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INSIDE: SIERRA CLUB ENDORSED CANDIDATES

# Broward Sierra News

Vol. XXVIII No. 9 Nov 2006

<http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>  
<http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BrowardSierra>

## GET OUT THE VOTE!

By Matt Schwartz, Political Chair



The 2006 political season has been an exciting one for the Broward Group of the Sierra Club. After putting our group's political committee back together this spring, members of the committee together with Broward's executive committee wrote a questionnaire covering 14 issues of environmental concern, which was mailed to all local candidates on the ballot for both the September primary and the general election this November. At the Chapter level, a slightly different questionnaire was mailed to candidates for federal and state-wide offices. Return rate on our local questionnaire was approximately 40 percent. As anyone who has ever tried to send out unsolicited direct mail knows, this is an excellent rate of return and shows just how seriously an endorsement from the Sierra Club is taken these days. The environment is definitely no longer an issue that can be written off as a sideshow to "more important" issues.

The fourteen topics we covered on our questionnaire can be summarized as follows:

1. Hometown Democracy – giving citizens a voice whenever a local governing body makes changes in how a municipality can be developed. This idea is strongly embraced by the Florida Chapter.

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## November Broward Sierra Program

Our guest speaker this November will be **Karen Gustin, Superintendent of the Big Cypress National Preserve**, a unit of the National Park Service. The Broward Group has taken a strong position on the Addition Lands of Big Cypress and has pushed hard for a management plan which would prohibit the use of off road recreational vehicles (ORVs) in the 'Addition', due to their negative effects on flora and fauna. Concerning the main part of the Preserve, Broward Sierran Brian Scherf has led two successful lawsuits which reduced 23,000 miles of 'dispersed use' trails down to 400. Implementation of this reduction is still in progress and far from complete.

Many of you have participated in 'swampwalks' in the Addition and are well aware of what an incredible, pristine piece of south Florida exists only about an hour or so from just about anywhere in Broward County. If you've walked the Florida Scenic Trail in the vicinity of I-95 you've also been walking in the Addition. This is a unique opportunity to talk to Karen - learn about the Preserve from a very knowledgeable source and have your concerns about its future heard by a decision maker. Please join us.



**This month's meeting and program (November 7) will be held at the Fern Forest Nature Center**, 201 Lyons Road South, Pompano Beach (see map on next page). Doors open at 7:00 PM. Committee reports begin at 7:30, and the program begins at 8:00. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.

**We need your email addresses in order to contact you about Sierra Club Broward group political endorsements and other important political alerts in the future.** The Broward Sierra Club website is completely off limits to information on political candidates and endorsements due to IRS rules on not-for-profit organizations. If you wish to receive updated news and action alerts, please contact our webmaster Carole Walsh at [carolewalsh@mindspring.com](mailto:carolewalsh@mindspring.com) and give her your email address. If your email address has changed since you registered with the Sierra Club it would be helpful if you provided Carole with a current one.

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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.



## The Broward Sierra Club Leaders

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**Secretary**  
Louis Serra 954-442-0880

**Treasurer**  
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**Conservation Chair**  
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**Newsletter Editor**  
Carole Walsh 954-987-3642  
carolewalsh@mindspring.com

**Newsletter Mailing Coordinator**  
Open

**Executive Committee Member**  
Leigh Buckner 954-563-0073

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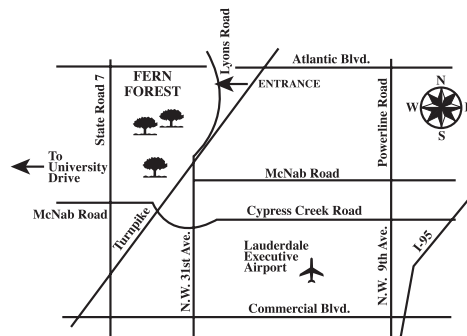
**Member Services**, 85 Second Street, San Francisco, CA 94105-3441. 415-977-5653 or e-mail <address.changes@sierraclub.org> or <membership.services@sierraclub.org>

If further assistance is needed, please contact your local Membership Chair, Andrea Hagen 954-475-9399.

## Broward Sierra Club General Meetings

Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings are held the first Tuesday of every month. **This month's meeting and program (November 7) will be held at the Fern Forest Nature Center**, 201 Lyons Road South, Pompano Beach (see map). Doors open at 7:00 PM. Committee reports begin at 7:30, and the program begins at 8:00. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.

Next month's meeting will be back at the Anne Kolb Nature Center.



## Executive Committee Meetings

Held on the 3rd Monday of each month at 7:00 pm, in room 430a of the Broward County Governmental Center. For details call Harold Hancock at 561-417-0216 or e-mail hhdhca@yahoo.com.

**We need your email addresses in order to contact you about Sierra Club Broward group political endorsements and other important political alerts in the future.**

*The Broward Sierra Club website is completely off limits to information on political candidates and endorsements due to IRS rules on not-for-profit organizations.* If you wish to receive updated news and action alerts, please contact our webmaster Carole Walsh at carolewalsh@mindspring.com and give her your email address. If your email address has changed since you registered with the Sierra Club it would be helpful if you provided Carole with a current one.

## WE NEED YOUR HELP – GET INVOLVED!

The Broward group still needs to fill the important positions of **Program Chair** (lines up the programs for our general meetings), **Newsletter Mailing Coordinator** (coordinates labeling, sorting & mailing), and **Fundraising Chair**. If you have questions about a particular position or want to get involved, please contact Harold Hancock at 561-417-0216 or Louis Serra at 954-442-0880.

2. Optimal levels of population that Broward County should be planning for in the future.
3. Whether or not the manatee should have been left on the Florida state list of endangered species or had its status changed to "threatened".
4. The question of ORV use and damage in Big Cypress National Preserve and "Addition Lands".
5. Support for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposed "Panther Habitat Conservation Banks" that would completely protect remaining primary panther habitat.
6. The question of the "Tamiami Skyway" – a project strongly supported by the Florida Chapter that would construct an eleven mile elevated roadway over Shark River Slough and allow for optimal water flow into Everglades National Park.
7. Views on oil drilling off the Florida coast.
8. The question of buying out land in the Everglades Agricultural Area (EAA) to prevent the spread of agricultural pollutants into the Everglades water system.
9. A question on the Sierra Club's "Cool Cities" program that encourages municipalities nationwide to cut down on energy use and contributions to global warming.
10. Views on alternative electrical production – including opinions on ethanol, hydro, wind, solar and nuclear.
11. A question about global warming and whether or not the candidate saw the effects as serious enough to warrant government as opposed to voluntary action.
12. Opinions on the South Florida Water Management's declaration that at current use and growth levels, there is insufficient water to meet the needs of local consumption and Everglades restoration.
13. Views on mass transit as a solution to growing traffic congestion in our County.
14. A final question on sewage outfall, in which semi-treated sewage is pumped offshore, and its effects on our remaining coral reefs.

As you can see from the range of topics covered, the questionnaire was not designed to be easy and required some knowledge of the issues. We tried to cover as many key environmental topics as possible and still leave candidates a bit of time to go out and campaign – or at least earn a living. Sorting out the candidates was done on the basis of the written questionnaire, face to face interviews and of course past voting record or pro-environmental work. In many, if not most, of the races during both the September primary and the November general election, no clear favorite emerged in terms of views on the environment and we chose not to

continued on page 4

## Local Sierra Group Outings

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



**Nov 12, Sun. ADDITION LANDS SWAMPWALK.** Join us for our first 'swampwalk' of the season. This will be a leisurely trip of about four to five miles through sections of the beautiful Big Cypress Addition Lands located only about an hour west of Ft. Lauderdale on I-75. Bring a change of clothes (especially shoes and socks) as it could still be pretty wet out there.

Cost: (everybody) \$5

Leader: Matt Schwartz <matthew3222@yahoo.com> 954-764-2739 (Broward Group)



**Nov 11-12, Sat.-Sun. CANOEING AND PRIMITIVE CAMPING ON FISHEATING CREEK.** West of Lake Okeechobee. Rated Moderate. Limit 20. \$65/person includes canoe rental, transport, and 4 meals. \$40/person with own canoe. No charge for children under 12 in parent's canoe.

Contact Leader Charles Hunt (561) 967-4770 <sierra@smartsolutions.com> or Mike Baird 561-965-7237 <GSDad@bellsouth.net> (Loxahatchee Group)



**Nov 18, Sat. TURNER RIVER CANOE.** This beautiful river goes 8 miles through very narrow channels beginning at the Tamiami Trail in the western Everglades, starting as fresh water and becoming increasingly salty as it flows into Chokoloskee Bay. Rated Moderate BUT the last hour may be strenuous depending upon open water wind/weather/tide. Limit 18. Cost \$35 members, \$45 non-members.

Contact Leader Jim Gross 305-665-2401 <JMGross3013@aol.com> (Miami Group)



**Nov 24-26, Fri.-Sun. JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK/ LOXAHATCHEE RIVER CAMP/HIKE/CANOE.** We will tent camp two nights, walk the short Kitchen Creek Trail and/or the Sand Pine Nature Trail. Saturday we will canoe the wild and scenic Loxahatchee River.

Transportation, canoe rental, campsite fees and most meals included.

Rated Moderate. Limit 6. Cost: \$110 members, \$130 non-members.

Contact Leader Kaatje Bernabei 305-223-6551

<cbernabei@braddock.dadeschools.net> or Asst: Alan Nowell, 305-270-5262 (days) <alan.nowell@sfcfcu.org> (Miami Group)



**DEC 2, Sun. EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK DAY HIKE.** Introductory hiking for beginners and a refresher for veterans. We will walk the Anhinga Boardwalk Trail and the Gumbo Limbo Trail and then drive to the Pinelands area and have a gourmet lunch and walk a trail there. Each trail is less than one mile long. We'll see gators, birds, turtles, fish, insects and maybe a snake or two. Rated Leisure. Limit 10. Cost: \$20 members, \$25 non-members.

Contact Leader Kaatje Bernabei 305-223-6551 <cbernabei@braddock.

dadeschools.net> or Asst: Alan Nowell, 305-270-5262 (days)

<alan.nowell@sfcfcu.org> (Miami Group)

**Outing Leaders Wanted.** Outing Leaders get involved, get active, meet new people, have fun, and attend their outings for free. (Assistant Leaders attend for half price.) If you are interested, contact Judy at (305) 308-8913 or judykuchta@yahoo.com

We would like to invite you to come on one of our fine educational 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.

For Broward Group outings, make your check payable to: Broward Sierra Outings. Include the name and date of the trip on your check. Also include your name, phone number, email and street address. Mail checks to: Judy Kuchta c/o Jackie Fisher, 4992 S.W. 105 Way, Cooper City, FL 33328.

**You may call the Sierra Hotline for updates at 954-567-2841**

**LOOK FOR UPDATED INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE:**

**<http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>**



take a position in those races. In the gubernatorial primary race, most of you are aware that the Florida Chapter took the unusual step of endorsing candidates in both major parties' primary races as better environmental choices over their respective opponents. Nevertheless, the process of questioning candidates on their views and sharing the positions of our Club was an excellent opportunity to create a dialogue on the environment with those who hold political power or those who hope to in the future.

The next step is up to you – our members. Voting for a candidate who will support our views is of course important. But it cannot stop there. It is vital that our more than 2,600 members here in Broward County stay on top of the people who make the crucial decisions on the future of our county and our planet – endorsed by the Sierra Club or not. Calling, writing, and emailing elected officials on the range of issues that affect us is what the Sierra Club is all about. Let's win these races, create an 'environmental majority' in Congress, and keep the momentum going with our votes, mouths, pens and computer keyboards in the coming year to undo some of the recent damage and improve our environment in the future.

Win or lose – many thanks to the Political Committee (Mara Shlackman, George Cavros, Brion Blackwelder), Carole Walsh, Siobhan McLaughlin, Phil Busey, the Broward Group's Executive Committee, all political candidates who participated in this process and to the membership of the Broward Group of the Sierra Club.

A final note – a question was raised during the last general meeting with regard to the electronic voting machines that are utilized in our County. It is obvious that regardless of our opinions, the machines will be in use on Election Day and that the vast majority of voters in Broward will be using them as opposed to an absentee

ballot. However, it is the Broward Group's position that the use of machines which simply print out totals of votes received for each candidate and do not provide a verifiable record of each vote cast is extremely dangerous to the democratic process. We are firmly behind scrapping the machines in favor of a verifiable and 'recountable' paper ballot as soon as possible and will work towards this goal in the near future. However, let us not let our anxiety to keep us from the polls – **get out and vote on November 7th and make sure our voices will be heard!**

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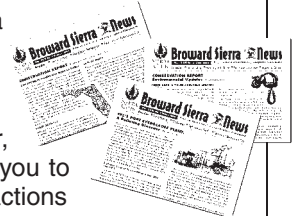
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