

Legislative Platform

Sierra Club Florida

2017-2018

CLEAN ENERGY

Prioritize transitioning from fossil fuels to renewable, clean, and efficient energy to mitigate the impacts of climate change and sea level rise.

Promote supply-side and demand-side efficiencies and introduce competition. Facilitate distributed generation.

Eliminate the emission of CO_2 and methane as much as possible and require the social cost of carbon to be included in energy policy decisions.

Decouple power company profits from sales; incentivize service, reduced emissions and better water use; and define future investment in fossil fuel infrastructure as imprudent.

Support a ban on hydraulic fracturing, acid fracturing, and acid matrix stimulation for natural gas and oil in Florida and **oppose** new extraction of fossil fuels in the state.

MASS TRANSIT AND ELECTRIC VEHICLES

Promote mass transit, associated infrastructure, and alternatives to automobile use such as walkable communities and safe lane barriers for bicycles.

Co-locate mass transit in existing transportation corridors to serve transit-oriented development and foster urban density.

Expand tax incentives and rebates for electric vehicles, improve local government parking policies, and ensure EV owners can responsibly install and use charging equipment, HOA and condo rules notwithstanding.

WASTE MINIMIZATION / RECYCLING

Real recycling saves energy and conserves natural resources. Foster robust recycling and recovered material markets, ban landfilling of biodegradables and use them for soil composting or anaerobic digestion for natural gas. Require manufacturer take back programs for non-recyclable items.

Regulate littering, including disposal of cigarette waste on Florida's beaches and allow localities to impose bottle deposits and bans or fees on single use plastic bags and polystyrene containers.

Stop counting the incineration of municipal solid waste as renewable energy.

GROWTH MANAGEMENT

Identify "significant state resources" and establish policies to protect them. When practicable, use Florida Forever funds to acquire them in fee simple or perpetual conservation easements.

Promote development that is environmentally and fiscally sustainable by encouraging urban infill and redevelopment to take advantage of existing infrastructure, services, and facilities.

Discourage development that ties residents to an automobile-dependent lifestyle and expensive upgrades for energy efficiency, wastewater and stormwater management, and inconvenient and distant shopping and employment locations.

Monitor all Consumptive Use Permit water use, promote water conservation, adhere to "local sources first", and reserve sufficient water for natural systems and ecosystems. Establish Minimum Flows and Minimum Levels for all surface watercourses and for the groundwater supplying springs, rivers, lakes, and streams as required by statute.

Oppose state preemption of local growth and land use rules or ordinances more restrictive than state provisions.

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WILDLIFE CORRIDORS AND HABITAT PROTECTION

Acquire (in fee simple or by perpetual conservation easement), restore, conserve, and buffer wildlife habitat and corridors (to protect habitat for bears, panthers, manatees, and other species at risk).

Coordinate Florida Forever and Florida Trail acquisitions to augment wildlife habitat in conjunction with the conservation of natural resources and preservation of lands providing aquifer recharge.

Minimize negative impacts on habitat: sprawl, new or expanded transportation corridors and interchanges, off road vehicles, and utility generation and transmission facilities.

WETLANDS AND EVERGLADES PROTECTION

Protect wetlands with strict permitting standards and enforcement.

Fully fund Everglades restoration, including acquisition of additional land in the Everglades Agricultural Area and an additional 5.5 miles of bridging for Tamiami Trail.

Increase the freshwater table height in southeast coastal Everglades; stop diverting freshwater to Turkey Point cooling canals, and deliver more freshwater to Florida Bay.

Oppose near-shore or offshore drilling for oil/gas or any expansion of oil/gas activities in the Everglades, Big Cypress, or elsewhere in the greater Everglades watershed.

WATER QUALITY PROTECTION

Control point and non-point source nutrient pollution from fertilizers, manure, stormwater, wastewater treatment facilities, and onsite sewage treatment and disposal systems (septic tanks) at the source. Set clear numerical standards and enforce them.

Mandate best management practices (BMPs), evaluate them for efficacy, upgrade them when necessary, and enforce them.

Oppose preemption of local control of fertilizer management and Support a ban on phosphorous in lawn fertilizer.

DEMOCRACY AND THE ENVIRONMENT

Spend Land and Water amendment trust funds (1/3 of documentary stamp revenues) to acquire, improve, restore and manage Florida conservation and recreation lands.

Oppose voter suppression and guarantee unfettered citizen access to voter registration and the polls.

Ensure reasonable public notice, access, and ability to participate in agency and district hearings, meetings, and proceedings.

Guarantee a level procedural and legal playing field.

Adequately fund agencies' environmental missions and protect staff from undue political influence. Oppose environmental trust fund sweeps and the inappropriate surplussing of conservation lands.

Sierra Club Florida, a chapter of the national Sierra Club, is made up of volunteer leaders and civic activists representing over 100,000 members and supporters from all over the state. Our mission is to enjoy, explore and protect Florida's natural places, to understand and teach others about the fragile environment in which we live, and to practice and promote the responsible use of our ecosystems and resources at the local, state, and national level. The Chapter's strength comes from the efforts of local, grass roots volunteers in the 16 Sierra Club Groups serving communities across the state. For more information, visit www.sierraclub.org/florida.

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