

## AIRPORT SLATED FOR EXPANSION - Debate on Overdevelopment is Back!

– By George Cavros, Conservation Chair

An old debate pitting the tourism industry against Broward residents has been reopened with the release of a Federal Aviation Administration (FAA) report on a proposed expansion of the Fort Lauderdale-Hollywood International Airport. Airport traffic is expected to increase in the future and the FAA wants the airport to accept the additional traffic and keep delays under six minutes, but the ultimate decision is in the hands of Broward County commissioners. The airport is currently served by more than 45 air carrier, commuter, and air cargo airline companies that provide flights to more than 40 U.S. and international destinations.

The airport primarily uses two parallel runways. The north runway is 9,000 feet long and handles commercial jets, while the south runway is 5,300 feet long and is used mostly by private planes. Several options in the federal report include expanding the south runway to at least 8,000 feet – which would take it over US1 to the east.

The expansion could wipe out up to 22 acres of wetlands. Wetlands provide important storm surge and flood protection in addition to wildlife habitat. In addition, a south runway expansion would require the county to mitigate noise impacts to nearby communities – requiring a costly taxpayer-funded mitigation plan that includes noise insulation for nearby homes or buying a whole swath of homes outright.

An 8,000 foot runway would cost approximately 700 million dollars. That cost could be paid by the airlines, which is then passed to passengers. The airport would likely be transformed from an easily accessible airport with low cost carriers to a major international hub on the scale of Miami International Airport – with higher priced tickets. It's uncertain what might happen to surrounding communities and what future land use changes might be allowed, given the industrialization of that area. Industrialization of the airport and port area leads to environmental degradation, noise, water and air pollution, and more congestion on roadways, which culminates in a decrease in the quality of life for Broward families.

### Don't build it and they won't come

The airport doesn't have to expand to accept additional projected flights. Air traffic could be diverted to Miami or Palm Beach. The FAA

report is predicated on the need for Broward County to absorb the anticipated increase in future flights.

The Broward County Commission can choose not to expand the airport and maintain it at its current size. The

new report does not make a recommendation on how long the runway(s) should be, but in 2003, the county commission voted to expand the south runway to 8,300 feet. They also requested a new Environmental Impact Statement from the FAA, hence the reason for the new federal report. Some commissioners still appear to support continued industrialization of the airport / port area, while others are fighting to maintain our quality of life.

Commissioner Rodstrom, an opponent of the expansion, was quoted in the Miami Herald stating, "the FAA is in total denial about the leveling off of air traffic, they believe it is absolutely temporary and our airport will continue to grow." Last year the airport saw a passenger decline of 4.6%.

There is an operational option of redirecting demand to nearby airports such as Miami or West Palm Beach. In fact, Palm Beach County is grappling with its own airport growth issues, and elected officials have stated publicly that they would prefer to maintain their quality of life and send the additional flights to Broward.

The Broward County commissioners are set to vote on the airport expansion at a May 8th evening public hearing. As this newsletter will reach you just several days before the meeting, please take just a few minutes to send an email to the commissioners at the addresses on page 4 to express your opposition to expanding the airport. Please take a moment to protect our quality of life from further degradation. As always, thanks for your support.

*continued on page 4*

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



Recycled paper, soy ink

### Broward Sierra Programs

**Wednesday, May 2nd:** Our guest speaker will be Dr. Richard Weisskoff, author of the book *The Economics of Everglades Restoration: Missing Pieces in the Future of South Florida*. (Rescheduled from Feb.)



The meeting and program will be held at the Anne Kolb Nature Center in Hollywood (see map on next page).

**Tuesday, June 5th:** TBA. Check our website at [florida.sierraclub.org/broward](http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward) for updates

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.

**Sierra Hotline**  **954-567-2841**

for Hotline additions, call Harold @ 561-417-0216

**SIERRA CLUB / BROWARD COUNTY**  
P.O. Box 350432  
Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335

NON-PROFIT ORG.  
U.S. POSTAGE PAID  
FT. LAUDERDALE, FL  
PERMIT NO. 4189

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**  
Open
- Membership Chair**  
Andrea Hagen 954-475-9399
- Volunteer Coordinator**  
Anita Lind 954-983-3709
- Program Chair**  
Harold Hancock 561-417-0216
- Media**  
Open
- Newsletter Editor**  
Carole Walsh 954-987-3642  
carolewalsh@mindspring.com
- Newsletter Mailing Coordinator**  
Open
- Executive Committee Member**  
Leigh Buckner 954-563-0073
- Executive Committee Member**  
Brion Blackwelder 954-262-6135

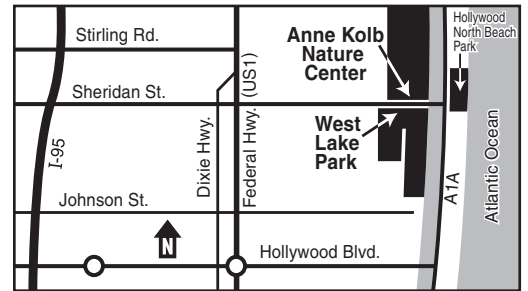
**Broward Sierra News** is published monthly for the members of the Broward County Group, Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club. Subscriptions are available for non-members. Send inquiries to: **Broward Sierra News**, P.O. Box 350432, Ft. Lauderdale, FL 33335

**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 Wednesday, May 2nd at the Anne Kolb Nature Center.** Take I-95 to the Sheridan St. exit. Go East past Federal Hwy. The entrance to Anne Kolb Nature Center will be on your left (About 1/2 mile after the sign for West Lake Park on the right, before the Intracoastal Bridge - 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 Fern Forest 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.

|                              |                                 |                                  |
|------------------------------|---------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| Wed., May 2nd: Anne Kolb     | Tues., August 7th: Fern Forest  | Wed., November 7th: Anne Kolb    |
| Tues., June 5th: Fern Forest | Wed., September 5th: TBA        | Tues., December 4th: Fern Forest |
| Wed., July 4th: TBA          | Tues., October 2nd: Fern Forest |                                  |

## BROWARD SIERRA'S OP-ED ON BEAR ISLAND

– By Matt Schwartz, Political Chair and Outings Leader

*Printed in the Sun Sentinel on March 16, 2007:*

The recent article on the National Park Service's decision to re-open off-road vehicle trails in the Bear Island section of Big Cypress provides a good discussion. However, no matter how important the panther is to the story, it is far from the only objection the environmental community has to this poorly thought-out decision.

According to the terms of the July 2000 Off-Road Vehicle Management Plan (which regulates ORV use within the preserve), most of these lands were deemed off limits to ORVs even without the presence of panthers. Far from being "dry and forested," much of the newly opened area consists of vast tracts of low-lying, wet prairie, inundated for most of the year.

Prairies are identified by the management plan as the "vegetation community most effected by ORV use." The plan goes on to list effects such as the loss of vegetation, exposure of underlying soils, rutting, compaction and the very likely spread of invasive plant species. Dispersed use due to a lack of natural obstacles is also cited. As stated in the September 2000 Record of Decision, "Environmentally sensitive areas, such as prairies, will be closed to ORV use."

Another objection to this decision relates to the length of the trails. While the management plan calls for approximately 30 miles of ORV trails in Bear Island, the new alignment provides for more than 34 miles of designated trails plus an additional seven miles of "secondary" trails. Although secondary trails are permitted by the ORV management plan, they are required to have a specific destination such as a campsite. In Bear Island, the only destination given by the NPS for the re-opened secondary trails is that they provide access to a "hunting area." This is

not consistent with either the letter or the spirit of the management plan.



*Prairie damage in Eastern Bear Island*

In 2006, the Department of the Interior released its new guidelines for the National Park Service. One of the key management principles was to "ensure that conservation will be predominant when there is a conflict between the protection of resources and their use." This is echoed by the NPS' own "precautionary principle" -- "in all situations involving conflicts between resource protection and resource use, the National Park Service would decide in favor of resource protection."

In addition to the endangered Florida panther, Big Cypress National Preserve is home to no less than 29 other animals listed as threatened, endangered or species of special concern. These include mammals, birds, fish, reptiles and a mollusk. Many of these are also affected by ORV travel. The University of Florida is conducting research on the effects of ORVs on amphibians and small mammals in Big Cypress prairies.

Plant life is equally diverse: Of the more than 850 species found in the preserve, 72 are listed by the state of Florida as threatened or endangered.

Perhaps more than any of its other qualities, Big Cypress is defined by this explosion of biodiversity. Proper use and enjoyment are, of course, expected and encouraged in any unit of the National Park Service. However, use and enjoyment should never extend to activities which have been shown to damage or are likely to damage natural resources.

*continued on page 3*

## FROM THE CHAIR – A message from Barbara Curtis

As you know, last month the Broward Sierra Club had a showing of Al Gore's movie, An Inconvenient Truth at the Cinema Paradiso. It was a big success! We attracted an audience of about 60 people, most of whom were not Sierra Club members. Everyone was very interested, and we handed out lots of newsletters and encouraged everyone to come to our meetings. After the film, George Carvos spoke, demonstrated the new energy efficient light bulbs, and told the fascinated group about the Sierra Club's efforts to conserve energy. Matt Schwartz spoke about the preservation of our beloved Addition Lands just west of Broward County, off of I-75, and our attempt to limit ORV traffic in this sensitive area.



We are excited about the interest that was shown in global warming and environmental issues, and hope to see many new faces at our meetings in the future.

By the time you read this, Earth Day will have passed, and I hope I will have seen many of you at the various events listed in the last newsletter. I would like to get more volunteers to join me in future table top environmental events. Please contact me at 954-946-7359 or legalbarb2@yahoo.com to find out what you can do to help. I hope we can all do more to encourage this community to wake up to the issues of global warming and the destruction of our wild lands.

## ACTION ALERT - Big Cypress Addition Lands

This month, the National Park Service will be soliciting final comments from the public on the fate of the 146,000 acre Big Cypress National Preserve Addition Lands. They will then make their decision as to a 'preferred alternative'. As of press time, the specific NPS website was not yet available for entering public comments. Please contact Damon Doumlele, Environmental Protection Officer for the preserve, and ask to receive the NPS Addition Lands newsletter. Damon can be reached at:

Damon Doumlele  
239-695-1158  
Big Cypress National Preserve  
Damon\_Doumlele@nps.gov

You can also log on to the National Park Services website at parkplanning.nps.gov and search for Big Cypress. For further information, contact Matt Schwartz at matthew3222@yahoo.com or 954-764-2739.

*Bear Island, continued from page 2*

In a recent National Geographic special issue on "Our National Parks in Peril," an aerial photo of Big Cypress received a two-page spread. The caption? "Scarface."

We who live in Broward County are fortunate to have this national treasure in our backyard. I and others often lead hiking trips into remote sections of the preserve only about an hour from Fort Lauderdale. Wet feet, the only drawback, are a small price to pay to experience the natural beauty and tranquility of South Florida as it once was.

As a unit of our National Park System, Big Cypress is the property of all Americans and few of the nearly 450,000 annual visitors to the preserve do so for the purpose of ORV travel. In the context of the current controversy, it is worth repeating the mission statement of the NPS here: "to conserve the scenery and the natural and historic objects and the wild life therein and to provide for the enjoyment of the same in such manner and by such means as will leave them unimpaired for the enjoyment of future generations."



© Brian F. Call Photography (www.brianfcallphoto.com)

## Local Sierra Group Outings

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



**MAY 5, SAT. SHARK VALLEY MOONLIGHT BICYCLE RIDE.** Enjoy viewing the wildlife by daylight, as they hunt for their last meal. Listen for nocturnal reptiles and birds by moonlight. This 15 mile bicycling loop is an excellent way to exercise and relax. Rated moderate and sometimes strenuous depending on the breeze. Limit 20. No children age 18 or less. *Cost: \$6 members, \$8 non-members.*  
Leader: Judy Kuchta 954-924-5001  
<judykuchta@yahoo.com>



**MAY 5, SAT. BUTTERFLY ECOWALK AT THE LANTANA NATURAL AREA.** 9am. This lovely little preserve is full of butterflies and birds, and we hope the Jamaica Capers will be in full bloom. Meet in the parking lot and bring your water, hats, sunscreen and binoculars. The Natural Area is on the north side of Lantana's Ocean Ave, between the bridge and A1A. FREE. Rated Leisure. Limit 20.  
Leader: Lisa Hanley 561-732-9578  
<lisa.hanley@juno.com>



**JUNE 8-10, THURS.- SUN. TURTLE WATCH/ CAMP AT SEBASTIAN INLET STATE PARK.** This is peak season to see sea turtles crawling up on the beach and laying their eggs. 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>  
Assistant TBA



**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**

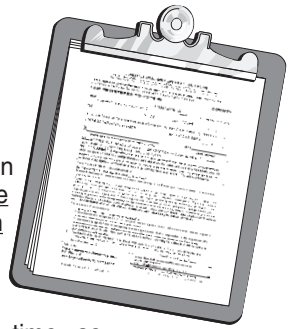
**LOOK FOR UPDATED INFORMATION  
ON OUR WEBSITE:**

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

# SAVE OUR STATE FROM GROWTH EXPLOSION

## Sign the Hometown Democracy Amendment Petition Today

– By Alice Platt, Northeast Florida Group Sierra Club member



How many times in the past few years have you driven by a forest cut to the ground for new homes, seen a waterway polluted by sediment and run-off, been stuck in traffic gridlock, or seen neighborhoods turned into strip shopping centers? Do you wonder what happened to the deer, otters and birds that used to live in the woods near your home? Is the only green space around you filled with For Sale signs? Do you ask yourself why your taxes are so high and your schools are so overcrowded, when our leaders pronounce that growth is good for our state?

You are not alone in asking questions with few answers. The statistics on Florida's growth woes are frightening. Citizens everywhere in the state are asking questions about how much they are expected to endure in their community. Where is the planning to control growth and protect the environment?

Florida state law requires that each county have a Comprehensive Plan – a plan for a county's growth that will ensure adequate roads, schools, and provide conservation of the environment and natural resources.

While these plans are in place, they have a loophole large enough to put an entire new city of homes into – often several thousand homes in one vote. In our fair cities and counties, lawmakers are giving in to developers' whims by simply amending the Comprehensive Plan at every turn – often more than one hundred times in one month! – rendering the plan completely ineffective and meaningless.

**But we have the power to change this unchecked, unreasoned growth.**

It's all included in the Hometown Democracy Amendment – a chance for all the citizens of a community to vote when a change to the Comprehensive Plan is proposed. Changes to the comprehensive

plan of our county would be done in an orderly way. Planners would review the proposed changes and elected councilmen would have a chance to comment and hold hearings, but in the end the voters would approve or deny the changes. Rivals say it would be cumbersome. Obviously, with time, as the population of Florida changes, the plan will need to be changed. But there's already a provision for that in the Florida state law, that it be reviewed and amended every 10 years. The only reason not to support the Hometown Democracy Amendment is if you like seeing unchecked urban sprawl; if you like to sit in traffic on a road that wasn't built for the proper capacity in time; if you enjoy seeing wildlife suffer because there isn't any place else for them to go.

There's only one catch. We can't vote to approve the amendment on the 2008 ballot yet. **First we have to collect the signatures to get it there.** The Sierra Club is taking an active part in collecting enough signatures by the end of this year to place the amendment on the ballot. **Please, go to [www.floridahometowndemocracy.com](http://www.floridahometowndemocracy.com) right now to download the petition and sign it.** You must be registered to vote in Florida to be able to provide a valid signed petition.

But you're not done there. **Print five petitions and take them to your friends, family, and coworkers.** Explain to them how important this amendment is to the integrity and beauty of our state. Ask them to sign, and ask them to get five people they know to sign as well. This amendment is so important to the future of your community and our state! **Let's all work together to put it on the 2008 ballot.**

If you'd like to volunteer to collect signatures for the Hometown Democracy amendment, please contact Joyce Tarnow at 954-942-7278 ([tarnowj@bellsouth.net](mailto:tarnowj@bellsouth.net)) or Leslie Blackner at 561-659-5754 ([lblackner@aol.com](mailto:lblackner@aol.com)). And of course, visit [www.floridahometowndemocracy.com](http://www.floridahometowndemocracy.com) for more information, to make a donation, or to download or print out a petition.

*Airport Expansion, continued from page 1*

The county commissioners' names and respective email follow:

- Kristin Jacobs ([kjacob@broward.org](mailto:kjacobs@broward.org))
- Stacy Ritter ([sritter@broward.org](mailto:sritter@broward.org))
- Lois Wexler ([lwexler@broward.org](mailto:lwexler@broward.org))
- Ilene Lieberman ([ilieberman@broward.org](mailto:ilieberman@broward.org))
- Debbie Wasserman-Rubin ([dwasermanrubin@broward.org](mailto:dwassermanrubin@broward.org))
- Ken Keechl ([kkeechl@broward.org](mailto:kkeechl@broward.org))
- Sue Gunzburger ([sgunzburger@broward.org](mailto:sgunzburger@broward.org))
- John Rodstrom ([jrodstrom@broward.org](mailto:jrodstrom@broward.org))
- Joseph Eggelletion ([jeggelletion@broward.org](mailto:jeggelletion@broward.org))

### 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](mailto: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.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Address \_\_\_\_\_  
 City \_\_\_\_\_ State \_\_\_\_\_ Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
 Phone (optional) (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_  
 E-mail (optional) \_\_\_\_\_

Check enclosed, payable to Sierra Club  Mastercard  Visa  AmEx  
 Cardholder Name \_\_\_\_\_  
 Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_

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.

### Membership Categories



|              | INDIVIDUAL                     | JOINT                          |                | INDIVIDUAL                      | JOINT                           |
|--------------|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|----------------|---------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| Introductory | <input type="checkbox"/> \$25  |                                | Life           | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1000 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$1250 |
| Regular      | <input type="checkbox"/> \$39  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$47  | Senior         | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$32   |
| Supporting   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$75  | <input type="checkbox"/> \$100 | Student        | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$32   |
| Contributing | <input type="checkbox"/> \$150 | <input type="checkbox"/> \$175 | Limited Income | <input type="checkbox"/> \$24   | <input type="checkbox"/> \$32   |

F94Q  
 W3302 1

Enclose check and mail to: **Sierra Club**  
 P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968