

# LAST CALL FOR ACTION ON THE BIG CYPRESS ADDITION!

– by Matthew Schwartz, Broward Sierra Conservation Chair

Broward Sierrans reading this newsletter have been following the story of the Addition Lands of the Big Cypress National Preserve for some time. Described by Congress as a place of “unique wild beauty,” and as “habitat for a wide variety of plants and animals, including the Florida panther, the bald eagle, native orchids and many other species...,” the 146,000 acre Addition has also been a favorite getaway for many who live in this crowded part of the world.

That is about to change. After 14 years of public meetings, newsletters and comment periods, the National Park Service (NPS) has decided that these fragile and completely unique lands will be opened to motorized hunting and recreation in order to allow for a ‘diversity of users.’ According to the NPS itself, the price to be paid for that ‘diversity’ will be compaction, rutting and oxidation of soils; destruction of surface vegetation and roots; spread of invasive plant species throughout the Addition; changes to the Addition’s hydrology, wetlands and water quality; and disturbances and degraded habitat for red cockaded woodpeckers, Everglades snail kites, eastern indigo snakes, and the critically endangered Florida panther (23 of which were killed in 2010 - as habitat continues to shrink by about 1% per year). Human visitors will also experience a very different landscape and soundscape as motor vehicles become a major part of a weekend outing. For many of the Addition’s 31 animals and 96 plants listed as threatened, endangered, or species of special concern, the impacts are not known (or simply not considered by NPS).

Although a plan was released just before Thanksgiving, as of the date of this article that decision has not yet been signed. Please take a moment to send a brief message to National Park Service Director Jon Jarvis and ask him to reconsider this bad decision. Most of the 582,000 acres of the original preserve are already motorized and provide ample opportunity for those who desire motor vehicles as a way of experiencing the Big Cypress. It is completely unnecessary to bring this level of damage and degradation to the Addition Lands.

Jon Jarvis can be reached by email at: [jon\\_jarvis@nps.gov](mailto:jon_jarvis@nps.gov) or by fax at 202-208-7889

Two outings are scheduled for the Addition Lands in February and March. If you’re up for some adventure, come and see what the fuss is all about. [Editor’s note: See the Big Cypress outings photos on page 4, and many more in the Photo Gallery on our website.]



ORV damage in Big Cypress

**Thursday, February 3rd: “Habitat Changes and the Effects on Birds and Wildlife”** Our guest speaker will be Dr. Paul Gray, Okeechobee Science Coordinator of Audubon of Florida.

**Thursday, March 3rd: “Caring for Injured Wildlife”** A presentation by Robin Recassina of the Sawgrass Nature Center and Wildlife Hospital in Coral Springs. Robin will bring four animals under her care, and will speak and answer questions about what to do if you find injured wildlife.

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).

# Broward Sierra News



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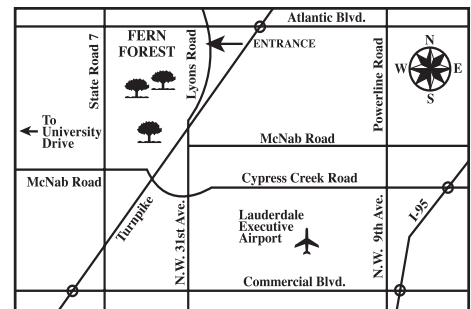
We hope you enjoy our newsletter. Why not join us right now? Come along on an outing. Get involved, learn about local environmental issues and how they affect you and your community. Just go to our website at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/broward>, and click on the “Become a member” link.

**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.**

### 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.





**SIERRA CLUB**  
FOUNDED 1892

**The Broward Sierra Club Leaders**

In the Sierra Club Broward Group's annual mail-in election, Barbara Curtis, Max Goldstein, and Judy Kuchta were reelected to ExCom for 2-year terms

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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 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> or <membership.services@sierraclub.org>

**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.

**IMPORTANT!** We probably do not have your email address. We need you to send your email address to philip@busey.org and please say if you **DO** or **DO NOT** want to start receiving your Broward Sierra newsletter via email at this time.

Sierra Club Broward Group may change to an all-electronic newsletter which is healthier for the environment and healthier financially. The portion of your membership dues that goes to the local Broward Group is not sufficient to pay for postage and production of a paper newsletter, and any money we save by going electronic is money that can be used to help the environment.

If we change to an all-electronic newsletter, it may have to be done for financial reasons and on short notice. So that we do not lose one another, make sure we have your email address, which we will add to the national Sierra Club database.

**FEDERAL ENVIRONMENTAL AGENCIES**

– by by Phil Busey, Broward Sierra Chair

If the only federal environmental agency you can name is the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), it's understandable, but just a beginning. In the vastness of the U.S. federal government there are numerous environmental sections scattered in departments, agencies, and administrations, with herds of acronyms.

The second of President Washington's four cabinet departments created in 1789, the US Department of War, now the Department of Defense (DOD), has numerous environmental offices, exchanges, and centers. The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE, often known as "the Corps") protects wetlands, coastal areas, and U.S. navigable waters. USACE is the world's largest engineering and construction management agency and is involved with site cleanup, education, environmental restoration, and support for EPA's Superfund program.

USACE issues permits for dredging and fill materials and is vital in its role in Everglades Restoration. USACE is repairing some of the damage it caused by channelizing the Kissimmee River in the 1960s. The Kissimmee was straightened and shortened as the C-38 canal, which dried up waterfowl habitat and introduced pollution to Lake Okeechobee. Part of the expanded environmental authority of the USACE comes from the Federal Water Pollution Control Act of 1972, the Clean Water Act, first vetoed by President Nixon but overridden by Congress.

In 1916, long before the EPA, the National Park Service (NPS) was created to manage national parks, monuments, and other properties. Yellowstone became the first national park in 1890. National park expansion was supported by progressive interests such as Republicans in Congress and big business, with prodding from President Teddy Roosevelt. Much of Roosevelt's conviction of the need for more federal control

and management of Yosemite Valley was obtained on a back country camping trip with John Muir, founder of the Sierra Club.

The NPS is in the Department of Interior (DOI), formed by the Whigs in Congress, in 1849, and which dealt initially with Indian Affairs. Currently the DOI manages about one fifth of the surface area of the United States and is involved in mining and geological survey. Everglades National Park, established in 1947; Biscayne National Park, 1968, and Big Cypress National Preserve, 1974, are administered by the NPS. U.S. national parks have been the model of national parks for many countries throughout the world.

Within the DOI is the Bureau of Ocean Energy Management, Regulation and Enforcement, formerly known as the Minerals Management Service (MMS), which had been criticized for employees taking drugs and having sex with energy company representatives who they were supposed to be regulating. After the Deepwater Horizon oil spill, Secretary of Interior Ken Salazar finally restructured the agency.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, also in the DOI, has wide ranging programs of scientific research on wildlife, habitats, wind energy; and is the main federal agency responsible for protection and recovery of threatened and endangered species of plants and animals.


Chosen as Secretary of the Interior in 1980 by President Elect Reagan, James G. Watt relaxed environmental regulations and was described by the Natural Resources Defense Council as one of the two most "intensely controversial and blatantly anti-environmental political appointees" in American history. In 1995, Watt was indicted on 25 counts of felony perjury and obstruction of justice due to false




*continued on page 4*

# Local Sierra Club Outings & Events


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



**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.** FULL. Leader: Barbara Curtis 954-946-7359 <legalbarb2@yahoo.com>

**FEB. 12, SAT. BIKING IN RIVERBEND PARK IN JUPITER.** Leader: Ron Haines 561 315-0528 <ronaldhaines@bellsouth.net>




**FEB. 13, SUN. SWAMPWALK AND HIKE IN THE BIG CYPRESS NATIONAL PRESERVE ADDITION LANDS.** We'll hike and slog about 5 - 6 miles through the 'California Slough' and mixed terrain. Depending on how much rainfall we've had, expect to get your feet wet at a minimum. But you'll also have lots of fun learning about and experiencing a true wilderness area in Broward's backyard. Rated moderate difficulty. *No charge, but a donation is appreciated.* Leader: Matt Schwartz <matthew3222@yahoo.com> 954-634-7173 (Email is best).



**FEB. 18, FRI. LOXAHATCHEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE MOONLIGHT PADDLE.** Leader: Sabrina Carle 561-732-4486 <SabrinaCarle@ymail.com>



**FEB. 19 - 21, SAT. - MON. FLAMINGO EVERGLADES NATIONAL PARK CAMP AND CANOE NINE MILE POND.** Leader: Kaatje Bernabei 305-223-6551 <kaatjebnabei@bellsouth.net>




**FEB. 27, SUN. THREE HOUR BEAUTIFICATION PARTY AT FERN FOREST.** A great Community Service project to keep Fern Forest Nature Center at 201 Lyons Rd., Coconut Creek as pristine and 'native' as possible. We'll meet in the nature center downstairs at 9:00am and you'll be out by lunchtime. 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 us. No experience or tools needed. Bring water, sunscreen and substantial footwear and clothing, for working outdoors in the brush. Contact Jackie Fisher at 954-434-2855 or <jsf812@bellsouth.net>




**MAR. 5, SAT. OCEAN TO LAKE TRAIL DAY HIKE.** Leader: Donna Brown 561-317-8288 <BuyFLhomes@gmail.com>


**MAR. 6, SUN. URBAN BICYCLING IN BOCA RATON.** Leader: Ron Haines 561 315-0528 <ronaldhaines@bellsouth.net>




**MAR. 12, SAT. WATER MATTERS DAY AT TREE TOPS PARK IN DAVIE.** Although not a Sierra event, we will have a Sierra Club booth. So stop by and see us while learning about Florida-friendly landscaping principles as a means of using water more efficiently in our landscapes. There will also be other exhibits, workshops, children's activities and entertainment. For more information go to <http://tinyurl.com/watermattersday>.



**MAR. 19, SAT. FULL MOON BIKE RIDE FUNDRAISER AT SHARK VALLEY.** If you've never experienced this 15 mile ride you are in for an exhilarating experience. Learn about Everglades ecology as well as the benefits of the elevated sections of the Tamiami Trail. Sierra Club has been working hard for years to see this Everglades restoration project come to fruition! You MUST have a bike with a front and rear light (in case the moonlight is obstructed by clouds). Helmets are strongly recommended. Wear clothing that is appropriate for the season. We'll have healthy and hearty snacks at the lookout tower. Rated moderate to difficult. Limit 15, no one under 16. Yes, you will see alligators and other wildlife. Meet at the park entrance at 4:30pm. Directions will be provided. *Cost \$15.00.* Leader Judy Kuchta 305-308-8913 <judykuchta@yahoo.com>; Assistant TBA.



**MAR. 20, SUN. SWAMPWALK AND HIKE IN THE SELDOM EXPLORED ADDITION LANDS SOUTH OF I-75.** This is an area of marshes, sable palm hammocks and of course cypress. Learn the difference between the various ecologies in one of the most pristine areas remaining in all of south Florida. As in the February hike, water conditions will depend on rainfall - but definitely expect to get wet on this one. About 5 - 6 miles. Rated moderate difficulty. *No charge, but a donation is appreciated.* Leader: Matt Schwartz <matthew3222@yahoo.com> 954-634-7173 (Email is best).



**MARCH. 26, SAT. WILD EDIBLE & MEDICINAL PLANT WALK.** Join us for a naturalist guided walk at the Fern Forest Nature Center to learn what you CAN and CAN'T eat in the wild. The walk is less than 2 miles and approximately 1 hour long. Rated easy. \$4 members, \$5 non-members. Leader: Jackie Fisher 954-434-2855 <jsf812@bellsouth.net>

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

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

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

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

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



*Sierrans enjoy a slog through the Big Cypress Addition Lands during a couple of Matt's previous Swampwalks*

*Jackie & Max stalk the invasive Air Potato during January's Fern Forest Beautification Party*

*Federal Environmental Agencies, continued from page 2*

statements involving influence peddling. As a forerunner of today's vitriolic political speech, Secretary Watt told a cattlemen's association, "If the troubles from environmentalists cannot be solved in the jury box or at the ballot box, perhaps the cartridge box should be used."

Also in the DOI, the United States Geological Survey (USGS) has been involved in scientific survey of both rocks and wildlife. We may think of the agency first for its topographic quadrangle maps long used by hikers and canoers, but their far ranging activities have included the National Wildlife Health Center and the National Biological Survey. One of the most famous directors of the USGS was John Wesley Powell, an explorer who led an 1869 river trip down the Green and Colorado rivers, the first passage of the Grand Canyon by European Americans.

The United States Department of Energy (DOE), formed in 1977 under President Jimmy Carter, includes many offices devoted to nuclear energy, but it also has programs on energy efficiency and renewable energy. The Nuclear Regulatory Commission, formerly the Atomic Energy Commission, is in the DOE.

The Department of Commerce includes both the National Institute of Standards and Technology, formerly the National Bureau of Standards, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) which includes the National Weather Service (NWS). The research network within DOC includes the Climate Program Office and the department has hosted the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change.

The US Department of Agriculture (USDA) has programs on soil erosion and climate change and some of these functions are housed in the Natural Resources Conservation Service, formerly the Soil Conservation Service formed in 1935. The 193 million acres of the U.S. national forests are managed by the USDA Forest Service, founded in 1905 to provide water quality and timber under the "many uses" philosophy. The USDA Invasive Plant Research Laboratory is located in Davie, Broward County, and its scientists are carefully introducing insects and other natural enemies of some of the worst invasive exotic plants such as the Melaleuca.

The National Science Foundation (NSF) is the lead funding agency for much cooperative research with universities. NSF is the main sponsor of the National Center for Atmospheric Research (NCAR) with a mission to develop large-scale research facilities to deal with global problems of the atmosphere.

Buried deep within almost every U.S. federal department are additional environmental functions. For example, within the U.S. Department of Transportation are programs such as Operation Wildflower, Historic Preservation, and the Recreational Trails Program. Within the Department of State is the Bureau of Oceans and International

Environmental and Scientific Affairs, responsible for marine conservation and international ocean laws. Within the Department of Justice is the Environment and Natural Resources Division (ENRD) which enforces federal civil and criminal environmental laws such as pollution abatement. Within the US Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are agriculture specialists moved from the USDA Animal and Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS), after the terrorist attacks of 9/11/2001. There are concerns that borders of the U.S. may be more vulnerable to bio-invaders due to administrative fractionation.

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) was proposed by and created in 1970 under President Nixon and is not a cabinet department but is normally given cabinet rank. Its Administrator is Lisa P. Jackson. The EPA implements national environmental laws dating back to the 1940s such as the 1947 Federal Insecticide, Fungicide, and Rodenticide Act (FIFRA), regulating all pesticides sold in the U.S., and other laws for safe water and safe air, fuel economy, and, most controversially, greenhouse gas emissions.

An issue throughout the federal bureaucracy has been that scientists have been muzzled by political appointees. The Union of Concerned Scientists has described "suppression and distortion of the scientific findings underlying [Federal] decisions--to the detriment of both science and the health of our nation" and shows the EPA as an agency under siege from political pressures. In December, 2010, the Obama administration issued a long awaited Scientific Integrity Directive that is consistent with UCS recommendations. UCS evaluates alleged interference of science for political purposes based on the rating system, "Mountain, foothill, or molehill?" and the main "Mountain" within the Obama administration has been with the Minerals Management Service for its inadequate offshore drilling plan.

The federal government of the United States has a comprehensive group of environmental agencies, representative of a mature and responsible government. There have been rocky periods in US environmental policy, fractionation, reorganization, and political manipulation, and the system needs constant review and inspection, and the public needs more education on the role of federal environmental agencies. There have been constant budget battles affecting federal environmental agencies, sometimes in an atmosphere that seems to punish agencies for doing their jobs. Although many businesses thrive in a climate of environmental regulation, others complain that they want more access to federal lands, weaker standards, and less regulation. Federal environmental agencies have become more transparent and accessible due in part to internet access. In 1994 the Clinton-Gore administration started the first White House web site and now all federal environmental agencies are published on the web. [Editor's note: Links to many of the departments and agencies can be found at <http://www.carep.com/fedagency.htm>.]