



Broward Sierra News

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SIERRA CLUB PICNIC

– By Ina Oost Topper, Broward Sierra Excom Chair

One of our most fun get-togethers is our yearly Sierra Club picnic at the John U. Lloyd Beach Park in Dania Beach. And we had a great turn-out this year.

A good part of our yearly picnic fun is bringing great food, pot-luck style. Many of us take pride in bringing unusual and exotic dishes. While we're not advocating that we should all become vegetarians overnight, we do promote the fact that great vegetarian/vegan fare is not only very healthy, but it also aids the future well-being of our planet.

It's always nice to get to know each other in an informal setting, and make new Sierra friends. It's also a good time to tell everyone what we're doing, not just as National Sierra Club members, but in our own Broward backyard, regarding the local issues we embrace. To this end, the Excommers took a few minutes to fill everybody in on some current issues we're working on. (Such as the upcoming legalized Black Bear hunt! We're going full speed ahead on fighting this battle - see more info about this in Sue's article on the next page.)

We were also treated to a wonderful presentation by M.E. La Palma, also known as "The Butterfly Lady." (She even came dressed in a colorful flowing robe, completely adorned with butterflies!) Our last-minute request for her to speak at the picnic AND her instant, positive response was very much appreciated. Recently much is being written about the universally loved Monarch butterfly, joining the lengthening list of endangered/threatened species! A major culprit of its increasing demise unfortunately seems to be the constant anti-mosquito spraying throughout South Florida. Hopefully our new awareness pertaining to the Monarchs will bring about research to enable ever more harmonious coexistence of ALL species.

Thank you all for coming, and see you again at our next Fern Forest general meeting on September 3rd.

FISH AND WILDLIFE COMMISSION MEETING

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission is having their next meeting on September 2 & 3 in Ft. Lauderdale at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Marina located at 1881 SE 17 Street. The meeting will start at 8:30 on both days and is open to the public.

The first day will cover several important topics that effect us in South Florida. Of major concern will be the discussion on panther habitat. Staff will seek guidance on a draft position statement addressing the Florida panther recovery, management and strategic priorities. This will be followed by the status of the Black Bear harvesting efforts.

These and many other wildlife topics will be discussed. The full agenda can be seen at <http://tinyurl.com/CommissionAgenda>.

This is the meeting where we need to rally, protest and show our displeasure. We need as many Sierrans to attend as possible.



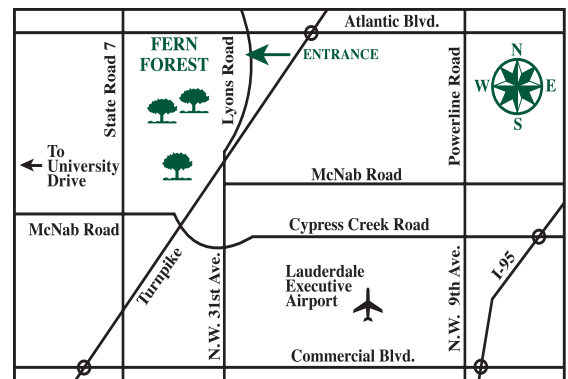
Broward Sierra Club's General Meetings - Each month we have an educational program on conservation or environmental issues.

DIRECTIONS: The Fern Forest Nature Center, 201 Lyons Road South, Coconut Creek is just south of Atlantic Blvd. on the west side of the street. (From the south, NW 31 Ave. becomes NW 46 Ave., and then Lyons Rd. as you pass under the turnpike.) Committee reports begin at 7:30, and the program begins at 8:00. The meeting is open to the public at no charge.



Thursday, Sept 3rd: Our guest speaker will be **Dr. Rena Borkhataria** of the University of Florida Everglades Research and Education Center. Dr. Borkhataria will be talking about the **UF Conservation Scholars Program**, funded by the Doris Duke Foundation, geared to training the next generation of conservation scientists and managers.

Thursday, Oct. 1st: Our guest speaker will be **John Pipoly**, PhD, Master Gardener, Broward County Extension services, who will be talking about the **value of urban forests in mitigating factors contributing to climate change.**



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

Local Sierra Club Outings & Events

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

For more details, see our website at www.sierraclub.org/florida/broward/outings-events



OCT. 10, SAT. FALL WINE TASTING FUNDRAISER. 7:00pm at Total Wines at The Fountains, 801 S University Drive, Plantation. "A Taste of Elegance ... Your Passport to Europe." As well as sampling interesting wines, there will be tasty appetizers to satisfy everyone's palate. *\$20 per person.* Come join us for a fun night out and a good cause! Please RSVP by October 3rd to Sue Caruso 954-684-6747 susan.caruso@att.net.



OCT. 17, SAT. FAKAHATCHEE STRAND PRESERVE STATE PARK SWAMP WALK. Copeland, FL. Join us for a guided swamp walk with Mike Owen. Learn what type of habitat is required to grow more native orchid species in a wilderness setting (including the famous ghost orchid), than anywhere else in the U.S. We'll assist Mike in documenting the status of the strand. Rated moderate, due to uneven footing, mostly under water. (A minimum of 10 people are required, with a maximum of 15.) *Donation of \$25 for Friends of Fakahatchee, and recommended donation for Sierra of \$5 members / \$10 non-members.* For more information contact Outing Leader Jackie Fisher 954-434-2855 jf812@bellsouth.net.



OCT. 17, SAT. PADDLE TO AND EXPLORE FULLERTON ISLAND IN JUPITER at the mouth of the Loxahatchee River. Palm Beach County has restored and opened Fullerton Island to the public. Unique wetland and upland habitats for fish, birds, and wildlife. Carolyn Beisner from Palm Beach County ERM will be our guide and interpreter. We'll launch from the Jupiter Outdoor Center, www.jupiteroutdoorcenter.com/. Bring your own kayak/canoe/paddleboard or kayak rentals are \$35/person and paddleboards are \$40/person. Contact the Jupiter Outdoor Center directly to reserve your rental. Limit 20. Rated moderate. *\$3 members, \$5 non-members suggested donation.* For more information contact Outing Leader Chas Hunt 561-315-0677 loxoutings@gmail.com.



OCT. 24-25, SAT - SUN. CAMPGROUND CAMPING AND KAYAKING/CANOEOING ON FISHEATING CREEK. See our website for details. For more information contact Outing Leader Chas Hunt 561-315-0677 loxoutings@gmail.com, Kaatje Bernabei 305-223-6551 kaatjebnabei@bellsouth.net, or Max Goldstein 954-296-3411 maxgold@yahoo.com.

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BLACK BEAR HUNT UPDATE & PROTEST - IS FLORIDA FWC FOLLOWING THEIR OWN POLICY?

– By Sue Carusor, Broward Sierra Excom Secretary

We all have, at some time in our lives, been impressed by images of bears that have warmed us, made us laugh or given us a safety lesson on forest fires. It is, therefore, especially troubling when these creatures are threatened by the very agency entrusted with protecting them. As Ina Oost Topper reported last month, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission decided, against overwhelming public opposition, to initiate a black bear hunt this October.

According to WCGU News, Nick Wiley, Director of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission was quoted as saying, "reviving the hunt is a way to manage the bear population rather than a response to recent bear attacks and escalating human-bear conflicts."

However, that does not ring true in light of the FWC's Bear Management Plan approved June 27, 2012. The three goals of the plan are:

1. Maintain a sustainable statewide bear population. The population target is one subpopulation of at least 1,000 and the other 6 subpopulations to be maintained at a minimum of 200. Increasing genetic exchange between subpopulations is also an important target.

Contradiction: Three of the seven subpopulations are under 200. In addition, the site says this about the Big Bend BMU: the best bear habitat in the Big Bend suggests this area could support 475 – 590 bears. It currently supports < 100 bears (actually less than 20, according another graph on their site).

So, what is the FWC doing to remedy this situation? The site suggests several strategies, such as removing females and dependent cubs from over populated areas to under populated areas. Has this been done? If the minimum number of bears, according to the plan is 2,200, how have they determined that 3,000 is too many? If it is not the fear of human-bear interactions, as Wiley stated, then what is it based on? What science is being used? Most compelling is the fact that the actual numbers for two BMUs where hunting will occur, won't be finalized until 2016!

2. Maintain habitat in sufficient quantity, quality and connectivity.

Contradiction: The site states "The loss of habitat and disconnections between large habitat patches caused by development and roads make occupying the high quality but unoccupied bear habitat, such as the Big Bend region, more difficult for bears. Increasing human development, including highways, reduces the ability of bears to travel between, or even find, isolated habitats."

What is being done to alleviate this problem? Are any wildlife corridors being planned? Are bear population attrition due to automobile-related deaths being accounted for?

3. Reduce human-bear conflicts:

Contradiction: Success of this plan is measured in two ways:

*reduce the number of bear-related complaints to FWC to 151 below the average number of complaints received annually between 2008 and 2010 152 levels (1,949)

* have at least 75% of the people who contact FWC comply with their conflict resolution advice

Have strategies to accomplish this been implemented or either goal reached?

So the big question is: How did the FWC jump from its own Management Plan to hunting as a source of conservation before completing these goals? We must make the Florida FWC responsible for doing the job they set out to in their own management plan BEFORE taking such a drastic step to cull at least 10% of the black bear population, without complete scientific data or satisfactory explanation as to need for this action.

To add insult to injury, of the 1,340 hunting licenses sold so far, state wildlife commissioner Liesa Priddy, an Immokalee rancher who voted with the majority of her colleagues to approve the hunt, was among them. This seems like a case of the fox guarding the henhouse!

What you can do: Join us at the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission meeting on September 2 at the Hilton Fort Lauderdale Marina located at 1881 SE 17 Street. Your presence will show the commissioners that public outrage is not going away.