

ACTION ALERT! **Commission Meeting June 5th** **on Airport Expansion**



The issue of the Airport Expansion will be coming up at the Broward County Commission meeting at 6:00pm on June 5th at the Governmental Center, Commission Chambers, Room 422, 115 South Andrews Avenue, Fort Lauderdale (Bring photo I.D.)

The proposed expansion is to accommodate raising the number of people flying in and out of Ft. Lauderdale airport from the current 10 million per year to 16 million. That's an increase of 6 million people per year flowing through that piece of ground by air and, in most cases, land connection as well. Plus additional hotel and restaurant space to accommodate them, not to mention the noise and air pollution. You can see why the money is following this.

Quality of life of the people who live here is definitely not the consideration. Let's support our community and stand against more unnecessary growth, more water taken from our rapidly shrinking aquifer and more greenhouse gases adding to the problem of global warming.

We need as many of you as possible to attend the meeting and voice your opposition. Additionally, write, call or e-mail the County Commissioners and urge them to commit to Alternative A - the no action alternative (no expansion).

For County Commissioners' contact info, click the "Broward County Government Contacts" link on our website <<http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>>

WATER WOES CONTINUE IN SOUTH FLORIDA **Protect Overdevelopment** **or the Ecosystem?**

— By *George Cavros, Conservation Chair*

Florida is in the midst of one of the worst droughts in recent history. Residential water consumption, a substantial percentage of total South Florida water use, has been the target of South Florida Water Management District voluntary water restrictions. State disaster planners said Florida may be entering a two or three year drought cycle that could pose new challenges for growth in South Florida.



In March, the District instituted temporary water restrictions aimed at cutting residential use by 15 percent, mostly from the watering of lawns and gardens. Farmers have had to cut back 50 percent. The state also announced that water from the fragile Everglades ecosystem would be cut off for any new or additional water supplies, meaning utilities will have to find new sources of water to supply demand for population growth. It was the first time in history that Everglades water was deemed off-limits, but there is already pressure to lift that restriction.

Water suppliers in Palm Beach, Broward, Miami-Dade and Monroe counties rely on about 500 million gallons of water per day from the Everglades to resupply the Biscayne aquifer, their main drinking water source. Coastal communities are particularly at risk without Everglades water to refill canals and well fields. When canal levels drop too low near the coast, saltwater can seep in from the east and contaminate drinking water supplies.

That could leave tap water unfit to drink, though still suitable for bathing and cooking.

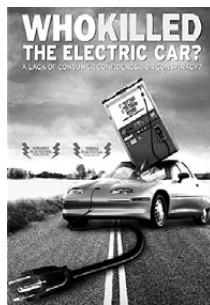
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Broward Sierra Programs

Tuesday, June 5th: *Who Killed the Electric Car?*

The movie that reveals the Auto Industry's biggest conspiracy and was selected for the Sundance and Tribeca film festivals.

Running solely on electricity, GM's fleet of EV-1 vehicles were so efficient, they were on the brink of altering the future of driving in America. Those lucky enough to drive one gave it glowing reviews. The film poses the question - why were they all destroyed?



Narrated by Martin Sheen, *Who Killed The Electric Car?* is a murder mystery like no other, as it unravels the puzzling demise of a vehicle that could have saved the environment and America's addiction to foreign oil.

The meeting and program will be held at the Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Rd. S., Pompano Beach (see map on next page).

Wednesday, July 4th: No meeting. Happy Independence Day!

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.

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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

- Executive Committee Chair**
Barbara Curtis 954-946-7359
- Secretary**
Louis Serra 954-442-0880
- Treasurer**
Max Goldstein 954-296-3411
- Conservation Chair**
George Cavros 954-295-5714
- Marine Issues / Energy Issues Chair**
Pedro Monteiro 954-525-3324
- Political Chair**
Matthew Schwartz 954-764-2739
- Legal Chair**
Mara Shlackman 954-523-1131
- Everglades Chair**
Rod Tirrell 954-202-9263
- Outings Chair**
Judy Kuchta 954-924-5001
- Education Chair**
Open
- Fundraising Chair**
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- Membership Chair**
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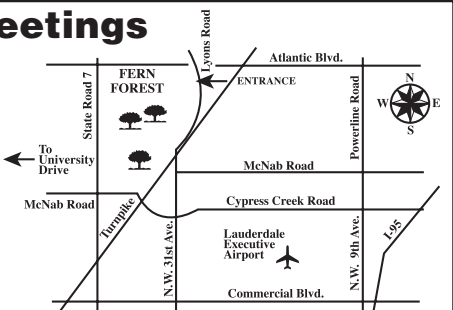
Broward Sierra News is published monthly for the members of the Broward County Group, Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club. Subscriptions are available for non-members. Send inquiries to: **Broward Sierra News**, P.O. Box 350432, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335

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.

Broward Sierra Club General Meetings

Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings are held the first Tuesday or Wednesday of every month (see schedule below). **This month's meeting and program will be held on Tuesday, June 5th at the Fern Forest Nature Center.** 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek. 201 Lyons Rd. South, Coconut Creek. Just south of Atlantic Blvd. on the west side of the street. (between Atlantic and Commercial Blvds., Lyons Road, south of Atlantic is the same street as NW 31st Ave., north of Commercial) (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 Barbara Curtis at 954-946-7359 or e-mail her at Legalbarb@aol.com.

GENERAL MEETING SCHEDULE AND LOCATIONS

In order to make our meetings more accessible to members in both the Northern and Southern parts of Broward County, we will be meeting at Anne Kolb Nature Center on the first Wednesday of every odd numbered month, and at the Fern Forest Nature Center the first Tuesday of every even numbered month.

Tues., June 5th: Fern Forest	Wed., September 5th: TBA	Wed., November 7th: Anne Kolb
Wed., July 4th: No Meeting	Tues., October 2nd: Fern Forest	Tues., December 4th: Fern Forest
Tues., August 7th: Fern Forest		

ACTION ALERT - Big Cypress Addition Lands

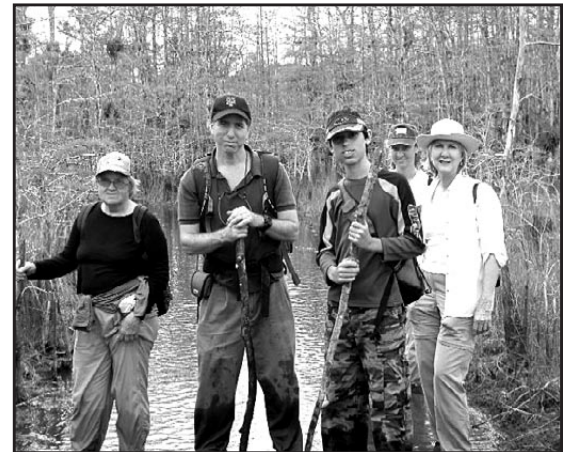
– By Matt Schwartz, Political Chair and Outings Leader

The deadline for Final Comments on the Big Cypress Addition Lands is June 15th!

If you've been following the 'Battle for Big Cypress' in the media lately, you know that the National Park Service (NPS) is currently accepting public comments for the last time with regard to the Big Cypress Addition Lands. This will be followed by an NPS selection of a 'preferred alternative' for these lands which will ultimately determine their future.

In their latest newsletter, the NPS offered a selection of six alternative management strategies including a 'no action' alternative for comparison. For years, the Broward Group of the Sierra Club has taken the position that these lands are relatively undisturbed and should be allowed to remain that way 'in perpetuity'. Those of you who have been on Broward Sierra swampwalks know that the Addition Lands support an incredible array of plants and animals. We commonly find both Florida panther and Florida black bear tracks on our hikes as well as sightings of numerous birds, reptiles, amphibians, crustaceans and insects. When we are fortunate enough to have a member join us who can identify native plants by name and habitat, the list seems almost endless. A recent botanical survey which identified more than 850 species of plants in the original preserve concluded that many more are likely to be found in the Addition that have not yet been added to the preserve's inventory.

Fortunately, our lobbying efforts have paid off to some extent and the National Park Service has agreed with us that 109,000 acres of the Addition Lands would qualify as a designated federal wilderness area. This assessment has been included in management **Alternative F**. While still allowing a relatively small number



Matt (2nd from left) leading a group on a "Swampwalk" in the Addition Lands

of property owners to access their homes by vehicle, Alternative F would completely ban any form of recreational vehicle use on the entire Addition Lands. Further, it would begin the process which would culminate in an Act of Congress establishing the Big Cypress National Preserve Wilderness Area.

The Road Ahead

The fact that the NPS has determined that the Addition Lands qualify as wilderness does not necessarily mean that this will be their chosen alternative. Five other alternatives are also on the table, which would allow up to 139 miles of off-road vehicle (ORV) trails through the Addition and there are those who will push hard for this type of usage. In eastern Bear Island (an area of the original preserve closed to ORVs



Florida Black Bear tracks spotted in the Addition Lands

since 2000) the NPS has recently allowed ORV use again in spite of the fact that this area was specifically closed to protect the Florida panther (a four year study commissioned by the NPS showed a marked decrease in the use of this land by panthers during hunting season), and to protect

the very fragile wet prairies that define that area.

What You Can Do

Until June 15, the NPS is accepting public comments on their website. The easiest way to get there is to simply go to the Broward Group of the Sierra Club's home page. This is located at www.florida.sierraclub.org/broward. At the very bottom of the home page, you will find links to both the latest NPS newsletter and the very easy to submit comment form. We urge all of you to take just a few minutes of your time to fill out this form, including your name and contact information, and select **Alternative F** as the management plan you would like to see for the Addition Lands. In your comments you may wish to talk about the value of a wilderness area only an hour from downtown Ft. Lauderdale; the known harmful effects of ORVs in other parts of the preserve (damage to the soil and vegetation, disturbance to wildlife, user conflicts); the importance of protecting up to 30 animal species and 72 plant species listed as endangered, threatened, or in need of special concern; the loss of millions of acres of other parts of south Florida to agriculture and development; the fact that the Big Cypress Addition Lands may well be the most biodiverse piece of land remaining in the continental United States; the need for the children of south Florida to experience their natural heritage in a safe and undisturbed setting.

Please make your comments personal. If you've ever been on a swampwalk with me or any of the hikes on the Florida Trail off of I-75 then you have been in the Addition. But whether you've been there or not, do let the folks at the National Park Service know that fully protecting these special lands, which are the property of us all, means a great deal.

If you do not have access to a computer, you may submit your comments in writing to:

National Park Service, Denver Service Center, Big Cypress Planning Team, 12795 West Alameda Parkway, Po Box 25287, Denver Co 80225-9901

Feel free to write or call me with any questions.
Matt Schwartz

Political Chair and Outings Leader, Broward Group
954-764-2739

A big thank you to volunteers Barbara Curtis, Judy Kuchta, Andi Hagen, John Shave, Anita Lind and Carole Walsh, who helped out with the Earth Day events at Birch State Park, Anne Kolb and Deerfield Pier. We got lots of Florida Hometown Democracy petitions signed, and raised \$150 from the sale of t-shirts, buttons and books, which will go into our conservation and newsletter funds.

Local Sierra Group Outings

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

JUNE 2, SAT. MOONLIGHT CULINARY CANOE. (Miami Sierra Group Fund Raiser) Enjoy an evening under the full moon on Biscayne Bay, with the delights of good company, delicious food, exquisite wine and a skyline view. No special diets. Rain or shine. Leisure. Limit 18.



Cost: \$45 members, \$50 non-members.
Leader: Ken Smith 305-275-0180

JUNE 9, SAT. HIKE THE BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE ADDITION LANDS. This will be the last opportunity to join Broward Sierra out in the Addition Lands before the comment deadline of June 15th. We'll hike about 5 or 6 miles through pine forest, prairie, sabal palm hammocks and of course cypress strands. It is the known habitat of the critically endangered Florida panther, as well as an ecosystem unique to the entire planet! Bring your own lunch. Meetup time is 9:30 AM. All information provided to participants. *Cost: \$5 members and non-members.* As water levels will probably continue to be low, children accompanied by parents will be permitted on this hike.
Leader: Matt Schwartz 954-764-2739 <matthew3222@yahoo.com>



JUNE 8-10, FRI.- SUN. TURTLE WATCH/CAMP AT SEBASTIAN INLET STATE PARK. View sea turtles nesting on the beach. We will be led by a registered guide on the evenings of the 8th and 9th. By day we'll enjoy the 3 miles of beautiful beaches and swim, snorkel and/or sunbathe. There is canoeing and kayaking available in the Indian River Lagoon, as well as nature trails in the Hammock Trail. We'll have waterfront campsites too! Limit 12. *Cost: \$100 members, \$125 non-members.*



Leader: Judy Kuchta 954-924-5001 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>
Asst: TBA

JULY 15, SUN. KAYAK AND PICNIC AT WILTON MANORS PRESERVE. Excellent for those with basic experience, and families with kids age 7 and older. This 7 mile loop takes about 2.5 to 3 hours to kayak. It is fairly urban and not too difficult to paddle, yet home to birds such as the ibises, herons and ospreys, and occasionally hawks and manatees. We'll have a delightful cookout and lunch afterwards at the preserve. Limit 18. Rated: easy to moderate. *Cost: \$40 members, \$45 non-members. Children riding tandem with parent \$20.* Equipment provided.



Leader: Howard Helbein
Asst: Judy Kuchta 954-924-5001 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>

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 (954) 924-5001 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 sign-up, payment and further information, please contact the outing leader.

**You may call the Sierra Hotline for updates at 954-567-2841
LOOK FOR UPDATED INFORMATION ON OUR WEBSITE:
<<http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>>**

EVERGLADES WATER MAY STILL BE NEEDED

South Florida Water Management District officials have asked the Army Corps of Engineers for permission to let the conservation areas dip below current limits for releases of water in precise areas and for limited periods.

The conservation areas are marshy government-owned lands in Broward, Palm Beach and Miami-Dade counties that act as underground water stockpiles – and as part of the Everglades ecosystem. Lowering them could pose an immediate threat to wading birds, fish and alligators, state environmental officials say. But not lowering the conservation areas in a sustained drought could allow damaging salt water to infiltrate the water supply systems for dozens of cities and towns.

District officials have publicly stated that they will drain water levels in the Everglades ecosystem if the drought continues, thereby threatening the habitat of a myriad of species. That's an odd contradiction, since the District recently passed a rule capping water from the Everglades ecosystem for residential consumption.

The District's contradiction on protecting the Everglades is indicative of the arguments surrounding the development of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Project – how much water for the ecosystem and how much water to feed the development boom. While the project speaks of “restoring the Everglades,” the operational emphasis of the plan has been on ensuring water supply to sustain South Florida overdevelopment – leaving ecosystem restoration as an afterthought.

Governor Crist has weighed in on the issue by saying that he hopes the wildlife-versus-people choices facing federal engineers and water managers in the current drought can be minimized if South Floridians heed strict water-use regulations. “We want to do everything we can to protect the wildlife and we want to be cautious and protective of our people,” Crist said.



Unfortunately, water restrictions triggered by one of the worst droughts in history haven't resulted in dramatic drops in the amount of water the public has consumed, a South Florida Sun-Sentinel review of utility pumping records shows.

A sampling of water providers in Broward and Palm Beach counties shows most falling well short of the overall 15 percent reduction goal the South Florida Water Management District proposed to achieve by imposing water restrictions on March 22.

DISTRICT WAS SLOW TO MOVE ON WATER RESTRICTIONS

District officials moved at a snail's pace to impose water restrictions on Southeast Florida. South Florida water managers started with three-times-a-week limits on lawn watering, and when conditions worsened they moved to twice-a-week limits on April 13 – hardly bold moves.

That was more than a *year* after northeast Florida imposed twice-a-week restrictions and about *four years* after that became the rule along much of the Gulf Coast, which prior to that had been under various restrictions for a decade. The Tampa Bay area went to once-a-week water limits in *January*.

Recently, environmental groups sent a letter urging the district to impose even tougher water-use restrictions, including limiting lawn watering to once a week and taking other conservation steps before lowering water levels in the Everglades.

NO WATER LEFT FOR DEVELOPMENT?

Don't bet on it. If the water shortage *is* such a crisis, why does the district keep issuing water-use permits for new homes, condos and golf courses that use more water?

The District says that the new developments have to identify and tap an “alternative” supply, such as deeper aquifers, treated wastewater, desalinization, or other new sources – an implicit statement that there is not enough water in the Everglades ecosystem to both wash our cars and protect what's left of the Everglades. It's clear that with continued overdevelopment, local utilities will have to look outside the natural system to find new sources of water. The natural system has surpassed its carrying capacity to supply the overdeveloped coasts.

In fact, the city of Fort Lauderdale is tapping the Floridan Aquifer, a deeper brackish aquifer, that produces saltier water that is more costly to treat. The city of Sunrise is undertaking a reuse pilot project that treats sewage water close to drinking water standards and pumps it back into the ground where it percolates into the drinking water aquifer. There has also been renewed talk of resorting to desalinization plants to supply drinking water. What does it all mean for a South Florida intent on growing? Water quality will likely degrade, water quantity will continue to be a concern for years to come, while the price for basic drinking water spikes sharply.

Please do your part to conserve water. For a current update on water restrictions, please visit: www.sfwmd.gov

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.

	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>.

Join the Sierra Club and receive a FREE Sierra Club Weekender Bag!
(While supplies last)



Yes, I want to join the Sierra Club! I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage and receive a free Sierra Club Weekender Bag. My payment is enclosed.

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Contributions, gifts or dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1.00 for your Chapter newsletter.

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