



Manatee-Sarasota Group Boca Sierra



Not blind opposition to progress, but opposition to blind progress

Oct. 2015

Tortoises and Bears Oh My! What They Mean to the Health of Our Environment!

What: Manatee-Sarasota Group Meeting
When: Thursday, October 8, 7 p.m.
Where: Sarasota Garden Club, 1131 Blvd. of the Arts

Join us for a fascinating program, October 8, at our monthly meeting. We are fortunate to have Julie Morris, the Florida and Gulf programs manager for the National Wildlife Refuge Association. She has a wealth of education and experience, with 18 years working with federal, state, and county agencies to develop conservation plans for protected wildlife species, identify conservation lands and protection strategies, and develop land designs and management policies. Her knowledge and experience will give us insight to our current concerns about the use of our parks and supposedly protected lands.

Her recent work as project manager on a Gopher Tortoise Payment Ecosystem Services Program for the Florida Fish and Wildlife



Black bear, courtesy of Sierra Club



Gopher tortoise, courtesy of Wikipedia

Conservation Commission is significant for insight into the importance of this species.

I look forward to this interesting presentation! Bring a snack to share and join us for social time following the program.

-Gerry Swarmstedt

Sierra Club and Allies File for an Injunction to Restore Amendment 1

The Sierra Club, the Florida Wildlife Federation, St. Johns Riverkeeper and the Environmental Confederation of Southwest Florida represented by Earthjustice filed suit today asking the courts to force the Florida Legislature to return Amendment 1 funds to a conservation land buying fund.

“We are asking for Florida’s courts to uphold the constitution as amended by the voters,” said Sierra Club Florida Conservation Chair Tom Larson. “The legislature needs to be held accountable for ignoring the will of the people.”

The funds from documentary stamps on land transactions, which are expected to reach \$740 million next year, were diverted by the Legislature to accounts that had nothing to do with land acquisition. Among other things, they were used to pay state executive salaries, ag-

Nominations Needed for Executive Committee

Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Club invites people to nominate themselves or others to serve on the group’s executive committee. The committee meets monthly to plan events and discuss responses to regional environmental issues. Please send nominations to Peggy Dessaint, chair of the nominating committee.

[\(dessaintap@verizon.net\)](mailto:dessaintap@verizon.net)

gricultural pollution subsidies and insurance premiums.

According to the suit: “The Legislature owes the people of the State of Florida a duty to honor and effectuate

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Sarasota Conservation Committee

Tuesday, October 6, 6:30–8 p.m. Please join us at the Florida House, 4454 Beneva Road (1/10 mi. north of Proctor), to discuss Sarasota’s environmental issues. Contact Andre Mele at 914-204-0030 or andy mele@mac.com

Manatee Conservation Committee

Tuesday, October 13, 1:30–3:30 p.m. Meet with us at the Bradenton Central Library, 1301 Barcarrota Blvd and help contribute to sound environmental policy in Manatee County. Updates on Harbor Sound and Long Bar Point. Join us and/or contact Sandra Ripberger at 941-794-3878 or sandr arip@yahoo.com

Check Out Our Recently Revived Facebook Page!

Get the latest information on our groups meetings, outings, other conservation/protection activities, and action alerts. See regularly updated newspaper, magazine, web articles, videos on environmental issues of all kinds--focused on Florida, but around the world too. You’ll also find stories and photos about enjoying Florida’s natural environment. If you “like” the page, you will get a notice on your Facebook page of new posts. But you do not have to be a member of Facebook to view our page as the posts are all public. So check it out and please do “friend” us. The web address is below:

<https://www.facebook.com/pages/Manatee-Sarasota-Sierra-Club/186754528016133>

You should also be able to go to the main Facebook page, and type Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Club after the search bar.

Newsletter Mailout Help Needed

We need volunteers to help prepare the Boca for mailing. It’s Thursday, October 22nd at 6 p.m. For details, contact Gerry Swormstedt at 366-9596 (gswormstedt204@comcast.net)

Native Plant Sale

When: Saturday, Oct 3, 9 a.m. to 3 p.m.
Where: Sweet Bay Nursery, 10824 Eric Road, Parrish. I-75 to exit 224, east on 301 two miles to Erie Road.

2016 Sierra Club Calendars

Due to the availability of calendars online, we have decided to discontinue selling them to our group members this year. If you would like to purchase the 2016 wall calendars or engagement calendars--you may do so on the national website. Your purchase will still benefit the club financially. If you just cannot manage to purchase them online, please feel free to contact me and I will attempt to help you out. John Myers: 941-961-7095. Address of the national website page to buy calendars: <http://action.sierraclub.org/site/PageNavigator/Sierra-Club-Store.html>

This will take you to the Club Store page, then in the upper left hand corner click on the Wall & Engagement Calendars image, that will take you to the ordering page. We’re sure you will still enjoy and find them useful.

Join Sierra Club’s New Meetup Group!

Become a member and receive information on all meetings, outings, and actions etc.

Check it out by visiting

<http://www.meetup.com/Manatee-Sarasota-Sierra-Club-Group>

2015 Executive Committee

Group Chair: Linda T. Jones, 941-358-3249, lindyleetheis@comcast.net

Vice Chair/Treasurer: Bob Fellman, 973-689-5556, rtf082446@hotmail.com

Secretary: Cathy Page, 941-795-8973, cnpage@tampabay.rr.com

Conservation Chairs

Sarasota County: Andre Mele, 914-204-0030, andy mele@mac.com

Manatee County: Sandra Ripberger, 941-794-3878, sandr arip@yahoo.com

Fundraising: Open

Inner City Outings: Sarah Mitchell, 941-721-7132, mitchell8manatee@yahoo.com

Membership: Mary Sheppard, 941-752-3200, mecomary@aol.com

Newsletter Editor: Jessica Benoit, benwasp@hotmail.com

Outings: Don Kirkley, 941-493-3085, donkirk@gte.net

Program: Gerry Swormstedt, 941-366-9596, gswormstedt204@comcast.net

Publications/Tabling: John Myers, 941-961-7095, sagejohnm49@gmail.com

Publicity: Gerlinde Kohl, 941-474-4712, fgkohl@verizon.net

Group Communications

Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Group Website (Note new web address)

<https://sierraclub.org/florida/manatee-sarasota>

Sierra Club Office:

Mailing address: P.O. Box 3485, Sarasota FL 34236-3485

Web Admin: Barry Zack barryzed@gmail.com

Boca Design and Production: Barry Zack, barryzed@gmail.com

Mailout: Lynn Nilssen, lynnsierra@nilssen.us

Executive Committee meetings are held once a month. For details about date and time, contact Linda T. Jones, Chair.

Boca Sierra Vol. XLIII Issue 10

This newsletter is published monthly by the Manatee-Sarasota Group of the Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club. The intent is to inform members and interested individuals of local activities and national environmental issues. Members of the Sierra Club subscribe to Boca Sierra through their annual dues. Non-member subscriptions are available for \$6 annually.



Suggested outings contribution \$5

Kayak the Alafia River

Sunday, October 18, 9 a.m. Meet up and 9:30 a.m. launch. This is one of the more scenic rivers in this area and for much of the trip there will be no signs of civilization. This is unspoiled Florida at its best! The trip will take about 5 hours, including a lunch break, and is mostly all downstream. You need to have solid, basic paddling skills due to the possibility of high and/or fast water, fallen trees or other debris to negotiate with mini-rapids. It's a challenging paddle at times but worth it for the natural beauty of Florida that you'll encounter. Bring a kayak or canoe and

required gear, water, lunch and money to pay the outfitter to return us to our cars. You must reserve with Mike Lehner at 941-365-1073 or email at mklehn@hotmail.com

Myakka Island Trail Section 1

Saturday, October 24. The Myakka Island Trail extends 18 miles across Myakka River State Park and the Carlton

Preserve. Over the next five to six months we will hike sections, adding in other trails to make a loop. Each hike will vary in length. On the first morning walk we will cover 8 to 10 miles. Need usual day hike gear and be comfortable hiking. (Reserve with Bill Lewis at 941-355-2156 to receive the launch spot.)

Outings Leaders Needed

Be an active club member and have fun at the same time – become an outings leader. Contact Outings Chair Don Kirkley at 941-493-3085 for details.

Wanted: Newsletter Design and Production Manager and Webmaster

After exemplary service to the Manatee-Sarasota Group, Barry Zack, our newsletter design and production manager who is also our webmaster, is retiring from these positions starting December 2015. We owe an enormous debt of gratitude to Barry for the diligent effort sustained by him over his tenure. Accordingly, the M-S Group seeks a volunteer newsletter design and production manager and a webmaster.

The production manager works with our newsletter editor and with the Executive Committee of the M-S Group to provide public access to information concern-

ing the activities and interests of the Group. This is done through our monthly newsletter, the Boca Sierra. We currently use a desktop publishing system called InDesign; other publishing systems may be considered. 6-8 hours per month effort required.

We also seek a volunteer webmaster, who will manage our website (updates and revisions). 2-4 hours per month required. Barry will train his replacements to accustom them to their new volunteer positions.

Interested? Email Bob (RTF082446@Hotmail.com) or Linda (lindyletheis@comcast.net).

A Letter to the Editor

Response to Paul Caragiulo: Hunting on Conservation Land (Herald Tribune, Sept 2, 2015)

Paul Caragiulo's opinion piece defending his vote to endorse hunting on environmentally-sensitive lands is articulate and calmly rational. I especially appreciate his expressed desire to preserve more land. I hope he backs it up by re-funding the Environmentally-Sensitive Lands program. He omits one key detail, however, in his zeal to make his opponents seem hypocritical: the language enabling the Environmentally-Sensitive Lands program calls for recreational, aesthetic and *non-consumptive uses only* (emphasis mine).

Non-consumptive uses do not include hunting. State and Parks statute and regulations are very clear on that point. Killing an animal consumes it, and removes it from its place in the natural native landscapes the ESL program was established to preserve. A landscape without its animals is a Potemkin Village, in which all the props may be there but the functions are gone.

It is disingenuous of Mr. Caragiulo to cite Sierra Club policy, a last resort for distressed and overburdened ecosystems, when there is only one species that is experiencing overpopulation

in Sarasota County – feral hogs – but there is plenty of evidence for species extirpation, thanks in large part to the generosity of this Commission toward the development industry.

If the past offers a window to the future, the management plans we will see for these lands will be shams, prepared behind closed doors with special interests at the table and opposing voices shut out of the process. They will be justifications for an a priori conclusion.

I don't care whether Mr. Caragiulo takes his kill home to the freezer. It's disregard for the legal basis of ESLs that bothers me – and should bother all of us.

-Andy Mele, Sarasota Conservation Chair

Help Sierra Save Money!

Want to help save local Sierra dollars, ease the burden on volunteers, conserve trees, and receive the newsletter faster and in color? Just follow the steps below to be switched from the paper copy mailing list to the electronic mailing list.

1. Type or copy this address into your browser:
<http://lists.sierraclub.org/archives/FLORIDA-M-S-GROUP-NEWS.html>
2. On the next screen type your name and email in appropriate boxes.
3. Click on the Subscribe (Florida M-S Group News) button.

Manatee-Sarasota Group
 Sierra Club
 P.O. Box 3485
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**Sierra Club and Allies
 (continued from page 1)**

the intent of the voters in the use of the funds placed in trust under this constitutional amendment.”

The November 2014 ballot summary stated: “Funds the Land Acquisition Trust Fund to acquire, restore, improve, and manage conservation lands including wetlands and forests; fish and wildlife habitat; land protecting water resources and drinking water sources, including the Everglades, and the water quality of rivers, lakes and streams; beaches and shores; outdoor recreational lands; working farms and ranches; and historic or geologic sites, by dedicating 33 percent of net revenues from the existing excise tax on documents for 20 years.”

An extraordinary 75 percent of the electorate voted for Amendment 1 proving that the people of the state understand the need to protect the richness of Florida’s wild heritage and unique waters.

Source: <http://www.sierraclubfloridanews.org/>

**Sierra’s Executive Director,
 Michael Brune on Youtube**

In a PBS Newshour interview, he talked about building a clean energy economy. See it by clicking this link: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=41AhwvFwx-E>.

Yes! I want to be a member of the Sierra Club and help preserve the beauty of the earth. **FREE GIFT WITH MEMBERSHIP**

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Senior, Student or Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	\$35

Contributions, gifts, and 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 for your chapter newsletter.


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