

# STATE ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES

– by Phil Busey, Broward Sierra Chair

Three of Florida's 21 State Departments with major responsibility for administering Florida's environmental laws are the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP), and the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS). Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) is also important, and Florida's 10 state universities are involved in environmental research and education. Out of a \$66.5 billion Fiscal Year 2010 state budget, DCA spends \$771 million (of which the largest outlay is for emergency management), DEP spends \$1.347 billion (of which the largest item is \$523 million for land acquisition), FDACS spends \$337 million, FWC spends \$292 million, and universities spend \$3.417 billion.

DCA (web site: [www.dca.state.fl.us](http://www.dca.state.fl.us)), the Department of Community Affairs, the state planning and community development agency and the enforcer of growth-management laws, is up for sunset review, a process that state agencies undergo every 10 years. Divisions of the DCA are responsible for comprehensive planning (e.g., Developments of Regional Impact and Areas of Critical State Concern); community and economic development assistance to local agencies; establishing uniform statewide standards for construction in Florida, through the Florida Building Code Commission; the coordination of state, federal, and local efforts on natural disasters such as hurricanes; state land acquisition for parks, open space, and greenways, through a grant program called Florida Communities Trust; and assistance to Floridians in obtaining safe, affordable housing, through the Florida Housing Finance Corporation. DCA has the comprehensive planning responsibility that is of great interest to environmentalists and developers. Recently, DCA got involved in a Boca Raton issue, stating that Ocean Strand Park should be described as a park. In a state in which growth has been a major part of the economy, it makes sense to have an agency such as DCA that can administer laws to promote quality, sustainable growth.

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# Broward Sierra News



SIERRA CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892

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

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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 environmental issues and how they affect you and your community. Just go to our website at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>, and click on the "Become a member" link.

**Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings** are held at 7:30 pm on the first Thursday of each month at the Fern Forest Nature Center. In addition to committee reports, each month we have an educational program on conservation or ecological issues.

**Thursday, December 2nd: Annual Sierra Club Potluck Dinner Holiday Party.** We'll have a wonderful time with fantastic food, friends & fun, and some fabulous raffles! Bring a dish to share (or \$5 donation if you can't bring a dish). Barbara will bring her yummy gumbo with veggie sausage, and we suggest you can bring other main dishes, salads, cheese & crackers, or beverages. Raffle tickets will be available for \$3 each or 2 for \$5. We'll send out an email and post on our website a list of the prizes 2-3 weeks before the party.



**Thursday, January 6th: "Dirty Secret in Paradise."** Our guest speaker will be Palm Beach County Reef Rescue Director Ed Tichenor who will present the beauty of South Florida's coral reefs and tell us something Broward County doesn't want to deal with. After the Florida Senate and House voted unanimously to stop the ocean dumping of sewage by 2025, Broward officials say it's going to cost almost \$1 billion just to shut the Pompano sewage outfall. Broward's wastewater director said the treated sewage is "clear as can be" and "already is 90% clean".

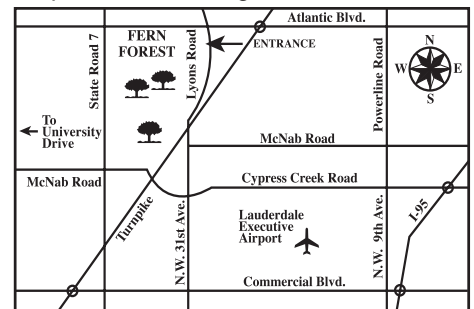


Please contact Phil Busey [philip@busey.org](mailto:philip@busey.org) to make sure you are receiving our twice monthly Sierra Club email announcements sent to [alert@sierraclub.org](mailto:alert@sierraclub.org). You should also check your bulk mail box to make sure your email software is not blocking Sierra Club, and be sure to whitelist mail sent to [alert@sierraclub.org](mailto:alert@sierraclub.org).

### DIRECTIONS:

**The Fern Forest Nature Center** is located at 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek, just south of Atlantic Blvd. on the west side of the street. (If you are coming from the south, NW 31 Ave. becomes NW 46 Ave., and then Lyons Rd. as you pass under the turnpike). **Make sure to check our website for changes or updates of the programs.**

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.



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 to sign up for any of the other numerous Yahoo groups.

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DCA, under Secretary Tom Pelham, got into the hot seat over its interpretation of Senate Bill 360, which allows builders of large developments to lessen paying for the road improvements, which would be paid by local taxpayers. Although declared unconstitutional by the Leon County Circuit Court, in *City of Weston v. Crist, et. al.*, the decision was stayed by the First District Court of Appeals after an appeal by Jeff Atwater, then President of the Senate, and recently elected as Florida Chief Financial Officer, and Larry Cretul, Speaker of the House. DCA has pointed out that the permit extension language of the bill specifically refers to Local Planning Agency decisions and the decisions of DEP, so DCA has no statutory authority to deal with extensions of building permits by LPAs and the DEP. Efforts to abolish the DCA have been underway in the Florida House since 2009, as part of an attempted solution to the economic crisis by loosening growth management regulations. Most land development decisions



are made by local city and county commissioners, planning and zoning boards, and local planning agencies. So enforcement of development laws passed by the legislature would not end if the legislature eliminated DCA. But DCA assists local governments to maintain compliance with state laws, and the elimination of DCA would probably increase costs to local governments and increase the rate of errors in legal compliance.

DEP (web site: [dep.state.fl.us](http://dep.state.fl.us)), the Department of Environmental Protection, is responsible for environmental regulation and the state's environmental resources, State Parks, and environmental management. Under Secretary Mimi A. Drew, DEP is responsible for regulation of pollution of air, water, and soil, including shorelines and hazardous wastes; management of state lands including parks and recreation areas; and environmental planning and management. Although there are no plans to abolish or sunset the DEP, some of its functions are under close scrutiny. DEP has prepared a "Model Ordinance for Florida-Friendly Fertilizer Use on Urban Landscapes" to reduce the risk of nutrient enrichment of surface waters. DEP delegates to Florida's five Water Management Districts the authority for consumptive use of water, aquifer recharge, well construction and surface water management. DEP has enforcement officers who arrest violators for environmental crimes. DEP is the main branch of state government involved with Everglades restoration. Federal agencies with which the DEP

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**SIERRA CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

**The Broward Sierra Club Leaders**

- Executive Committee Chair**  
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[philip@busey.org](mailto:philip@busey.org)
- Vice Chair**  
Brion Blackwelder 954-262-6135  
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- Treasurer**  
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- Secretary**  
Open
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**Executive Committee Meetings** are usually held on the first Tuesday of each month. Contact Phil Busey at 954-579-3932 or [philip@busey.org](mailto:philip@busey.org) for time and location.

**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 550561, Davie, FL 33355

**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. Phone 415-977-5653 or e-mail: [address.changes@sierraclub.org](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org) or [membership.services@sierraclub.org](mailto:membership.services@sierraclub.org)



**Broward Sierra Executive Committee Election Ballot**

**MUST BE POSTMARKED BY DECEMBER 21, 2010.**

**Please vote for up to 3 candidates.**

3 people will be elected to the EXCOM board this year. The Nominating Committee has selected 3 candidates. If you have a joint membership, both members should select candidates for office by using the "First Member" and "Second Member" spaces. When you have completed your ballot, **clip on the dotted line** and mail to:

**Broward Sierra Club,  
PO Box 550561, Davie, FL 33355**

All valid ballots must have either a printed newsletter mailing label on the reverse side or your membership number in the space provided:

Membership number:

**Please vote for up to 3 candidates**

	First Member	Second Member (if applicable)
Barbara Curtis	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Max Goldstein	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
Judy Kuchta	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**VOLUNTEER POSITIONS AVAILABLE**

Please print your name in the space of any volunteer positions you would be interested in.

Fundraising Chair \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter Mailing Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Newsletter Mailing Volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

Program Coordinator \_\_\_\_\_

Outings Leader \_\_\_\_\_

# Local Sierra Club Outings & Events

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



**Nov. 26, Fri. 'GLADES 101' EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK DAY WALK.** (Day after Thanksgiving) Introductory visit and "walk-hike" sampler in the Everglades for beginners and refresher for veterans and guests. We'll preview our experience with film, displays and visit art show at the ENP Coe Visitor Center then stroll the Anhinga Boardwalk Trail and nearby Gumbo Limbo Trail followed by a visit to the Pinelands area for a gourmet lunch (included) and walk an unimproved trail there. Time and weather permitting, we'll visit Pa-hay-okee Overlook boardwalk. Each trail is less than one mile long. We'll look for gators, birds, turtles, fish, maybe a snake or two and bugs in season. Rated leisure/moderate. \$15. Limit: 8. Contact Leader: Kaatje Bernabei 305-332-6551 <kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net> or Asst Leader: Alan Nowell 305-253-4250 <mrhitnmiss@aol.com>



**Dec. 11, Sat. HIKE THE BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE WILDERNESS TRAIL.** We'll hike 6-8 miles on a wilderness trail off a section of the Florida National Scenic Trail, north of Alligator Alley (about 50 minutes from Downtown Ft. Lauderdale). See local flora, wildflowers, and trek through cypress forest, hammocks and prairie. Bring a camera for some fabulous nature photos of birds and alligators. Rated easy to moderate. Bring your own lunch, water & snacks, and we will eat along the trail. Please reserve early. \$3 members, \$5 non-members. Leader: Nancy Lunz 954-658-8531 <a101nunzie@aol.com>



**Dec. 28 - 30, Tues. - Thurs. JONATHAN DICKINSON STATE PARK - CAMP/HIKE/CANOE.** Hike a section of the Florida Trail, canoe the mysterious, wild and scenic Loxahatchee River, and visit the Trapper Nelson Interpretive Site. Camp and recreate with like-minded souls amongst the pines and palmettos. Participants provide and prepare meals individually. Option to arrange car pool. Rated moderate to strenuous. Limit 8. \$55, including canoe rental and campsite fees. For information/reservation, please email Leader: Kaatje Bernabei 305-332-6551 <kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net> or Asst. Leader: Alan Nowell 305-253-4250 <mrhitnmiss@aol.com>



**JAN. 8, SAT. CORKSCREW SWAMP SANCTUARY** (near Naples). Join us for a fun and educational outing at this most unique and beautiful ecosystem. The park is wheelchair accessible and all are welcome. Bring your own picnic lunch. Rated easy. \$3.00 (plus \$10 park entrance fee). Leader: Karen Bulkowski 954-612-5459 <karenowski@att.net>, Asst. Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>



**JAN. 9, SUN. SIERRA CLUB WORK PARTY TO CLEAN UP FERN FOREST NATURE CENTER.** 201 Lyons Rd., Coconut Creek. We'll meet in the museum area, downstairs at 9:00 am. This is an opportunity to learn about some of the challenges of maintaining and upgrading a natural area, while returning something to the park for the beautiful meeting room they provide to us. No experience or tools needed. Bring water, sunscreen and substantial footwear and clothing for working outdoors in the brush. Contact: Jackie Fisher 954-434-2855 <jsf812@bellsouth.net>



**JAN. 14 - 16, Fri. - Sun. SOUTHWEST FLORIDA NATURE FESTIVAL AT THE ROOKERY, MARCO ISLAND.** Camp at Collier Seminole Park on Tamiami Trail. View and learn to identify flocks of birds, including roseate spoonbills, sandhill cranes, many species of herons, ibis and egrets. Hiking, kayaking and biking. Rated moderate. Limit 8. \$20 for 3 days of festival admission; \$38 for 2 nights of camping, bagels for breakfasts, and Friday dinner; plus extra for additional meals. Kayak rentals available at extra cost. Payment must be made by December 15 to reserve your space. Leader: Barbara Curtis 954-946-7359 <legalbarb2@yahoo.com>



**JAN. 29, SAT. HIKE THE BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE WILDERNESS TRAIL.** We'll hike 8 miles on a wilderness trail off a section of the Florida National Scenic Trail, north of Alligator Alley (about 50 minutes from Downtown Ft. Lauderdale). You will learn the difference a few inches of elevation makes to the local flora, as you trek through cypress forest, hammocks and prairie. We will walk at a leisurely pace, learning to identify birds, wildflowers, plants and butterflies. Bring your own lunch to eat on the trail. Rated easy to moderate, due to distance and uneven footing. \$3 members, \$5 non-members. Leader: Jackie Fisher 954-434-2855 <jsf812@bellsouth.net>, Asst. Leader: Kip Fisher 954-434-2855



**FEB. 5, SAT. NATURE WALK AND BIRD WATCHING IN DELRAY.** We'll start at the wetland nature walk at Wakodahatchee in Delray then drive over to Green Cay. Expect exceptional birding, enjoy the outdoors and learn about wetland ecology. We'll start in the morning and end the outing at a local restaurant for lunch (not included). Rated easy. Limit 18. \$3.00. Leader: Karen Bulkowski 954-612-5459 <karenowski@att.net>, Asst. Leader: Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>



**FEB. 6, SUN. BROWARD SIERRA CLUB OUTING LEADER POW WOW.** 10:00 am - 12:30 pm at Judy's place. Contact her for more info 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>



**FEB. 11 - 13, Fri. - Sun. BLUE SPRING STATE PARK CABIN CAMPING.** (Approximately 4-1/2 hour from Ft. Lauderdale) St. John's River guided nature cruise. Also kayaking and canoeing available. Watch dozens of manatees cluster in 70 degree springs! Boardwalk, interpretive exhibit, concessions and restaurant, special education programs. Rated moderate. \$22 adult, \$20 seniors for guided nature cruise, food and lodging estimated at \$100 (possible camping for \$20 less). Kayak and canoe rentals available at extra cost. Leader: Barbara Curtis 954-946-7359 <legalbarb2@yahoo.com>

Unless otherwise stated, the costs for each outing represent a best estimate of actual shared expenses, for food and transportation and other direct expenses.

We would like to invite you to come on one of our fun and educational outings! If you have any questions about an outing, please check with the certified Sierra Outing Leader listed for the outing. Some of the outings need no experience; others require some level of proficiency. All participants 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](http://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>>**



# THE MAGIC OF THE EVERGLADES: FULL MOON BIKE RIDE AT SHARK VALLEY

– by Leigh Buckner, Broward Sierra Club member

How many different ways can you claim to have experienced the magic of the Everglades? By flying over in a plane? Kayaking? Hiking? Last month the Broward Sierra Club held one of its traditional outings, a moonlit bike tour of Shark Valley in Everglades National Park, off of Tamiami Trail. I had never experienced the Everglades by bike and wondered why I had waited so long. There is no comparable feeling to the freedom of gliding along the sawgrass plains, watching alligators and birds as you sail by.

Approximately twenty five Sierrans from Miami-Dade County to Boca Raton gathered together for the ride. We rode the first half of the bike trail, 7 miles, before it got dark. The view was spectacular and it provided great exercise. As the sun started to set we saw the ubiquitous alligator, wading blue herons, anhingas, and a couple of kingfishers. As the group rode along we shared stories of past Sierra trips and learned bird identification skills from the more experienced birders in the group.

The sun began to set as we all reached the observation tower. We walked up the winding path of the tower to reach the top for an awesome view of the sawgrass plains. We were positioned somewhere between the tree line and the sky, and looked down to see gators swimming in the water and herons flying in groups through tall trees.

Our outings leaders, Judy Kuchta and Amy Werba, surprised us with a real treat for dinner - crackers, exotic cheeses, olives and sushi! As we continued to dine, the full moon rose and provided a breathtaking view of the landscape below. Other groups of bikers joined us in the tower by this point and had also opened up their picnic baskets.

The 8 mile ride back to the front of the park in the dark was exhilarating. The moon illuminated the standing water in the sawgrass on both sides of our bike trail. Thankfully we had lights on our bikes to guide us. We rode along the path carefully so as not to disturb the occasional alligator still resting on the paved road. The 15-mile loop ride provided the perfect outing, combining wildlife viewing and good exercise. If you have never experienced the Everglades on bicycle, I highly recommend it!

Photos by Leigh Buckner (See more in the photo gallery on our website at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>)



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works include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Recently, in the assessment of cancer concerns in The Acreage area of Palm Beach County, DEP was involved in sampling and testing for more than 200 pollutants in water and soil, but nothing was discovered at toxic levels for human health.

FDACS (web site: [doacs.state.fl.us](http://doacs.state.fl.us)), the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, is responsible for protecting state forest resources, pesticide regulation, and for protecting over 500 endangered and threatened plant species. The recently elected new Commissioner of Agriculture, U.S. Representative Adam Putnam, a fifth-generation farmer, has been outspoken against a strict set of numeric nutrient standards for Florida water bodies. This sets up a possible challenge to DEP's drafting of standards to be in compliance with the EPA. The Sierra Club endorsed Putnam's opponent. Most consumers will notice the petroleum inspection stickers on fuel pumps at 9107 retail outlets, which are part of the Department's

broad inspection programs that also includes seed, fertilizer, LP gas, and fair rides. FDACS administers the state pet law which governs pet dealers and vaccinations. FDACS interacts with several Federal agencies including the U.S. Department of Agriculture, especially APHIS, the Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service, and the EPA, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency.

The FWC (web site: [myfwc.com](http://myfwc.com)), the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, regulates hunting and fishing permits, boating safety, and performs research and education on fish and wildlife, and has 1947 full-time employees. FWC is governed by seven Commissioners appointed by the Governor. The Chair is Rodney Barreto of Miami. Commissioner Ron Bergeron is a Broward resident and developer. The FWC is currently considering speed-zone changes to Broward waterways to protect manatees. The counterpart agency at the Federal level is the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. FWC has a web site for panther education, [www.floridapanther.net.org](http://www.floridapanther.net.org).