks, State Parks, and wildlife sanctuaries, undermining the ability of the state to manage Florida’s wildlife species through science-based conservation management.
2. Create a constitutional right to hunt, appears to allow hunters to trespass on private property to exercise their constitutional right to hunt.
3. Allow “all traditional methods” of hunting appears to allow hunting bears with dogs.
4. Allow “all traditional methods” appear to allow the courts to overrule the existing net ban on the use gill nets and seine nets, and the devastating impacts on the fishing resources.

**For these reasons:**

Vote NO on Amendment 2! Say no to this ill-conceived and ambiguously worded constitutional amendment.

**How to Get Involved**

Email James Scott at [JScottNoto2@gmail.com](mailto:JScottNoto2@gmail.com).



## Vote in the Sierra Club Adventure Coast Executive Committee Election

The Executive Committee (ExCom) of the Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group includes seven dedicated members in our group territory of Hernando and Citrus Counties. They are elected by our members for 2-year terms ending in alternating years. This year's election is for 4 positions for a two-year term of office in 2025-2027. Nominations closed October 30th and we have an incredible slate of qualified candidates for you to vote on.

**Adventure Coast members will receive an electronic ballot via email on November 8th. Those without email addresses will be sent a mail-in ballot via the U.S. Postal Service. All ballots are due by December 6th. The ballot will also be on our [website](#).**

Newly elected Executive Committee Members will be announced in December and at our Holiday Party December 11th. They will be seated to take office at the January 8th, 2025 Executive Committee Meeting.

**Voting ends December 6th. Please vote!**

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## Adventure Coast Holiday Party December 11th



We've had a big year and will mark the holidays and celebrate our successes with like-minded friends at our Adventure Coast Holiday Party on Wednesday, December 11th. Details coming soon. This will be instead of our monthly meetup but at the same time—second Wednesday of the month. Mark your calendar to save the date and join us.





The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3.5 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person's right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. For more information, visit [sierraclub.org](http://sierraclub.org).

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**For more information about Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group, visit our website: [www.sierraclub.org/florida/adventure-coast](http://www.sierraclub.org/florida/adventure-coast), send an email to [sierraclubadventurecoastcc@gmail.com](mailto:sierraclubadventurecoastcc@gmail.com), or call 352 277-3330. Find us on [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), and [Twitter](#).**

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