

Broward Sierra News



SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

VOL. XXXI No. 4
AUG / SEPT 2009

CONSERVATION PRIORITIES

– By Phil Busey, Broward Sierra Conservation Committee Chair

As America's largest grass roots environmental organization, the Sierra Club depends on volunteers such as you to be the environmental watchdogs in our Broward communities. A conservation challenge for our group is to manage priorities to do what we do best and what is uniquely most important for us to do. In practice, conservation actions of the Sierra Club Broward Group are driven by the interests and capabilities of us members, and needed reactions to bad development and bad legislation. We also cooperate with other organizations, agencies, and local communities to advance the Sierra Club mission at the state and national levels. As a group we should review all that we do to make sure it is not merely reactive, not merely what we are interested in, and not duplicative of what others do, but a comprehensive conduct of the state and national vision and mission, at the local level.

Sierra Club's mission #1 is "to explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth." Sierra Club

Broward Group has been involved in protecting the Florida panther and other wildlife of Big



Cypress from human disturbance, protecting coral reefs from sewage outfalls that still dot the South Florida coastline, protecting the Everglades from backpumping polluted water into the Everglades, and removing restrictions to the natural flow of water in the Everglades. We support protection of coral reefs from possible dredging to deepen the channel to Port Everglades; protection of the West Indian manatee, turtles, gopher tortoise, and endangered and threatened species generally; and restoration of night skies to protect Florida's five species of sea turtles and other species dependent on natural lighting for navigation and possible biorhythm.

Sierra Club's mission #2 is "to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources." Sierra Club Broward Group has been involved with efforts to reduce energy use; to develop clean, renewable energy still almost nonexistent in Florida; to restrict mining of limestone used in construction; and to oppose expansion of the urban footprint both west of the Sawgrass Expressway and US-27 as well as in the mangrove estuaries next to Port Everglades and Fort Lauderdale International Airport. As Broward County businesses and residents, we can do our part to reverse global warming by conserving energy use locally, by supporting the development of net renewable energy from clean sources at the state and national levels, and to be steadfast in opposing offshore drilling anywhere off Florida's fragile coastlines.

Urban sprawl and other inappropriate development is a threat both to South Florida's human residents and to the surrounding wilderness. Therefore measures such as **Florida Hometown Democracy, (State Constitutional Amendment #4)**, will beneficially make citizens directly accountable for comprehensive land use decisions. South Florida's remaining water resources are becoming inadequate to sustain the human population and the Everglades at the current rate of development. Because only the most egregious of invasive developments will come to citizen account under Hometown Democracy, we must remain vigilant as watchdogs of our city and county commissioners to make sure that other kinds of inappropriate developments are stopped. Besides the consequences of natural resource degradation, inadequate concurrency

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

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P.O. Box 350432
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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.

Broward Sierra Programs



Saturday Aug. 8th: This month, instead of our regular monthly meeting and program, we'll be having our annual **Picnic on the Beach** at John U. Lloyd Beach State Park from 11am - 4pm. Come enjoy the fun, sun, beach, swimming, kayaking, socializing, food & more. See outings on page 3 for more details.

Wednesday, Sept. 9th: Wendell Vaught, a master naturalist, swamp walk leader and retired Florida Division of Forestry senior forest ranger, will share his favorite haunts for spotting wildlife - from eagles, manatees and gators, to bird migration and nesting habitats. Tips on where and when to find the **best of the Everglades** - from paddling 10,000 Islands, to bird sitting in the Rookery Preserve, to tips on ghost orchid sitting. Vaught will share his tales of exploring the murky marshes for fossils, snakes and other swamp things. He is president of Eco Quest Tours, and his work has been focused on the Picayune Strand State Forest and the Everglades restoration project. Don't miss this fascinating presentation.



The meeting and program will be held at the Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Rd. S., Coconut Creek (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.



SIERRA CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

The Broward Sierra Club Leaders

- Executive Committee Chair**
Brion Blackwelder 954-262-6135
- Secretary**
Louis Serra 954-442-0880
- Treasurer**
Max Goldstein 954-296-3411
- Conservation Chair**
Phil Busey 954-579-3932
- Marine Issues / Energy Issues Chair**
Pedro Monteiro 954-525-3324
- Political Chair**
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Barbara Curtis 954-946-7359
- Media**
Open
- Newsletter & Web Site**
Carole Walsh 954-987-3642
carolewalsh@mindspring.com
- Newsletter Mailing Coordinator**
Open - to volunteer, contact
Max Goldstein 954-296-3411

Broward Sierra News is published every other month 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

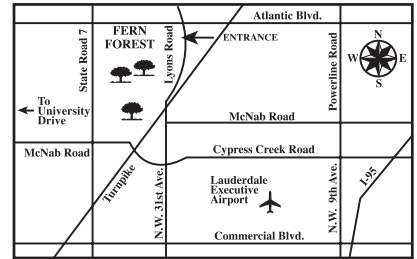
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To expedite any membership change (new addresses, etc.) or problems with your membership records please send your name, member number, old and new address or problem to:
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If further assistance is needed, please contact your local Membership Chair, Andrea Saifman 954-817-1749.

Broward Sierra Club General Meetings

Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings are held monthly (see schedule below). This month, instead of our monthly meeting and program, on **Saturday Aug. 8th**, 11am - 4pm, we'll be having our annual **Picnic on the Beach at John U. Lloyd Beach State Park** (6503 N. Ocean Drive, Dania Beach, north of Sheridan Street on A1A). See outings on the next page for more details.

Next month's meeting will be held on Wed., Sept. 9th at the Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek, just south of Atlantic Blvd. on the west side of the street. (Between Atlantic and Commercial Bvds. 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.



GENERAL MEETING SCHEDULE AND LOCATIONS

We meet once a month on Wednesday at either Fern Forest Nature Center or Anne Kolb Nature Center. Here is the schedule for the rest of the year: Wed. Sep. 9: Fern Forest Wed. Nov. 4: Anne Kolb
Make sure to check our website for changes. Wed. Oct. 14: Fern Forest Wed. Dec. 9: Fern Forest

Executive Committee Meetings

First Tuesday of each month. Contact Brion Blackwelder at 954-262-6135 for time and location.

The Broward Sierra News is published every other month. To keep you apprised of current Broward Sierra Club events, we will have them all listed on our website: <http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>. If you would like to receive reminders of these events e-mailed to you, you will need to **subscribe to our Yahoo newsgroup**. The address is: <http://groups.yahoo.com/group/BrowardSierra>. Simply click on the blue "Join this Group" icon and follow the instructions. You may have to create a Yahoo ID first, which is easy and free. This will also allow you sign up for other Yahoo newsgroups, of which there are many.

A CLIMATE CHANGE IMPERATIVE

– By Brion Blackwelder, Broward Sierra Executive Committee Chair

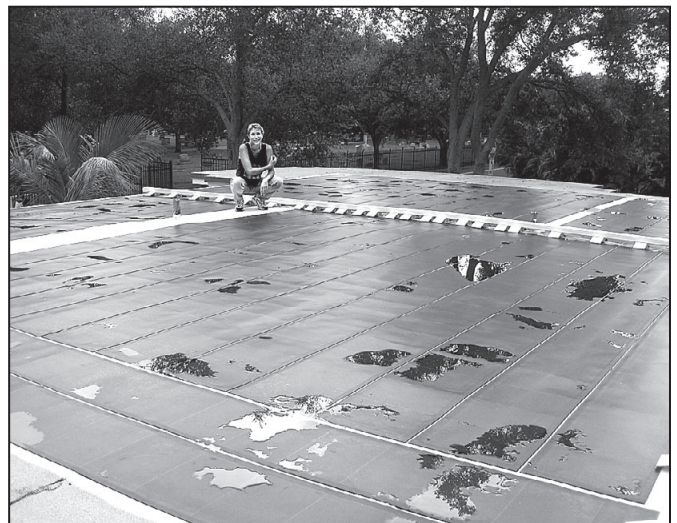
We cannot hope to protect the environment without great laws. Few have been adopted since the activism of the 1970s began with the great awakening of the original Earth Day. Wilderness, parks, clean air, clean water, endangered species, fisheries, and several dozen more key acts of Congress were born or modernized at that time. Funds for the programs rose to the task. Once, when threatened with depletion of the critical ozone layer from the unnecessary chemical refrigerant and aerosol called CFC, nations of the world united and passed the Montreal Protocol.

There has been a long drought ever since.

Finally, a new awakening exists related to the threat of global climate change from carbon dioxide, methane, and other heat-trapping, although mainly invisible, gases. Fossil fuel burning that powers our vehicles, power plants, and factories have been identified as the essential culprits.

Like all the great measures of the past, however, the painful creation of the American Clean Energy and Security Act in Congress is finally making headway.

The Sierra Club endorsed the Act before House passage on June 17th.



Broward resident Vicki Eckels shows off her solar roof. When not home and using electricity, Vicki's roof acts as a mini solar power plant sending electricity into the FP&L power grid. It results in a substantially lower energy bill for Vicki. The Institute for Southern Studies estimates that only 7 percent of structures in the U.S., if used for solar production, could generate 100 percent of our energy needs.
Photo © by Matthew Schwartz

While there were many in the environmental community who wanted this bill to contain much more, the vote was a close one with a final tally of 219 to 212. The bill now goes to the Senate and an uncertain future.

Continued on next page

Here in Florida we are expecting massive environmental changes from the climate change scientists now predict. These range from catastrophic effects to reefs due to warmer and more acidic oceans, saltwater intrusion to groundwater, more intense and more quickly forming hurricanes, odd cycles of drought and rains, record heat, excessive coastal erosion, and inundation of shore-front communities. We are appalled to watch the record melting of summer ice in the Arctic Ocean, the new evidence of increasing Greenland ice melt and jeopardy to the Antarctic ice cover. If the trend continues, sea levels could rise far faster and far higher than earlier forecasts. A total meltdown of the Antarctic ice shelf would raise sea levels by well over 200 feet.

With what is now known, it is a level of about 350 parts per million of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere that we need to get to. Unfortunately the House version does not get us there, and we are already in significant excess.

The House version has one great advance. It begins a system of cap and trade. Our production of greenhouse gases (now considered pollutants by the EPA) will have levels set, much the way acid rain levels were controlled. Emissions can then be adjusted by trading among emitters.

Detractors question the subsidized help to so called 'clean coal' and to nuclear energy, and lack of sufficient fair treatment of renewable energy sources such as wind and solar. In many cases, these truly renewable sources are ready to go to take over a big percentage of energy generation. It is unfortunate that much of the action in the current bill emphasizes the wrong solutions.

Millions of jobs are ready to go in renewable energy industries, and this potential needs to be unleashed. Studies have identified Florida as, by far, the best location in the Eastern United States in terms of its potential to develop solar energy. As the energy bill goes to the Senate, getting help for Florida's nascent solar energy industry is imperative. Equally important is insuring that compromises are not put in the final bill that encourage oil drilling in Florida's offshore waters or an expanded nuclear power industry.

Still, hope is seen in the Obama administration's approval of California's provisions to limit greenhouse gases. Fourteen other states are ready to join this great advancement. State control of greenhouse gas production is not a total solution, but could very well be an important piece of the puzzle.

On the local level, I can only ask Broward Sierrans to jump in and help out in the national policy debate. Attend meetings with elected officials and warn about the dangers to our state and communities from global climate change. At the same time, push for getting renewable solutions on board now. Last week, a number of local Sierra Club members attended a meeting with Congressman Ron Klein at the offices of a local company already engaged in the installation of rooftop solar technology. Congressman Klein heard in no uncertain terms that although we were glad that congress is finally tackling this enormous problem, we are expecting a great deal more.

Local Sierra Group Outings

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



AUG. 8TH, SAT. PICNIC BRUNCH AT JOHN U. LLOYD BEACH STATE PARK. 11am - 4pm. Join us for our annual picnic on the beach. It's fun, outdoors, and we all need to relax and enjoy life. Bring a dish of your choice. We'll supply the beverages, bread, buns, condiments, veggie burgers and dogs. We'll have plates and cutlery that is non disposable (but bring your own just in case we don't have enough). We'll have a grill to cook your traditional summer fare. *Donation \$3 for adults and \$2 for kids. This does not include the park entry fee of \$4 per one individual in a vehicle or \$6 for up to 8 passengers in a vehicle (see, it pays to carpool). Bicycles are \$2.* (Broward Group) Please RSVP so we can have enough for everyone: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>



AUG. 23RD, SUN. OUTING'S LEADERS POW WOW. 3:30pm at Judy's house. Contact Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>



LABOR DAY WEEKEND, SEPT. 5TH - 6TH, SAT. - SUN. CLYDE BUTCHER WALKABOUT AND FESTIVAL ON TAMiami TRAIL. We have lodging in Everglades City, the site of the Everglades National Park boat tour, historic hotels, museum, and Smallwood Store. Cost includes food and two nights lodging in shared apartments. *Members: \$125; non-members: \$150. \$100 deposit needed by Aug 1.* (Broward Group) Leader: Barbara Curtis 954-946-7359 <legalbarb@aol.com>



SEPT. 12TH, SAT. HELP BROWARD COUNTY PARKS AND THE ENVIRONMENT by volunteering to clear natural areas of garbage and invasive plants. 9am to 12 noon. Anne Kolb Nature Center, 751 Sheridan St., Hollywood, 954-926-2480. Afterwards we'll rent kayaks or go for a swim at the beach. Ages 13 and up. (Broward Group) Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>



OCTOBER 10TH - 12TH, SAT. - MON. JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK CAMPING. Located just south of Stuart, this park teems with wildlife. We'll hike on some of the 4 scenic nature trails allowing us to explore the various habitats. We'll kayak or canoe on the Loxahatchee River, which was Florida's first nationally designated "Wild and Scenic River". *Cost approx. \$75-\$100 (must have payment in full by October 2nd.)* Limit: 10. Ages 13 and up. Rated easy to moderate. (Broward Group) Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com> Assistant: Matt Schwartz 954-865-4306 <matthew3222@yahoo.com>



DECEMBER 4TH - 6TH, FRI. - SUN. BAHIA HONDA STATE PARK CAMPING. Enjoy the beautiful beach, the fresh air, visit Key West and relax before the hustle and bustle of the holidays. Limit 6. Adults only. Rated leisure. Cost approx. \$65 to \$85. (Broward Group) Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>

If you are interested in helping Outings Chair Judy Kuchta organize a Family Camping Trip outing please her at 305-308-8913 or <judykuchta@yahoo.com>.

We are looking forward to several hikes in the fall when the temperature cool. Dates TBA, and will be listed in the October/November newsletter and on our website (Click on "Outings and Events" at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>).

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 or go to <www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms>.

Florida Seller of Travel Ref. No. ST37115

For sign-up, payment and further information, please contact the outing leader.

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

allows developers to effectively tax existing residents to build the streets and schools to serve the new developments. Among all the environmental issues, development is one that is fundamental, because as Broward grows there is proportionate pressure on natural resources.

Sierra Club's mission #3 is, "to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment." Urbanized Broward County is located virtually entirely within the Everglades ecosystem, most of it within the natural river flow of the historical Everglades. The human environment is in constant collision with the adjacent natural environment in Broward's largely urban and suburban area. This presents a challenging teaching opportunity for the Sierra Club Broward Group.

When large-scale developments come up for Commission vote, whether they be regional shopping malls or expanded transportation schemes, the developers and agency consultants who favor the development cleverly frame the argument as "jobs versus the environment." In a region so dependent on development for its economy, during a major national recession it is only too easy to scapegoat environmental standards for the dire state of the economy, and to sacrifice the environment for the economy. This is fraudulent. Having seen how destructive deregulation was to the nation's financial system, what the economy needs is not less environmental regulation.



Photo © by Matthew Schwartz

Developers whine about regulations regardless of whether there is a recession as a handy whine piece. There was resistance to building standards both before and after Hurricane Andrew and Hurricane Wilma, but shoddy developers were nowhere to be found after people lost their homes and lost their lives. **Really, objecting**

about environmental protection and regulation is not about the environment and not about jobs. It's about greed.

The tiresome argument goes like this, "We are in the worst recession in 80 years and we cannot let the environment stand in the way of jobs. If we can build XYZ shopping mall, it will provide 5,000 more jobs and lower your taxes." The problem with this argument is that careful analysis has repeatedly shown that environmental protection and job growth go hand-in-hand, not the other way. If anyone thinks that higher development brings lower taxes, they can consider moving to Manhattan and see how low the taxes are.

What makes Broward County special, among other things, is a thriving tourist economy that depends on environmental conservation, low income residents whose livelihoods can be benefited by green jobs, precious natural resources on which our economy depends, and retiree populations who cannot afford to pay the high taxes that come with excess development. The work of the Sierra Club Broward Group makes the connection between a healthy environment and a healthy economy. **Whether you are working to preserve wilderness, promote responsible use of resources, or teaching the coupling of healthy jobs to a healthy economy, you contribute to conservation.**

For more information on how you can get involved in local conservation efforts, contact Phil Busey at 954-579-3932 or <philip@busey.org>.

DAN S. ARNOLD III

DAN S. ARNOLD III, P.A.
ATTORNEY & COUNSELOR

One Financial Plaza, Suite 2500
100 S. E. Third Avenue
Fort Lauderdale, FL 33394

Phone: (954) 764-4849
Fax: (954) 462-1335
dan@danarnoldlaw.com

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	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>.

DONATE TO THE SIERRA CLUB BROWARD GROUP



You can donate directly to our environmental work here in Broward County. Your donation will support our county-wide environmental programs, including our efforts to protect Florida panther habitat in South Florida. Contributions and gifts to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts.

Please make your check payable to:
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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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