

Vote!
ExCom
Ballot inside!



Delta Sierran

Winter 2019

Group Meetings:

ACADIAN-LAFAYETTE AREA

Twice a month, Wednesdays at 6:30PM at

First United Methodist Church
703 Lee Ave, Lafayette 70501

BATON ROUGE

Fourth Thursdays, 6:30 PM

Check website calendar for location of upcoming monthly meetings

HONEY ISLAND (Northshore)

Fourth Sundays, 4:30 PM usually at Abita Springs Trailhead Museum
22044 Main St. 70420

NEW ORLEANS

Second Sundays at 6:30 PM at the Audubon Zoo, Dominion Auditorium

6500 Magazine St. 70118

SEE THE CALENDAR WITH ALL UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS AT OUR DELTA CHAPTER WEBSITE: SIERRACLUB.ORG/LOUISIANA

QUOTES in the NEWS:

"The plain truth is that capitalism needs to evolve if humanity is going to survive."

- Patagonia CEO Rose Marcario

"You're failing us, but the young people are starting to understand your betrayal. The eyes of all future generations are upon you."

- Greta Thunberg

Save Our State Parks!

"It's unused property at this point. It's woods and it's not being utilized for anything."

- Actual quote: Lt. Gov. Billy Nungesser, July 17, 2019 re: Fontainebleau State Park

The Lt. Governor is the top ranking officer over State Parks in Louisiana. Billy Nungesser has campaigned in the past to privatize our public properties with the supposed intent of saving money for the State. Nungesser's interpretation of the State Park's mission statement: "Preserving and protecting natural areas of unique or exceptional scenic value for the inspiration and benefit of not only the present generation, but also for generations to come," is obviously skewed. Nungesser is not someone who values "woods" unless they are "utilized" as in mowing them down to build something... like a resort/casino.

In St Tammany Parish the Tourism agency solicited a feasibility study on Nungesser's repeatedly quoted idea of turning 500 acres of Fontainebleau into a 150 room resort complex. Although they paint the study as supportive of the idea, a reading of the document shows that St Tam-

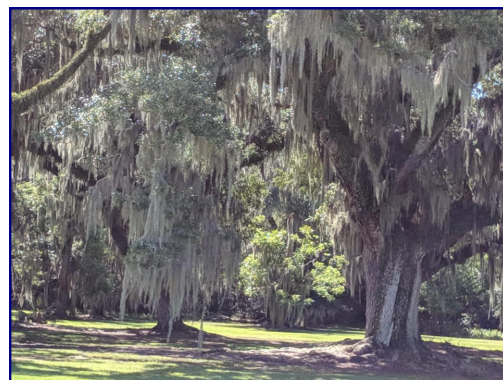
many's current hotel/motel occupancy is already well below the national average.

One of the many problems with the State supporting (your tax dollars at work), private for-profit enterprise is that it will become

a competitor to currently established lodging businesses, an unfair advantage in a free market, and a double loss to the public, considering the green acreage that will be removed from public use as well as from the local tax base.

One retired motel administrator pointed out that Nungesser's planned 150 room "resort" would not be adjacent or near to conference facilities or other amenities (shops, salons, etc.), making it unlikely to be utilized in full very often.

For Fontainebleau's wildlife development will be disastrous, reducing their ability to



escape from 'peopled' areas and pushing more of them onto Hwy. 190 to become dangers to traffic, as well as ending their lives. St Tammany government is already planning new roads just north of the park with rampant development to follow.

It is vital to leave greenspace for wildlife, as well as for people. Add in increased traffic, noise, sewerage issues and we see the end of Fontainebleau as a serene preserve tucked away on the shore of Lake Pontchartrain between bayous Castine and Cane.

What YOU Can Do:

Ask Governor John Bel Edwards to stop this destructive sell-off of Louisiana's State Parks: Call the Governor's Constituent Line - (225)342-0991. Write or call your Parish Representatives - Councilperson and Parish President. Your State Senators and Representatives can also help by removing recent changes to the Lt. Governor's abilities to contract and privatize public lands. Lt. Gov. Nungesser has said publicly that if "the people of St. Tammany don't want it (his Fontainebleau resort)" that he will withdraw the idea. Let him and our elected officials know we want to keep our green spaces! You can get State Legislators contact info at <https://www.legis.la.gov/legis/Home.aspx>



Holiday Pot Luck Parties around the Chapter!

Baton Rouge Group

Saturday, December 14,
6:30 PM - till

Organized by: Charlie &
JoAnn Fryling

1068 East Lakeview Drive
Baton Rouge, LA 70810

New Orleans Group

Sunday, December 8,
6:30 - 9:00 PM

Organized By: Dave Stets,
504-250-0332

Location: 2101 Selma St
New Orleans, LA 70122

Honey Island Group

Sunday, December 29,
5:30 - 9:00 PM

Organized By: Michele John-
son, 985-290-1689

Location: Log Cabin Lodge
at Fontainebleau State Park

*You only live once: Make A Difference...
and Make Friends!!*

FROM THE CHAPTER CHAIR

Your Chapter Excom (Executive Committee) and our Conservation Leader, Margie Vick-nair-Pray, our Group Chairs and Group Ex-Com members have been busy this year and we wish you all Happy Holidays.

We have elections coming up in December when we have the opportunity to bring in some reinvigorated members to help rejuvenate our Chapter and Group ExComs.

Some of our ExCom members have served for many years which we greatly appreciate, but everyone deserves a sabbatical now and then to get their batteries recharged for the battle against those who try to take away our clean air, water and land.

Any of our members can be nominated for the Excom, no degrees or experience required. Your concern and participation is all that is essential, along with a determination to fight for Louisiana's environment and heritage, and to support social justice and equity for the people of Louisiana.

If you're willing to help us, tell any Excom member, Chair or send us an email. There are also postings on our web site under the volunteer tab that list volunteer positions were hoping to fill. See Volunteer Opportunities in this newsletter! Most volunteer positions require one to four hours a month.

We're welcoming almost six hundred new members who have joined us this year. We hope to see all of you at an upcoming meeting, event or outing. Please be sure to introduce yourself to others so that we can truly welcome you into our Sierra Club.

Being a member is more than paying a membership fee. Please participate and make a difference in Louisiana.

Your Sierra Club has made a difference in our state and in our nation and will continue the work through people like you.

Chapter Goals for 2020

Reduce Carbon Emissions:

Over the next 10 years, there will be a 5% annual reduction in carbon emissions, per 1990 levels.

2. Ecologically-Friendly Land Use Development:

Reduce the immediate impact of new developments on land and water sources.

3. Sustainable Water Solutions:

Protect and conserve Louisiana water sources.

Talk to one of your Excom members for more information.

-- Dave Stets, Delta Chapter Chair



VOLUNTEER OPPORTUNITIES AVAILABLE!

Visit our website to see a listing of volunteer opportunities:

<https://clubvolunteer.org/volunteer?z=70001>

We're looking for Delta Chapter:

- Volunteer Conservation Coordinators (to oversee Group conservation issues and work with our staff Conservation Projects Coordinator)
- Welcome Wagon (to welcome New Members)
- Citizen Lobbyists (to engage with local and state elected officials on vital issues)
- ExCom members
- Any other volunteering that you see as a need!

Please get in touch with any active leader, or check-in at the volunteer website, which can also be reached via our Delta Chapter website.

During the year we sometimes need a member to fill in for a vacancy on our ExCom. To volunteer as a substitute, talk to any Excom, Chair or send us an email at davidmstets@gmail.com

Ballot for 2020 Delta Chapter ExCom

If you're receiving this newsletter you have asked national to add you to a "do not email" listing. Those who accept emails from the Delta Chapter will receive the newsletter via email and can vote online at <https://www.sierraclub.org/louisiana/chapter-excom-election>.

If you'd like to receive emails from Delta Chapter in the future, please contact member.care@sierraclub.org

This ballot can be mailed! Just cast your vote, then fold in thirds and tape the page; add a stamp!

Your Sierra Club Delta Chapter (Louisiana Chapter), has an Executive Committee (ExCom) of nine volunteer members whose position provides leadership and direction to the Chapter and Groups. ExCom members are active on various committees, such as Conservation, Political, Outings and the Environmental Justice Committee, which are also open to all Sierra Club members.

ExCom members serve two-year terms and may run for re-election; ANY MEMBER may run for a position on ExCom.

Responsibilities of the Chapter Executive Committee:

- Understand and promote the mission of the Sierra Club
- Attend Executive Committee meetings and General meetings
- Lead and provide educational training and/or conservation opportunities to the general membership
- Promote the Outings Program and help members and others to get out into and enjoy and understand nature
- Participate in long range planning for the Chapter, and guide national on grassroots interests
- Actively assist in fundraising activities or contribute financially
- Ensure financial stability and solvency
- Modify and allocate resources; as applicable to the opportunities, the abilities, and the commitment of the Chapter/Groups
- Monitor, question, and evaluate club activities
- Provide Leadership and Vision within the Chapter/Groups for a just, equitable and sustainable future



Add
Stamp
Here

Sierra Club Delta Chapter

P.O. Box 8619

New Orleans, LA 70182-8619

BALLOT: Delta Chapter ExCom Nominees for 2020-2022 term - Vote for TWO:

To vote, **write your membership number** in the spaces for the two candidates you wish to vote for.

Your membership number may be found on the mailing label of your national Sierra magazine. Call Membership Services at 415-977-5653 if you need help. They can also change your settings so that you receive our monthly Delta Chapter e-newsletters!

Joint Memberships - Both members of a joint membership may cast a vote by initialing the second vote space.



Angelle Bradford (member since 2017)

I am a doctoral student at Tulane Med during the day and I join my fellow Sierra Club members, friends, and our affiliate orgs during the evenings and weekends for some good ole activism and organizing. I am really big on developing strategy and frameworks for others to step into as we grow and expand the environmental work here in the Delta Chapter. Since joining the Sierra Club in 2017, I have roped in my Southern University students who are now super committed to the environment and warding off the injustices accompanied with degradation of the environment. Together, we have organized climate change strikes, workshops for students and the community, earned a grant through SC national grassroots network to work on recycling and waste reduction, Styrofoam bans, and plastic bag usage reduction within the 5 major cities of Louisiana. We also worked hard to build understanding for our population of folks regarding elections, voting, and how those 2 actions impact climate change long-term. I have also spent time at the Capitol, attending hearings, commenting on bills, and doing the same for the local level at the BR Metro Council meetings and, now, participating in the R-RPS work of New Orleans at the city council level. With another grant opportunity in the works, acceptance to the C40 Women in Climate program with the Mayor of New Orleans, and a goal for codifying how to best increase membership and engagement in 2020, I hope to earn your vote on the Executive Committee, again, as an at-large member.

Vote for Angelle: _____



Leo Laventhal (member since 2015)

I became active in the Sierra Club after a long career as a school teacher and union activist. I can barely tell the difference between a palm and an oak tree or between a heron and a pelican. But it seemed to me that positions of the Sierra Club to protect Louisiana's threatened land, water, air, vegetation, and creatures were spot on. I also believed that being part of a larger national organization would give Louisiana folks a more powerful voice and greater resources to fight the good fight (when we're not having fun hiking). I'm currently the New Orleans Group Chair.

Vote for Leo: _____



Sylvia LeBlanc Martinez (member since 2003)

I fell in love with nature as a child playing in my Terrebonne Parish neighborhood, camping in Girl Scouts and much later as a Cub Den leader. While visiting National Parks and at Earth Day events, I discovered how instrumental the Sierra Club was in encouraging outdoor activity as well as preserving wild lands and entire ecosystems. The grassroots nature of the organization appealed to me, so in 2003 I joined. Since retiring after 32 years teaching high school, I've been more engaged, and served three years on the Baton Rouge Group Ex-Com. I want to see Louisiana survive and thrive, and not succumb to the ravages of climate change and the capital structure that exacerbates it.

Vote for Sylvia: _____

Reminder: This ballot can be mailed without an envelope. Fold in thirds, tape it shut, and add a stamp!

2020 LEGISLATIVE SESSION

We need to start NOW to be effective in the 2020 Legislative Session!

Did you know that in 2020 your legislators will spend 84 days in Baton Rouge deciding which Louisiana laws are changed? During those 84 days, your legislator's ears will be ringing with the cacophony of over five hundred corporate lobbyist. HOW OFTEN DO YOUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES HEAR FROM YOU?

The best time and place to talk to your elected officials about environmental policy is right where you are: in the district where you and your legislator both live. Talk to them before they leave the peace and quiet of home, on any of the remaining 282 days of the year.

Join the Club's team of citizen lobbyists. We advocate for the environment without the long trips to Louisiana's Capitol, although - for those who are interested in learning the lobbying process - we may make a trip or two to Baton Rouge during the session.

But most of the time it is much more effective to meet our elected officials in the districts we call home.

The Louisiana legislature is more conservative, more pro-business than ever before. Citizen Lobbyists, reminding legislators to vote for them and for the environment where it really matters: in our own backyards right here in Louisiana!

You can become a Citizen Lobbyist easily! Just put a reminder on your phone or calendar to set aside 5 to 10 minutes a week to make a call, send an email or if you're in the mood, make an appointment to visit your elected representative, whether that's an Alderman, Council member, Mayor, Representative/Senator (State or Federal) or Governor. Or write a Letter to the Editor! Pick an issue that is important to YOU and let them know that it is important to you. Remember, it doesn't take much, but be consistent and do it weekly. The paid lobbyists are promoting what industry wants, they don't promote what you want, so take the time to lobby for yourself and your family. It's important!

Email margie.vicknair-pray@sierraclub.org if you want to get involved or learn more.



Flooding: Poor Practices and Bad Development Choices

Homes flooding in the Louisiana has become a sad, but regular feature of the news. Each spring brings new worries of riparian flooding, then hurricane season starts and more worries of tidal and surge flooding from Lakes Pontchartrain and Maurepas as well as from the Gulf, create new fears. The 2016 floods were a shocking reminder that torrential rains can bring flooding at any time.

Why is there so much flooding? Why is the cry of "We've never flooded before!" being heard so often.

The answer: Primarily because of poor development practices which lack a long-term and broad overview of planning and enforcement on the part of the parishes and state.

Homes and businesses that were built

on "high ground" have been compromised by poor development practices that have allowed red clay fill to be brought into bulldozed floodplains and plopped into areas that once were tree-covered wetlands that sucked up tons of flood waters. Now, because of the hills of impermeable clay fill and the cement and rooftops built over them, the rains have nowhere to go and end up surging into the new "low areas" - your homes and businesses.

The Louisiana Watershed Initiative (<https://www.watershed.la.gov>) is trying to get parishes to look at the big picture, to consider drainage basins and floodplains in their planning and zoning studies, and to act in "unprecedented coordination and cooperation across all fac-

ets and functions of government agencies."

In some parishes attempts to weaken Ordinances that control mitigation and fill requirements for developers have met with strong vocal protest at Parish Council meetings. Residents are starting to stand up against rampant development and poor planning.

Parishes are beginning to work with the state Watershed Initiative to develop better guidelines for building in flood-prone areas.

Contact your local elected officials and see if your Parish is working towards more intelligent design, zoning, planning and development practices. Get yourself or other qualified residents onto Parish committees to make it happen!



Attention: Northern & Central Louisiana Members

Delta Chapter is introducing Conservation and Issue teams in Northern and Central Louisiana. This concept has been successfully piloted in several other Sierra Club Chapters where there aren't enough members interested in electing officers and holding monthly meetings, but who would still like to get something done with the support of their local Sierra Club Chapter.

This ends the need to deal with elections, setting up group organization or having to set up and manage bank accounts; all that can take too much time and effort and cause members to lose interest and find something else to do.

A great way to start is to organize a house party

or meet in a meeting space in a local library or restaurant and talk to each other to see what interests the group has. It might be to bring together people interested in Outings, to share travel ideas, or promote a family-friendly camping group. Or members may want to organize to fight a specific local issue.

If you're located in the northern and central part of Louisiana and want to get involved in something like this, let us know. If you can organize a meeting place, we can email other members in the nearby zip codes to let them know what you are planning.

Please contact Chapter Chair Dave Stets if you are interested in putting this together for your area. Email him at davidmstets@gmail.com.



P.O. Box 8619, New Orleans, LA 70182-8619

Visit us on Facebook:
Sierra Club Delta Chapter
E-mail:

chapter-info@louisiana.sierraclub.org

Website:

www.sierraclub.org/louisiana

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Please send Photo & Editorial Contributions to:

margie.vicknair-pray@sierraclub.org

FOCUS: A Forum on Fontainebleau & Flooding

The Honey Island Group in conjunction with the Progressive Northshore Democrats recently hosting a forum on two issues that are of great interest in the community. On Friday, November 8th, two panels composed of five knowledgeable people presented on these issues while over 100 citizens, including the current Parish President and President-elect, listened and asked questions. Panelists included specialists such as Mark Davis and Donata Henry from Tulane University, Andrew Whitehurst from Healthy Gulf, as well as retired Fontainebleau Park Ranger Richard Scott and others, from flooded home owners to attorneys, to local activists, who gave their views and concerns on poor development practices that are causing more flooding in established neighborhoods and on the proposal to develop 500 acres of Fontainebleau State Park into a resort hotel and possibly a casino within the next year. The Mayor of Mandeville, who was also present, asked us for a redo in Mandeville (this first Forum was held at Abita Springs Town Hall).



Nov. 8th Forum, Abita Springs

We'd like to host similar forums on

issues that are of interest to the members in your group. Any suggestions? If so, write our Conservation Projects Coordinator at margie.vicknair-pray@sierraclub.org.

The date is not yet set, but will be posted on Grand Isle's website soon: <https://www.grandisleevents.org/event-calendar>

Pencil in our **Annual Delta Chapter Spring Retreat** during the Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration provides a great opportunity for birding, photography and scenic walks. You can wander on your own or with experienced birders who will take you for leisurely walks through Grand Isle's unique live oak and hackberry chenier woods, beach and dunes, as well as marsh habitats, loaded with birds of all types including warblers, orioles, tanagers, thrushes, buntings, and other migrant songbirds. Wading and shore birds are also easily found in great numbers, with sightings of black skimmers, magnificent frigate birds, American oyster catchers and brown pelicans.

\$5 a Month to Protect What You Love...

Join us in the fight to protect Louisiana's environment. Gifts to the Sierra Club Delta Chapter give citizens a voice -- helping us hold Louisiana leaders accountable for decisions that affect our air, waters, lands and climate.

Your investment means we can keep up the pressure on state officials to protect our waters, expand clean energy, and hold toxic polluters accountable.

Best of all, 100% of your contribution stays here in Louisiana to work locally on the issues you care about. Donate at www.sierraclub.org/louisiana

Your support is key in helping the Delta Chapter's efforts to secure an environmental legacy that future generations will thank us for. Your generous donation is an investment in the future of our environment and the protection of our most special places!

If you would prefer to mail in your donation, please make your check payable to Sierra Club Delta Chapter and mail to Sierra Club Delta Chapter, PO Box 8619, New Orleans, LA 70182 Thank you for your generous support!

Sierra Club
P.O. Box 1785
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