

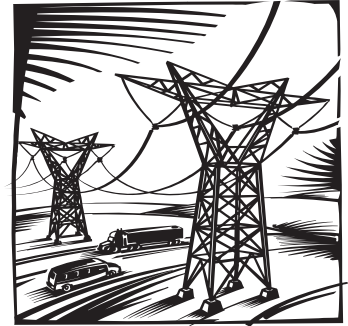
FP&L'S GREEN-PRICING PROGRAM – IS IT WORTH IT?

By George Cavros, Energy Issues Chair

This article was spurred by a Sierra member's inquiry into the value of FP&L's Sunshine Energy program. Most of you have likely seen the notice in your monthly FP&L bill offering you the option of "purchasing" clean energy for an additional \$9.75 per month. Over 100 electric utilities offer variations of this "green-pricing" program. As concerns grow over the environmental impact of carbon dioxide (CO2) global warming emissions, more electric utility customers are opting to pay more for the "purchase" of "green power". FP&L's Sunshine Energy program currently has 10,600 customers. The answer to the ultimate question of is it worth \$120/year depends on your conclusions regarding the value of FP&L's program compared to other investment options that promote renewable energy or decrease CO2 emissions.

The FP&L program has two components. First, FP&L agrees to build a small solar photovoltaic (PV) plant of 150 kw (enough to power about 20 private homes) for every new 10,000 customers that enroll in the program. As they've surpassed the 10,000 customer mark, FPL is planning its first small solar PV plant. This component of the program isn't all that impressive – that's \$97,500/mo (10,000 customers x \$9.75) to build a solar plant that will provide electricity to only 20 homes.

FP&L also agrees to "purchase" 1,000 kWh per month for every Sunshine Energy customer from a clean, renewable source. Since the average customer uses approximately 1,000 kWh per month, the rate hike represents the \$0.01 incremental cost in "purchasing" the cleaner energy. FP&L should consider tying the \$0.01 increase to actual usage instead of the expected average of 1,000 kWh per month, as this would promote conservation. Moreover, some of our "greener" members pay \$30 to \$40 /month for electricity and \$9.75 per month would constitute a considerable utility bill increase.



It's important to note that clean, renewable energy sources in Florida are virtually non-existent. Florida doesn't have the steady winds of 12 to 17 miles per hour required to turn a wind turbine. Moreover, it doesn't have the large land mass required for solar thermal arrays or solar PV cells. Plus, solar energy works best as "distributed energy" that homeowners can sell back to the electricity grid (discussed in a future newsletter). This requires FP&L to go outside the state to "purchase" renewable energy.

The power that runs your appliances is still generated by the aging Port Everglades oil-burning power plant. FP&L actually "purchases," on behalf of the customer, a "green tag" or Renewable Energy Certificate (REC). One "green tag" equals a 100 percent renewable energy source that offsets 1,400 pounds of CO2 for every 1,000 kilowatt hours. These certificates are

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Graphic design & layout by carolewalsh@mindspring.com
Printing by The Press Room
4111 SW 47 Ave. #309, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33314
(954) 792-6729 • www.thepressroom.net

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March & April Programs



Our **March 1st** program will feature **Roger Hammer**, a native Floridian from Cocoa Beach who has authored a masterpiece field guide titled, "*Everglades Wildflowers*". It showcases wildflowers of the historic Everglades, including Big Cypress, Corkscrew and Fakahatchee swamps. There will be a Sierra outing with Roger in Everglades National Park on April 2nd. (See Jackie Fisher at the Outings Table to sign up.)

Author, lecturer and photographer **Bob Wallace** will present our **April 5th** program. Bob has recorded blue holes in the Bahamas, wildlife in Africa and chronicled the rescue of a baby deer in his recently published children's book, "*The Adventures of Ichi*". Bob will bring some of his rescued wildlife friends so be sure to bring your children for this program.



Sierra meetings start at 7:00 PM with a social time for conversation and treats. Committee reports at 7:30 PM and program presenter at 8:00 PM. Anne Kolb is located East of U.S. 1 on Sheridan Street in Hollywood.

Sierra Hotline  **954-858-0160**
for Hotline additions, call Kip @ 954-434-2855

SIERRA CLUB / BROWARD COUNTY
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We hope you enjoy our newsletter. Why not join us right now? Come along on an outing. Get involved, learn about local issues and how they affect you and your community. Just use the membership form on the back cover.



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Broward Sierra News is published monthly for the members of the Broward County Group, Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club. Subscriptions are available for non-members. Send inquiries to: **Broward Sierra News**, P.O. Box 350432, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335

Membership Corrections - To expedite any membership change (new addresses, etc.) or problems with your membership records please send your name, member number, old and new address or problem to: **Member Services**, 85 Second Street, San Francisco, CA 94105-3441. 415-977-5653 or e-mail <address.changes@sierraclub.org> or <membership.services@sierraclub.org> If further assistance is needed, please contact your local Membership Chair, Andrea Hagen 954-475-9399.

Committee Meetings

Executive Committee:

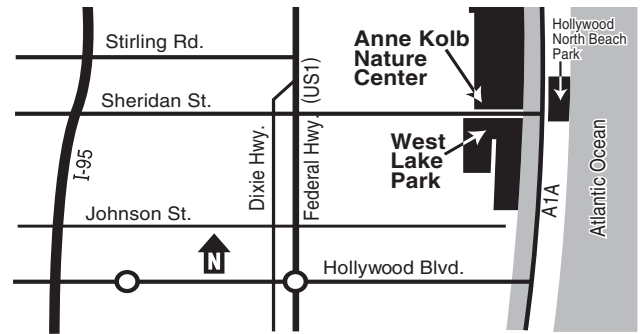
Meets the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm, in room 430a of the Broward County Governmental Center. For details call Loren Colburn at 954-761-1355 (or e-mail lorenac1101@hotmail.com).

Broward Sierra Club Social:

Meets on the 4th Wednesday of each month from 6:30 to 8 pm. On March 23rd we will be at Bennigan's in Cypress Creek - 665 NW 62 St. (Cypress Creek Blvd. between Andrews & Powerline Rd.) 954-771-2800. For further info call Max Goldstein at 954-296-3411.

Carrying Capacity Committee:

Contact Linda Brown, Carrying Capacity Chair at (954) 764-1470 or e-mail lbrown@communityusa.com.



Broward Sierra Club General Meetings

Held on the first Tuesday of every month at Ann Kolb Nature Center (954-926-2480). Outings sign-up start at 7:00 p.m. and the general meeting begins at 7:30 p.m. All members welcome!

To get to Anne Kolb Nature Center: Take 95 South to Sheridan St. exit. Go East past Federal Hwy. The entrance to Anne Kolb Nature Center will be on your left (After the sign for West Lake Park). The center is before the Intracoastal Bridge.

ANNE KOLB RESTORATION DAYS *By Loren Colburn, Vice Chair*



Tina and Jimmy Pellicane among the sea grapes

What does a day at the beach and helping the environment have in common? It's the Anne Kolb restoration days. On the second Saturday of the month Sierra Club members have been meeting at Anne Kolb Nature Center to help clean up the park of trash and remove invasive plants.

In December the group spent a beautiful day on the beach cleaning up the stretch of the Hollywood beach, they filled a large recycling bin with cans and bottles and removed all kinds of discarded beach furniture.

The volunteers that helped in the past couple of months included Anita Lind, Michael and Jesse Sciolino, Jackie Fisher, Carole Walsh, Mara Shlackman, Max Goldstein, Erica and Emily Rubio, Nancy Kleiner, E.C. Bureson, Amy Duffy, Jeanne Hakola, Brenna Lurstad, Tina and Jimmy Pellicane and Loren Colburn. The club would like to thank these volunteers for their hard work.

The last restoration day of the season is March 12. They will resume again in the Fall. So if you are interested in joining the group call Loren Colburn 954-761-1355 or send her an email at lorenac1011@hotmail.com. All ages are welcome.

ADVERTISE IN THE BROWARD SIERRA NEWS

Placing an ad in the Broward Sierra News does more than reach thousands of local, environmentally sensitive readers. It also helps to offset the costs of printing and mailing the newsletter, making it possible to continue to alert you to issues of local importance and the actions you can take, as well as inform you of events, outings and meetings of the Broward Sierra Club group.



Size	RATES	
	1 month	3 months
Business card size ad (3-3/4" x 2")	\$55	\$150
Double size ad (3-3/4" x 4")	\$95	\$255
1/2 page ad (7-3/4" x 5")	\$195	\$525

If you would like to place an ad, please contact Max Goldstein at 954-296-3411 or email him at <maxgold@yahoo.com>.

BROWARD SIERRA EMAIL SUBSCRIPTION

To receive email alerts from the Broward Sierra Yahoo Group, send an email requesting to be added to the yahoo group email list to: <BrowardSierra-subscribe@yahoogroups.com>.

Be sure to reply to the emailed questionnaire so that we know you're a real person rather than a computer sending spam.



FP&L, continued from page 1

typically certified by a third party, non-profit organization. Since "green tags" are sold separately from electricity, they can be purchased from locations anywhere, enabling you to choose green power even when FP&L doesn't offer its own "green power" product.

As a quick aside, it's important to note that FP&L is a subsidiary of FPL Group. FP&L is your regulated "investor owned" utility at home, while the FPL Group, in many parts of the nation, is an independent power producer (IPP) and can sell its power production at an unregulated, market rate. FPL Group is the nation's largest producer of wind power, with a 40% market share and wind-turbine facilities in 15 states.



When you enroll with the Sunshine Energy program, you're indirectly supporting the development of clean, renewable energy (most likely wind power) by purchasing surplus renewable energy, outside of Florida, in the form of credits. The more demand for a renewable product or service, the more likely it is that private enterprise will step in to fill the need. The interesting twist on this story is that FPL Group, as the largest wind producer in the U.S., will likely be the largest beneficiary of FP&L's Sunshine Energy program. So the program isn't entirely borne out of environmental altruism, as there are some self-serving market forces at play. Nevertheless, the market system of buying "green tag" credits will provide an overall environmental benefit and encourage investment in more renewable energy sources.



There are other ways to invest your money that would provide a more local benefit in promoting renewable energy products and/or reducing CO2 emissions. The options include: installing "distributed energy" products, such as adding a small photovoltaic system (SPS) to your home; utilizing passive solar water heaters; investing

in a hybrid vehicle; retrofitting your home with energy efficient appliances – look for the Energy Star label - most of these appliances are 40% more efficient than models developed just several years ago (visit: www.EnergyStar.gov); replacing your incandescent bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs; even buying and planting trees helps reduce CO2.

Is FP&L's Sunshine Energy program worth it? Ultimately, the answer depends upon your priorities. There will be more to come on promoting local renewable energy options and energy efficiency measures in future newsletters.

Broward Sierra Group Outings

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

SATURDAY, MARCH 5TH & APRIL 9TH.

FAKAHATCHEE STRAND STATE PRESERVE HIKE.

This hike replaces the 'monthly' hike in Section II of the Florida Trail in Big Cypress, because of a recent prescribed burn. Located between Tamiami Trail and Alligator Alley, west of 29. Bring your own lunch. Rated moderate. 'Back country' trails. *Cost: Mem. \$3 donation; Non-mem. \$5.*

Leader: TBA

Contact Jackie Fisher 954-434-2855



SATURDAY, MARCH 12TH. THE LAST ANNE KOLB RESTORATION DAY OF THE SEASON.

An opportunity to give something back to the community, your Sierra Group and Mother Nature! Yep, we're talking volunteer work here, doing whatever is needed on the grounds of Anne Kolb Nature Center-West Lake Park to restore it to its natural beauty. Help keep it wild, clean and natural. 3 or 4 hours on Saturday morning. No experience is needed. Bring water and sunscreen. Get out and enjoy the park in the cool winter months. *Cost: FREE*

Leader: Lorenac Colburn 954-761-1355

lorenac1101@hotmail.com



SATURDAY-SUNDAY, MAR 26-27. VALLEY FULL MOON BIKE RIDE IN THE EVERGLADES.

Slow-paced moonlit bicycle ride in the Everglades to the Shark Valley Tower. A unique Florida experience not to be missed! Overnight camp-out Saturday, then do it again in the daylight. Reserve with Alan at 941-955-7613. (Manatee-Sarasota Group)



SATURDAY, APRIL 2ND. WILDFLOWER BIKE RIDE IN EVERGLADES NATL. PARK WITH ROGER HAMMER.

Take a leisurely bike ride on Long Pine Key, in Everglades Nat'l. Park to Pine Glades Lake and back. Approximately 12 miles. Entire trip takes about 4 hours. Bikes available for rent or bring your own. Rated Moderate, due to distance. *Cost: TBA*

Leader: Jackie Fisher 954-434-2855

Assist. Leader Kip Fisher 954-434-2855

We would like to invite you to come on one of our fine outings! If you have any questions about an outing, you can check with the certified Broward Sierra Outing Leader in charge of the outing. Some of the outings need no experience; others require some level of proficiency. All participants in Sierra Club outings are required to sign a standard liability waiver. If you would like to read the Liability Waiver before you choose to participate in an outing, contact the leader of the outing.

Make your check payable to: Broward Sierra Outings.

Include the name and date of the trip on your check.

Include your name, phone number, email and street address.

Mail all checks to:

Jackie Fisher, 4992 S.W. 105 Way, Cooper City, FL 33328.

**You may call the Sierra Hotline for updates at
954-858-0160.**

**LOOK FOR UPDATED INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE:
<<http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>>**

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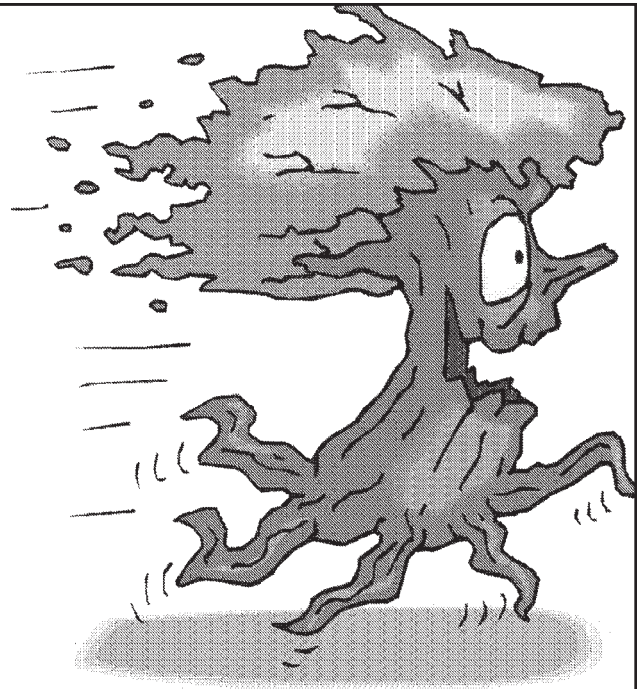
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