

# Nassau Sierra News



**SIERRA  
CLUB**

FOUNDED 1892

**NASSAU SIERRA  
GROUP LEADERS**

**CHAIR/SECRETARY**

Julie Ferreira

**LEGISLATIVE CHAIR**

Lori Miller

**TREASURER**

John Baker

**CONSERVATION**

Faith Ross

**MEMBERSHIP**

Joyce Newlin

**FUNDRAISING**

Chris Occhuizzo

**NEWSLETTER**

Faith Ross

**MEDIA OUTREACH**

Jonna Wood

**OUTINGS**

Grier Newlin

**CONTACT US!**

**Facebook:**

Sierra Club Nassau  
County Group

**Email:**

newlin12@gmail.com

**Phone:**

(904)432-8633

**Nassau County Sierra Group**

## Say "NO" to Amendment ONE!



### A Message

from

*Julie  
Ferreira*

*Chairperson*

The good news is that the federal Solar Investment Tax Credit (ITC) was recently extended for six years by Congress. This investment tax credit encourages solar in our heavily subsidized nuclear and fossil fuel energy markets. The bad news is that Florida voters need to beware of the wording of Amendment 1 on the November ballot because it's an attempt by Florida's energy industries to mislead voters.

Amendment 1 has been packaged and bankrolled by the utilities. It is being marketed as a pro-solar amendment. However, in reality, it is the electric monopolies' response to a grassroots citizen initiative to open up Florida's solar industry by developing good solar policies that would carry Florida into the future.

"This amendment establishes a right under Florida's constitution for consumers to own or lease solar equipment installed on their property to generate electricity for their own use. State and local governments shall retain their abilities to protect consumer rights and public health, safety and welfare, and to ensure that consumers who do not choose to install solar and not required to subsidize the costs of backup power and electric grid access to those who do."

The above language for Amendment 1 was narrowly approved by the Florida Supreme Court by a one vote margin. It is cleverly worded. It sounds like by guaranteeing consumers "the right to own or lease solar equipment installed on their property to generate electricity for their own use" that it is very pro-solar. But wait, that a right that every Floridian already has.

The amendment would also ensure "that customers who do not choose to install solar are not required to subsidize the costs of backup power and electric grid access to those who do." Careful now. This misleading and seemingly innocuous language opens up the possibility that

energy monopolies could limit the creation of solar strategies in Florida by strangling the growth of residential rooftop PV systems.

It would be easy for the monopolies and the PSC to levy hefty billing fees onto solar customers, claiming the "subsidization" argument. Fortunately for the solar industry, the most recent report from the reputable Brookings Institute refutes this claim, it reports that solar is a net benefit to the grid.

The utility monopolies (FP>, Duke Electric, Gulf Power Company, etc.) fear that as the price of solar equipment and installation continues to drop, and as more solar power is generated, that they will no longer be in control. Hence they have spent a lot of money trying to ensure that they WILL be able to control the solar profits in the future.

Most independent solar analysts believe that if this amendment passes, it will help the utilities get rid of net metering in Florida and discourage the expansion of affordable solar power in the state. Net metering means utilities credit customers for the difference, or net, between consumption and generation. Net metering is the business plan that has been used in so many other states to make solar installations affordable.

"It is shameful that the utilities would go so far, and spend millions to manipulate and deceive their own customers," says Dr. Stephen Smith, Executive Director of Southern Alliance for Clean Energy. "We will absolutely continue to shine a light on their dirty tricks and hope that the voters of Florida will see their ballot initiative for what it is: a wolf in sheep's clothing, a sham designed to keep more money in the power companies' pockets."

The thing to remember here is that the power companies make money when you BUY electricity from them, not when you install your own solar panels and make your own power.

Amendment 1 leaves the Sunshine State dragging behind the rest of the country and in fact, the rest of the world. It also allows the utility monopolies and the Public Service Commission to control the decisions regarding Florida's solar future. So if you are skeptical of the utilities/ control over how we get our power, voting against this amendment will send a message that voters want new strategies and do not want to protect current policies by adding them to our state constitution.



**Monday, October 24 - Nov. 5<sup>th</sup> @ 7 am to 7 pm**  
**VOTE EARLY!** If you are unsure of your voting status or do not know where to cast your ballot, please visit the **Nassau County Supervisor of Elections' website** at

<http://www.votenassau.com/> .

You can also view, download, or print a **SAMPLE** Ballot from the above website. **Also Tuesday, November 8<sup>th</sup> @ 7am to 7 pm**  
**LAST CHANCE to VOTE!**

Check the Nassau County Supervisor of Elections' website at <http://www.votenassau.com> for a sample ballot.

**Saturday, November 12<sup>th</sup> – Okefenokee Sunset/Full Moon Paddle!** Join Nassau Sierra to watch the sun set and full moon rise over the haunting Okefenokee Swamp. We will watch the swamp settle in for the evening as birds and other daytime denizens wind down as the night creatures come to life. Paddle back by the light of the moon. Call early! Limit 20 people or 10 boats. **See the full page ad on Page 4 for lodging and other details.** \$45 includes the canoe rental and 4 hour tour. (No discounts for bringing your own canoe.) Email: [nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com](mailto:nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com) or call (770) 668-6161 to place your reservation and get directions.

**Thursday, November 17<sup>th</sup> –** Last chance to nominate a friend or acquaintance to the Executive Committee of our local Nassau Sierra Group! Contact Jeffrey Newlin at [jdnewlin@gmail.com](mailto:jdnewlin@gmail.com) or (904) 432-8633.

**Saturday, November 26<sup>th</sup> @ 6 pm at the Fernandina Public Library –** Movie Night! Nassau Sierra will show the documentary **“Oil & Water”** which immerses the viewer in the captivating and complex experiences of society and oil in one of the world's most biodiverse places on the planet, the Ecuadorian Amazon. This

fascinating film gives an intimate portrait of two young people finding their voices and trying to beat incredible odds. Their journeys lead them to explore what could be a more just future, not just for the people of the Amazon, but for all people around the world born with oil beneath their feet. Eight years in the making, this film is a shocking and “inspiring David and Goliath story”. Best for viewers 12 and above.

<http://www.oilandwaterdocumentary.com/about>

**Thursday, December 1<sup>st</sup> - Deadline to mail election ballots to Nassau Sierra Club members**

Watch your mailbox! Mail the ballot back before December 29<sup>th</sup>. Call John Baker at (202) 716-4802 if you have not received your ballot by December 5<sup>th</sup>.

**Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> @ 6 pm at the Fernandina Public Library- Executive Committee-Open Public Meeting**

All members are invited to participate in the decision making process of the group. Share your ideas, your talents, and your enthusiasm with others. Learn about the activities and special opportunities offered at a state and national levels to all members. Meet the candidates for election to the Executive Committee.

**Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup> @ 7:30 pm at the Fernandina Public Library- Movie Night!** **“Racing to Zero”** is a quick-moving, upbeat documentary presenting new solutions to the global problem of waste. By simply substituting the word “resource” for the word “garbage”, a culture can be transformed, and a new wealth of industries can emerge. Three years ago the mayor of San Francisco pledged to achieve zero waste by 2020. **Racing to Zero** tracks San Francisco’s waste stream diversion tactics and presents innovative new solutions to waste. This film documents a surprising, engaging and inspiring race to zero.  
<http://www.racingtozero.com/>

**Saturday, December 10<sup>th</sup> – Outing!** **Little Talbot Island -** Hike and photograph the trails and gorgeous beaches of Little Talbot Island. Email: [nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com](mailto:nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com) or call (770) 668-6161 to place your reservation and get directions.

**Thursday, December 29<sup>th</sup> –** Ballots closed and counted for Nassau Sierra Group Executive Committee elections. Contact Jeffrey Newlin at [jdnewlin@gmail.com](mailto:jdnewlin@gmail.com) or (904) 432-8633 for further information.



# SIERRA CLUB

FOUNDED 1892

## NASSAU SIERRA GROUP LEADERS

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## Nassau Sierra Group Holds Elections!

### -About Elections-

It's that time of year! The group must continue to respond to the needs of its members and the bylaws of the Sierra Club by polling the membership.

In December the Nassau Group will be electing four members to be part of a nine member Executive Committee for two year terms. To maintain continuity, five Executive Committee members will remain on the board. The following year the remaining five ExCom positions will be up for election.

### SUBMIT YOUR NAME!

If you, or another, has an interest in directing the activities of our local Sierra Club Group, please submit your name to become part of the Executive Committee. New ideas and new leadership efforts are always welcome! Join us!

Candidates who wish to be placed on the ballot should submit their names to Jeffrey D. Newlin, Chairman of the Nominating Committee, at his email address: [jdnewlin@gmail.com](mailto:jdnewlin@gmail.com) or call him at (904) 432-8633 prior to **November 17<sup>th</sup>, the deadline for candidate submissions.**

### Join Us!

Nassau Group Sierra Club  
Executive Committee

## Open Public Meeting

6 pm, Friday, December 9<sup>th</sup>

Fernandina Beach Library Community Room



### Watch Your Mail Box!

Ballots to be mailed by

**December 1<sup>st</sup>**

No ballot?

Call John Baker at (202) 716-4802

The deadline for submitting candidates for election to the Executive Committee of the Nassau Group shall be November 17, 2016. Ballots Statements shall be due no later than November 28. Ballots will be mailed no later than December 1 and the election will be closed and ballots counted on December 29. Voting results shall be published in the following newsletter and on social media. The change of officers shall occur at the next Nassau Group Sierra Club open public meeting.



**Outings are great fun!** Our Nassau Sierra Group would like to offer more outings to the public and our membership. As a result, we are always **looking for people to be outings leaders.** The Sierra Club offers training and certification, so that you are prepared to lead outings with confidence.

If you love the great outdoors and want to take others with you to enjoy it, contact us (Facebook: Sierra-Club-Nassau-County-Group) or even better, meet us at the Fernandina Public Library on December 9<sup>th</sup> at 6 pm for the Executive Meeting open public meeting.

## Okefenokee Sunset/Full Moon Paddle

**When: Saturday, November 12, 2016**

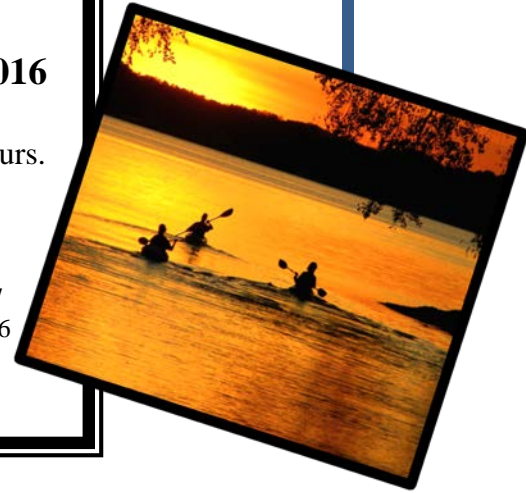
**Time: 3pm to 7:30 pm**

We will be paddling on the water for 4 hours.  
Moonrise: 4:27 pm    Sunset: 5:29 pm

**Where: Okefenokee Adventures**

4159 Suwannee Canal Road, Folkston, GA 31537  
866-THE-SWAMP (843-7926) or 912-496-7156

<http://www.okefenokeeadventures.com/>



**Price: \$45.00 includes canoe rental and four (4) hour tour** led by Sierra Outings Leader Grier Newlin, and Chip Campbell of Okefenokee Adventures. You are on your own for lodging/camping afterward, if you wish to stay overnight. There is no discount for bringing your own boat, so you can travel light!

Join Nassau Sierra and watch the sun set and full moon rise over the haunting Okefenokee Swamp. We will meet at Okefenokee Adventures concession in the National Refuge at Folkston, Ga. at 3:00 pm. Come early, about 2 pm to tour the interpretive center if you never have. At 3:30 pm we will pick up our packed picnic dinners at the expanded dining room there (menus provided beforehand), then canoe/kayak out onto the "prairie" or open swamp wetland. We watch the swamp settle in for the evening as birds and other daytime denizens wind down as the night creatures come to life. Paddle back by the light of the full moon, (bring a flashlight for the last ½ mile, although the moonlight should suffice) returning to the dock by 7:30 pm, then choose lodging or camping from several venues nearby, or head home. **Limit 20 people or 10 boats, so call early!**

### Make Your Reservation NOW!

Email: [nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com](mailto:nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com) or call (770) 668-6161 to place your reservation and get directions.

### Bed and Breakfasts:

The Inn, (prices from \$120-160/night)  
509 W Main Street, Folkston, GA 31537  
(912)496-6256 (Janis)  
888-509-6246  
[info@innatfolkston.com](mailto:info@innatfolkston.com)

The Folkston House  
802 Kingsland Drive  
Folkston, GA 31537  
904)219-4240  
[innkeeper@folkstonhouse.com](mailto:innkeeper@folkstonhouse.com)

The Mizell House  
101 Garden Street  
Folkston, GA 31537  
(904-219-4240 (same owner, Jean Scott)  
(Call or email for pricing – can do group rates, or, \$100+/room)

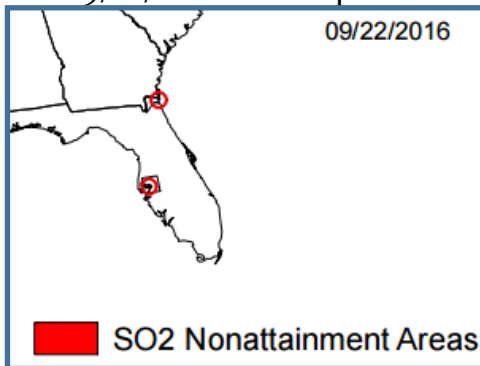
# To Breathe or NOT to Breathe?

## Is Progress Being Made in Our Air Quality?

Can we safely breathe the air in Nassau County yet? **Is any progress being made in our air quality?**

In a previous newsletter, the Nassau County Group of the Sierra Club addressed the issue of poor air quality in Nassau County. In 2013 the EPA placed Nassau County on a “nonattainment” area list for not meeting the EPA’s National Ambient Air Quality Standards (NAAQS). According to the EPA, as of September 22, 2016, Nassau County remains on the EPA’s “nonattainment” area list for SO<sub>2</sub> (sulfur dioxide). <https://www.epa.gov/green-book/green-book-sulfur-dioxide-2010-area-information>

09/22/2016 EPA Map



[https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/maps/02\\_2010.html](https://www3.epa.gov/airquality/greenbook/maps/02_2010.html)

The EPA is continuing to fight for our air quality through continued oversight of the Florida Department of the Environment Protection’s (FDEP) permitting process.

For the EPA, and its air monitoring system, it has been a harrowing task to balance all sources of air pollution into an equation that meets the set limits for healthy air quality. Our largest sources of air pollution are industry, vehicles, air travel, and shipping. ALL of these major sources of pollution are concentrated on Amelia Island. Our diesel-fueled log trucks and train also add to the mix of sulfur dioxide pollution.

### **Where is it coming from?**

When a facility determines that it will likely be designated as a “major source of air pollution”, it is required by law to apply for an EPA Title V Air Permit. The application is obtained from the FDEP for its first review and public scrutiny. A legal notice in the local newspaper is published to announce the Florida Department of Environment Protection’s

intent to issue the permit. The permit must be reviewed and renewed every 5 years.

### **Who holds Title V Air Permits?**

In Nassau County only three facilities hold Title V Air Permits. According to the FDEP, Title V Facilities are listed as:

1. WestRock CP LLC  
Facility ID: 0890003
2. Rayonier Performance Fibers, LLC  
Facility ID: 0890004
3. Nassau Co. Board of County Commissioners (Callahan Landfill)  
Facility ID: 0890428

Not only do these facilities report sulfur dioxide emissions, but emissions for other hazardous pollutants such as VOC’s (volatile organic chemicals such as benzene), lead, carbon monoxide, various sizes of PM’s (particulate matter), and NOX’s among others.

### **Any Good News?**

Some progress has been made. Both industrial facilities have reduced their sulfur dioxide emissions over the previous year. In 2014 the FDEP reported WestRock’s and Rayonier’s sulfur dioxide emissions as 3,477 and 355 tons per year. New 2015 emissions are reported as 3,097 and 230 tons per year. (The Callahan Landfill reports negligible amounts of sulfur dioxide.) There has been a total reduction of 605 tons per year of sulfur dioxide from industrial facilities in 2015 from reported 2014 levels. Our industrial facilities have also received permits from the FDEP to replace older scrubbers. Hopefully these will bring our sulfur dioxide levels down further.

### **When are we off the list?**

Since states are tasked with developing a process for achieving clean air quality, the EPA tasked the Florida Department of the Environment (FDEP) with a State Improvement Plan (SIP). This plan is developed to specifically find a solution to our air quality difficulties. In April of 2015, the FDEP presented the EPA with an SIP that will hopefully provide the desired results. <https://www.epa.gov/air-quality-implementation-plans/sip-status-reports> On October 3, 2016, the latest action taken by the EPA is to judge that the FDEP Improvement Plan is “complete”, in that it meets the elements required of a

State Improvement Plan. With equipment changes made at both Title V facilities in the near future, our air quality may soon have a brighter future.

As the EPA reviews the State Improvement Plan and our air quality future, it is also important to note that the Port of Fernandina is initiating expansion plans for its shipping operations. Larger ships and more truck traffic will likely have further negative impacts on our future air quality which is not in the State Improvement Plan. Fernandina’s port has no ship to shore power to cut sulfur dioxide emissions. And no EPA mandates have been discussed for its future since it is not a Title V facility.

To further protect our air quality and relieve our industry of the costly burden of additional restrictions on air emissions, the City’s Planning Advisory Board recently added the additional requirement of “Ship to Shore” power to the Port of Fernandina’s latest Comprehensive Plan. Hopefully, if shipping expansion is anticipated, matching state funds will supply ship to shore power to further cut and prevent future sulfur dioxide emissions from idling ship engines at our port.

### **\$\$\$ and Sense**

According to the EPA and the National Institute of Health, the young, the elderly, and lung impaired are most affected. Worldwide studies have concluded that children residing (8 years) in moderate SO<sub>2</sub> exposure developed higher numbers of lifelong asthma cases, lifelong allergic rhinitis, and eczema cases. Adults can have irritation of the nose, throat, lungs, coughing, watery eyes and shortness of breath. Prolonged exposure can decrease fertility in men and create more emergency room visits for migraine headaches, stroke, heart attacks, and heart disease.

Not only are elevated levels of sulfur dioxide not good for our bodies, but it is not good for our pocket books. Rising health care premiums and costs at the national, state and individual level should be of concern to all. We ALL pay for the effects of air pollution.



## Zebra Longwing Butterfly

Florida State Butterfly

(*Heliconius charitonius*)

Commonly found throughout Florida from gardens to hardwood stands, these butterflies are the only butterflies known to eat pollen along with nectar. They are considered to have a relatively long lifespan of six months in comparison to other species. The Zebra Longwing butterfly does have some special peculiarities (which may explain its longevity). It only lays its eggs on Passion Vine/Flower leaves. The Passion Vine leaves, which contain toxins, are then consumed by the growing caterpillars. Due to the consumed toxins, predators receive a nasty surprise when consuming adult Zebra Longwings. The toxic butterflies can be poisonous to all who may find them tasty!

**JOIN US!**  
**December 9<sup>th</sup>, 6 PM**  
**Executive Committee**  
**GENERAL OPEN MEETING!**  
Fernandina Beach Library  
AND  
**Okefenokee**  
**Sunset/Full Moon Paddle**  
Saturday, November 12th  
\$45 includes canoe  
Call early, limited to 20 paddlers  
**See Ad on Page 4**

**For ALL**  
**special event details**  
**see the**  
**Nassau Sierra Club's**  
**Calendar**  
**Page 2 Inside!**

## **\*FREE MOVIES\***

**November 26<sup>th</sup> - Saturday**

**6 pm - Fernandina Library**

**"Oil and Water"**

This fascinating film gives an intimate portrait of two young people finding their voices and trying to beat incredible odds. Eight years in the making, this film is a shocking and "inspiring David and Goliath story". Best for viewers 12 and above.

**December 9<sup>th</sup> - Friday,**

**7:30 pm**

**Fernandina Library**

**"Race to Zero"**

Three years ago the mayor of San Francisco pledged to achieve zero waste by 2020. "Race to Zero" tracks San Francisco's waste stream diversion tactics and presents innovative new solutions to waste. This film documents a surprising, engaging and inspiring race to zero.

<http://www.racingtozero.com/>



Nassau County Sierra Group

P. O. Box 38

Fernandina Beach, FL 32034