



# DELTA SIERRAN

E-Newsletter of the Louisiana Chapter of the National Sierra Club

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New Orleans residents come out for Hands Across the Sand Event in New Orleans  
Photo Credit Darryl Malek-Wiley

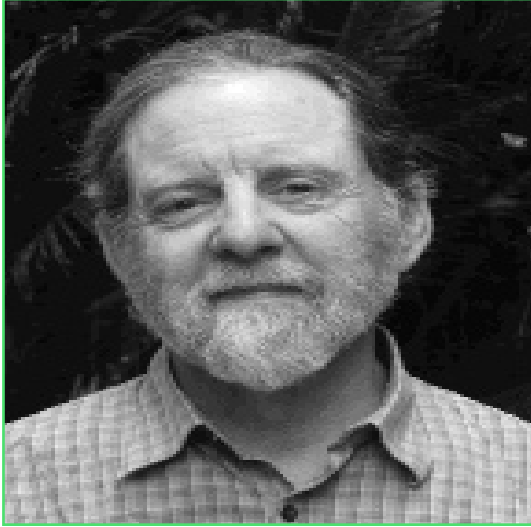


The National Sierra Club's members and supporters are more than 1.3 million of your friends and neighbors. Inspired by nature, we work together to protect our communities and the planet. The Club is America's oldest, largest and most influential grass roots environmental organization.

## July 2011

[www.louisiana.sierraclub.org](http://www.louisiana.sierraclub.org)

# Dear Sierrans,



As this is being written, the Louisiana legislative session has just finished the regular session for 2011. They started April 25 and ended at 6:00 pm on June 23. This was the “short” sixty day fiscal session in which State budget and fiscal matters were to be taken up along with a limited number of bills on other subjects. The big battle was to be the State budget and how to resolve a \$1.6 B deficit. It turned out to be not so much of a battle. The actual deficit turned out to be \$ 790 million and the money to fill the hole was found sloshing around in numerous state funds and programs.

Of more direct concern to Sierra Club Delta Chapter is that a little more than a year after one of the biggest manmade environmental disasters in the world, the BP disaster in the Gulf, only three pieces of legislation appeared in the Louisiana legislative session, and all were killed by pressure from the oil and chemical industries. Several other bills of consequence for the environment did successfully make it through. One bill pushed by the oil and gas industry that we were opposing was HB 563 to limit rights of landowners to sue for damages from oil development. This bill was killed in its first committee by strong opposition from landowners.

## View from the Chair

Your State legislative lobbying team includes our contract lobbyist Darrell Hunt and me working actively with Kathy Wascom of LEAN and Barbara Dodds of St. Tammany League of Women Voters. It takes a team to keep up with comings and goings at the legislature. We are frequently up against some very well funded and highly organized lobbyists representing the forces of industry and unrestrained development.

I have been providing legislative updates for you on the Chapter blog which is accessible through the Delta Chapter website or at <http://deltasierraclub.blogspot.com/> and on the Sierra Club Delta Chapter facebook page at [http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group\\_314869644946&cap=1#!/home.php?sk=group\\_314869644946&cap=1](http://www.facebook.com/home.php?sk=group_314869644946&cap=1#!/home.php?sk=group_314869644946&cap=1) We hope to have a new and more responsive web page for legislative updates up and running in time for next year’s legislative session.

So how does this fit in to Sierra Club’s mission to explore, enjoy and protect the planet? We do outings and fun stuff all the time. Our conservation coordinator, Devin Martin has been tasked to greatly increase the fun stuff part of what we do. His latest posting is at <http://deltasierraclub.blogspot.com/p/summer-2011-outings.html>. My own personal history of involvement with Sierra Club started with group outings to places I would probably not have discovered on my own. I still go on outings whenever I can. So that is the explore and enjoy part. The protect part is the Sierra Club’s long history of advocacy starting with John Muir. Sure we protect as individuals by reducing our personal carbon footprint, but our civic responsibility can take us into working with others to encourage responsible government and to stop or modify irresponsible and environmentally destructive projects and actions.

There is room in Sierra Club for people who just want to have fun, people who are limited for time and want to do specific functions, and for people who want to do more for environmental protection. Together we can make a difference.

Woody Martin, Chair  
Sierra Club Delta Chapter  
[hmartin2sc@gmail.com](mailto:hmartin2sc@gmail.com)

## Sierra Club Final Update for the 2011 Legislative Session

The Louisiana legislative session ended at 6:00 pm June 23. In general the environment did not fare too badly in this session though there were some good bills that did not make it. In particular we note that two bills (HB 389 and SB 97) and one resolution (HCR 48) which directly address the effects of the BP disaster failed to make it through the session. Opposition to these bills from oil and gas and the chemical industries was very strong. It is remarkable that little more than one year after the BP oil disaster we see absolutely no relevant State legislation to address the health of exposed workers or to help coastal recovery.

Listed here are the bills of consequence to the environment that we were most actively following:

### *Legislative Bills which we opposed:*

HB 290 Burns – Repeals the Wild Louisiana Stamp. This bill would have required bird watchers on State Wildlife Management Areas to obtain a hunting license instead of the currently offered Wild Louisiana Stamp. The bill was pulled from first hearing and saw no further action.

HB 296 Greene – Diverts money held in the Artificial Reef Development Fund to other purposes. This bill passed the House and Senate. This is one example of a sitting pot of money that was diverted to help make up the State budget shortfall.

HB 321 Doerge – Sale of water from Lake Bistineau. This legislation would give local governments authority to sell water from Lake Bistineau, with LDWF in advisory role. Funds would go to LDWF for control of noxious plants and for other benefits to the lake. This was about providing water for hydrofracking for natural gas. All things being equal it may be preferable to use surface water rather than more limited groundwater for gas development. But the

## Capitol News



lack of comprehensive state policy on how to deal with water resources leaves openings for disposition of publicly owned water in ways that may not benefit residents of the State. The bill never made it out of the House.

HB 563 Cortez – Would have removed the right of property owners to sue oil companies for damages to their property, and placed resolution of all such disputes into the State Dept of Natural Resources Office of Conservation. This bill was deferred (killed) in House Natural Resources and Environment Committee under strong opposition from landowners.

### *Bills we were supporting:*

HB 70 Smith – Allows local authorities to purchase or lease hybrid or alternative fuel vehicles for previously exempted uses such as law enforcement and emergency vehicles. The bill passed the House and Senate.

HB 212 Morris – Authorizes issuance of bonds for remediation of oilfield sites. This bill never made it past its first committee.

HB 219 Jones – Requires a minimum of 5% of the Atchafalaya Basin Conservation Fund be set aside to be used by the Department of Natural Resources for the purchase of land, or rights, or servitudes, specifically including conservation servitudes from willing sellers to improve water quality, access, or other projects consistent with the Atchafalaya Basin Master Plan. Passed House and Senate.

HB 371 Tucker - Authorizes issuance of Brownfields Investor Tax Credit to eligible taxpayers. Passed House, pending vote on Senate floor when the session ended.

HB 389 Connick – Provided that certain releases of medical claims relating to the BP oil spill are null and void. Amended to provide only that BP notify workers of their right to medical monitoring. Failed in House vote 17-77. Strongly opposed by oil & gas and chemical industries, not supported by governor's office.

HB 412 Lambert – Creates Louisiana Beverage Container Law. Killed in House Commerce Committee. A bill like this gets introduced every year and gets killed every time.

HB 436 Henderson – Levies a tax on transportation of natural gas through pipelines in La. The bill was killed in House Ways and Means. Foster Campbell, Public Utilities Commissioner has tried for years to get legislation like this passed. It gets killed every time by oil & gas industry.

HB 496 Barrow – Provides for campaign contribution disclosures by appointees to certain boards and commissions. Bill never made it out of its first committee.

HB 513 Williams – Bicycle and pedestrian traffic on roadways. Requires lights on bicycles at night and certain standards for walkways. Passed House and Senate.

HB 580 Hoffman – Would allow local school boards to bypass state standards and purchase their own textbooks. This bill if successful along with the already enacted and misnamed Louisiana Science Education Act would allow the presentation of creationism and so called intelligent design in science classes as credible alternative theories to evolution. Zack Kopplin was the most outspoken and articulate opponent of this bill and supporter of SB 70. HB 580 passed the House and passed Senate Committee but failed twice on Senate floor to get 2/3 vote required after 57th legislative day.

HB 595 Labruzzo - retains current tax credits for installation of residential solar

**Continued on next page**

# Capitol cont.

and wind systems but adds that the state tax credit shall be in addition to any federal grant earned for the same system. The bill was amended to make it have the opposite effect of what was intended. We originally supported the bill but then had to advocate for removal of the damaging amendment or for killing the bill. Passed House, amended in Senate Committee on Rev and Fiscal Affairs, died waiting passage on Senate floor.

HB 615 Simon – Adds geothermal energy systems to systems eligible for wind or solar energy systems tax credit. The bill never was heard by its first committee.

HB 622 and 623 Jackson - Tax authority for ozone non-attainment areas. The bill was an attempt to help fund the Capital Area Transit System in Baton Rouge. Pulled from committee by sponsor. Other measures for funding of mass transit in Baton Rouge were being pursued.

HCR 48 (House Concurrent Resolution) Gisclair – Urges and requests the Dept. of Health and Hospitals to investigate any health conditions suffered by responders to the Transocean Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion and provide direction for the long-term health care of these individuals. Passed House, referred to Senate Health and Welfare Committee. Voluntarily deferred by sponsor in the face of intense opposition from oil & gas industry.

SB 40 Morrell - Authorizes DEQ to grant transferable credits for the investigation or remediation of hazardous waste “brownfields” sites. Passed Senate and House.

SB 70 Peterson – This bill if successful would repeal the La. Science Education Act which allows LA school science classes to treat

creationism and intelligent design as credible alternative theories to evolution. The bill was killed in Senate Education Committee. La Family Forum was a big opponent of this bill. See HB 580.

SB 97 Crowe – Oil Spill Prevention and Response Act (Requirement that dispersants be non-toxic). The bill's sponsor had to resist attempts by the oil and chemical industries and DEQ to amend the bill before consideration on Senate floor. Passed Senate Committee on Environmental Quality but failed Senate floor vote 10-21.

SB 133 Marionneaux – Applies La smokefree air act to bars and restaurants. Bill failed on Senate Floor. Big tobacco and casinos were against this one.

SB 184 Crowe – Seeks to eliminate filing deadlines until 2021 for lawsuits related to the BP oil spill. The bill was never heard by its first committee.

SB 222 Mills – Provides that drivers education courses will teach the economic effects of littering. Passed Senate and House.

SB 245 Willard-Lewis – State income tax credit for sales tax paid by homeowners when purchasing green materials. The bill was not heard by its first committee.

SB 254 Willard-Lewis – Exempts sale of construction materials to the Make It Right Foundation from state and local sales tax. Passed Senate and House.

SB 255 Willard-Lewis – Grants a residential energy efficiency tax credit for the qualified elderly. Passed Senate and House.

SCR 5 Morrish – Approves the FY 2011-2012 annual plan for integrated coastal protection. Passed Senate and House.



# Sprog

## CALLING ALL YOUNG MOVEMENT BUILDERS AND REVOLUTIONARIES: DO YOU DREAM OF CHANGING THE WORLD?

The environmental challenges of our generation are great and hard to ignore. You may have grown up in a community polluted with toxins from a power plant or refinery; you may have been impacted or moved by the tragedy of the BP Disaster; you may simply have that bug that doesn't allow you to look away from what's happening without wanting dig your hands in and make a difference.

The good news is that you are not alone.

For over 10 years, the Sierra Student Coalition, the nation-wide, student run Chapter of the Sierra Club, has hosted Summer Training Program (Sprog). A week-long, immersive environmental activist training program, Sprog gives young leaders the tools they need to start movements, run campaigns, and create the world they want to live in.

What: 2011 Gulf Coast Student Training Program (Sprog)

Where: Fontainebleau State Park, Mandeville, LA

Who to Contact:

Jason Faulk, [jdfaulk@gmail.com](mailto:jdfaulk@gmail.com) or 337-254-0684

Matt Wyatt, [matthewwendellwyatt@gmail.com](mailto:matthewwendellwyatt@gmail.com) or 901-626-6600

Check out <http://www.legis.state.la.us/> for more information on these bills.

# One Year After BP Memorial Events



Photo by NRDC staff



Photos provided by  
Lars Grange

Residents of Grand Isle, with the help of the Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club, hosted two memorial events on April 20 and 23 to mark the one year anniversary of the BP oil rig explosion and pollution disaster. Community members commemorated the eleven men who were lost, reflected on the grave impact to the people and environment of the Gulf coast, and inspired hope and continued action to build a better future for residents of the area.

“A year ago, the Gulf almost lost everything—we almost lost hope for our children,” said Karen Hopkins, an event organizer and resident of Grand Isle. On this day, we want to look back at what has happened and figure out how we can make Gulf coast communities healthy again and build a better future for the region.”

On April 20th, 2010, the BP Deepwater Horizon rig exploded and sunk to the bottom of the Gulf, causing the underwater Macondo reservoir to continuously release over 4.9 million barrels of oil until it was finally capped nearly 3 months later in July. One year after the fateful explosion, the devastating impacts on Gulf Coast communities are still felt. Families and neighbors of the eleven oil rig workers killed in the accident are mourning their loss. Livelihoods from fishing and tourism are still affected, with many left un- or undercompensated from the beleaguered Gulf Coast Claims Facility run by Kenneth Feinburg. Clean-up workers and families along the coast are experiencing worrisome health symptoms that could be related to toxic petroleum and dispersant exposure. Populations of pelicans, turtles, fish and other wildlife are showing signs of stress and high mortality.

Led by Karen Hopkins, Betty Doud, Beverly Amand and others, and assisted by Delta Chapter Conservation Coordinator Devin Martin, Island residents held two events to shine a spotlight on their urgent recovery needs, create a space for community members to come together and reflect, and raise funds for local charities for affected families.

On Wednesday, April 20, they held the Memorial for the Deepwater Horizon Explosion at the Grand Isle medical clinic. It featured poetry and art from local high school students, baked goods, and a “Shrimplless Boil and

*Continued on the next page*

# Protest continues ....



Photo from NRDC staff

Fishless Fry.” Voluntary donations were requested to help those still in need on the island. The event was concluded with an Inter-faith prayer service and lantern-lit vigil on Grand Isle Beach. 12 large white crosses were placed on the beach along the path of the vigil—one for each life lost and one for the Gulf of Mexico itself. It was well attended and included Senator David Vitter and Congressman Jeff Landry as well as local media.

On Saturday, April 23, the community organized “The Resurrection of the Gulf” day of action, with family-friendly events, food, music, fundraisers, and an organization fair. There were trees and books for sale, live music, and also a creative stunt led by Bourg resident Darlene Eschete called the Big Oil Panty Protest. She called for women to “burn their panties” as a way of showing BP that people’s “panties are in a twist about BP.” No actual panties were burned during the event. (1)

The battered coastline is not only still threatened by BP’s remaining oil and dispersants in the Gulf

of Mexico, but other oil releases as well. In March of 2011, fresh oil sheens were reported off the waters of Grand Isle and vicinity. After a period of confusion, Anglo-Suisse Partners of Houston, Texas took responsibility for the spill after tests matched samples with one of their wells. The company estimated only five gallons of crude to be released, while reports from fishermen attested to miles and miles of oil sheen on the Gulf’s waters.

“People who live and work on the Gulf coast know that the oil hasn’t gone away, and neither have the problems it brought with it,” said Delta Chapter organizer Devin Martin. “There are still major concerns that need to be addressed, and Gulf Coast communities are calling for decision-makers to hold BP, our government and elected officials, the media and the nation at large be held accountable to restore the Gulf, rebuild our communities, and prevent future offshore drilling disasters.”

The Gulf Coast community groups, with the support of the

Sierra Club, are calling for elected officials and the oil industry to:

- to pass a Gulf recovery bill and other stalled measures to hold oil companies fully accountable for their actions,
- fully fund clean-up and restoration efforts,
- invest in locally-driven, sustainable economic opportunities in the Gulf Coast region,
- continue monitoring of the impacts of the spill on our water, soil, air and health,
- take action to protect coastal communities from risky offshore drilling and future disasters with tougher safety laws and other measures,
- invest in clean energy sources to move the region beyond oil

Together, Gulf Coast communities are working together to make sure that the BP disaster is made right, and to build a future for their kids that is cleaner, healthier, and more resilient.

“The oil is still here, and so are we,” says Betty Doud, painter, activist and long-time resident. “We want to make sure people everywhere understand that the impacts of this disaster are still happening and are far from over. But, there are plenty of things people can do to make a positive difference. If we all lean together, we can make sure we have a future that is brighter, cleaner, and has a lot more respect for people and the environment.”

(1) You can read more about the Big Oil Panty Protest at Huffington Post: [http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rocky-kistner/gulf-women-show-their-panty\\_b\\_855366.html](http://www.huffingtonpost.com/rocky-kistner/gulf-women-show-their-panty_b_855366.html)

# Earl's Pearls Holy High School

As if the public high schools of New Orleans didn't already have enough problems, in February one of the largest, McDonogh 35, was invaded by bats. The school administrators and teachers did not treat the presence of the flying mammals as an opportunity for some very real science pedagogy. Rather, the response was driven by hysteria; hysteria by students, hysteria by parents, hysteria by television reporters. At least no one was reporting seeing Count Dracula.

It wasn't as though there was a swarm of bats like those that come out every night around Austin, Texas. In fact there were only two or three little bats causing the shut down of the school for part of one day at least and the disruption of classes as a ripple effect.

Consider what the school might have done by letting the bats stay until some calm-spirited wildlife people simply caught them – in the presence of the students – and released them away from screaming parents and TV people acting like bat paparazzi. High schoolers could have seen the bats up close, learned that they eat enormous amounts of mosquitoes and other insects, that there are real vampires, and that bats are to be respected rather than feared. What a great opportunity to teach teenagers what guano is!

There has been a proliferation of wildlife sightings in urban areas, to the extent that in some communities deer have become almost as much a nuisance as stray dogs and cats. In fact, a few months before the bats showed up in McDonogh 35 a deer showed up in somebody's living room in Houma. And you thought your sister's children were tough on



your furniture! Oh, deer, what can the matter be?

The truth is that wildlife are merely trying to reclaim territory. Where I live was once a mixture of hardwood forest and swamp. The squirrels were here first, as were the raccoons and the possums. My house was erected in the middle of their neighborhood, and they refuse to leave. Not only haven't they left, they've proliferated. Every night a clan of raccoons gathers on the roof of my garage to swap stories, wash dinner in my neighbor's untended swimming pool, and defecate copiously on the roof.

Even as I sit at my computer (my office is part of the garage) composing inspiring words of wisdom for the Sierra Club cognoscenti, I hear the coons scampering hither and yon with babies in tow. One morning early I encountered a possum in what looked like an attempt to steal my morning paper on the front walkway. I didn't know until then that possums liked to read the Times-Picayune.

Then there are the pigs. Feral swine roam through forests and swamps, tearing up everything, eating anything. Sometimes they are called wild hogs, sometimes wild boars, a name invoking rapacious violence.

The pigs even have their own reality show on the Discovery Channel called "Hogs Gone Wild," which follows pig chasers and their dogs in their unending hunt. (Continued next week).

For some people, conventional wildlife is not sufficiently interesting or challenging. They need to be scared by mythical beasts that present unknown dangers. It has been several years since there were any sightings of the Honey Island Swamp monster, St. Tammany Parish's equivalent of Sasquatch, Bigfoot, Yeti, Abominable Snowman, and so forth. There is a goofy figure in the Audubon Zoo that somebody thought might look like the monster, but there have been no reported sightings in a long time.

Nevertheless, people have been seeing a black panther roaming around Plaquemines and St. Bernard Parishes. Never mind that no pumas, cougars, catamounts, panthers, mountain lions (different names for the same big cat) have been living in Louisiana for more than 70 years. Don't bring up the subjects of habitat, breeding populations, and the lack of evidence other than fleeting sightings. Science should never be invoked to squelch a good story.

"I saw that panther with my own eyes; it was black and as big as a . . ." Fill in the blank with your animal of choice: pony, horse, cow, mule. The apparition gets a little bigger at each sighting.

Walking out my back door one day, I see a raccoon scurrying along the driveway in front of the garage. Then I look down and see a good-size ribbon snake trying to make a meal of a toad. But the toad is too big to swallow, unlike the stories of the swamp monster and the Plaquemines Parish black panther, and the snake eventually gives up. That snake had better be careful; it could become food for other predators that want my neighborhood back.

Earl Higgins

Editors Note: The humourist Earl Higgins, that we have enjoyed for years in the Delta Sierran, is also the author of *The Joy of Y'at Catholicism* (Pelican 2007), is still in print and selling well. His second, *Metairie, Ames, High - The Streets of Jefferson Parish* (Pelican 2011) was published in February. You can catch up with Earl on his book tour. The website is <http://www.pelicanpub.com/proddetail.asp?prod=9781589808874>.

# Get involved with nature through the Groups

## ACADIAN GROUP: [HTTP://LOUISIANA SIERRA CLUB.ORG](http://LOUISIANA.SIERRACLUB.ORG)

Check website for updates

Meetings held at Meetings held at Lourdes Hospital, 611 St. Landry Street, Lafayette, first floor, rooms 108 or 110 unless otherwise noted.

Second Wednesday of the month @6:30 pm-Acadian Group Conservation Meeting

Third Wednesday of the month@ 6:30 pm - Acadian Group General Meeting,

Last Sunday of the month @ 7 - 8:00 pm - Ecologic, Acadiana Open Channel 5, Live Call-In

Outings on web page <http://louisiana.sierraclub.org/acadian/>

For more information contact Harold Schoeffler: 337-234-4042 or 356-9764

## BATON ROUGE GROUP: [WWW./ BATONROUGE.SIERRACLUB.ORG](http://WWW.BATONROUGE.SIERRACLUB.ORG)

The BR Group Excom meets the first Monday nite of the month at 7PM at LaMadeline's on Jefferson. If you would like to put something on the agenda, contact Nancy Grush at 225- 938-8353.

Save the Ales is heating up again on the third Wednesday@ 7PM at Chelseas.

Acension Parish Recycles

When: 1st Saturday of the Month: 9am-1pm

Where: Prairieville WalMart on Airline Highway

Glass, styrofoam, plastic wrap and bags not accepted.



Honey Island Group: [www.louisiana.sierraclub.org](http://www.louisiana.sierraclub.org)

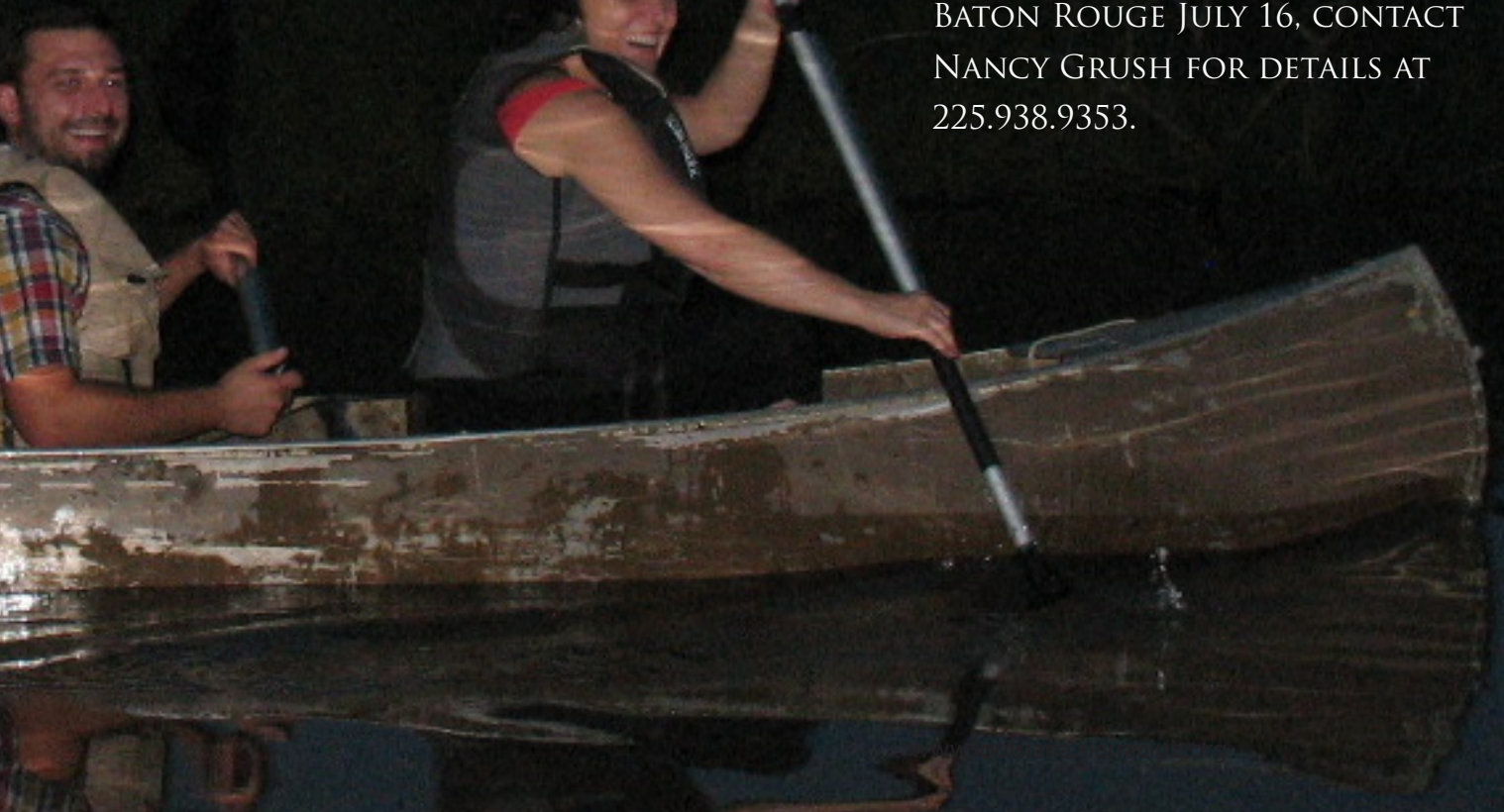
Meetings: Sign up for our google groups hotline and to receive our Recycling guide for the Northshore.

**New Orleans Group:** <http://neworleanssierran.blogspot>.

We usually meet on the second Sunday of each month unless there is a conflict with a holiday/event and then we reschedule. Please check our calendar on the Delta Chapter website. All programs are in the Dominion Auditorium at the Audubon Zoo (6500 Magazine St, New Orleans, LA). The doors open at 6:30 pm and the program starts at 7 pm. Refreshments served.

We love our outings. Join our Facebook group our yahoo group list serve for up to date meeting details, outings and volunteer opportunities.

MOONLIGHT PADDLERS FROM THE ACADIAN GROUP. JOIN THE FUN. CHECK FOR A MOONLIGHT PADDLE COMING TO YOUR GROUP SOON. BATON ROUGE JULY 16, CONTACT NANCY GRUSH FOR DETAILS AT 225.938.9353.



# I hear that train a coming....



Photos are of the Phoenix Light rail system exterior and interiors. More information on rail transportation can be found at [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List\\_of\\_United\\_States\\_light\\_rail\\_systems\\_by\\_ridership](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_United_States_light_rail_systems_by_ridership)



Get connected! To the environment? To sustainable transportation? To a train? For those who attended the April 21, 2011 meeting of the Baton Rouge Group of the Sierra Club, the choice would have been "train." Although it's quite obvious that a rail between New Orleans ("N.O.") and Baton Rouge ("B.R.") would be good for the environment in a number of ways, those at the meeting were made aware of just how a rail connection could benefit the environment.

Many of you have probably heard (for some time) talk of a train between New Orleans ("N.O.") and Baton Rouge ("B.R."). You also probably recall in 2009 when Gov. Bobby Jindal withdrew the state's application for \$300 million in federal grant money because he said the rail would be too costly to sustain. Not too long thereafter, then DOTD Secretary William Ankner announced his resignation. Not so surprising for those of us who, at the time, were working with Ankner on establishing a train and/or bus link between these two cities.

Accordingly, in 2009, the rail concept

seemed to be dead in the water. Yet efforts were continuing behind the scenes. At the April 21 meeting (referenced in the first paragraph), Rachel DiResto, executive director and vice president at the Center for Planning Excellence ("CPEX") in Baton Rouge, explained how the rail is very much still alive, thanks, in part, to "Connect" and its coalition. Connect is a project of CPEX and the coalition is comprised of a very diverse group of public and private sector organizations from the two cities and surrounding region.

The Legislature's passage in 2010 of the Louisiana Intrastate Rail Compact (co-sponsored by Rep. Michael Jackson, No Party-Baton Rouge) provided further impetus. The legislation created a means whereby two or more parishes or municipalities can create a super region that can better harness federal transportation dollars needed for such projects as a rail between B.R. and N.O.

For more information and facts and figures concerning this rail, you can

go to [www.connect.cpex.org](http://www.connect.cpex.org). To date, CPEX has released two reports of a three-part series on the rail. And the momentum seems to be increasing. The New Orleans City Council passed a resolution to enter into the type of compact agreement enabled by the 2010 legislation. It is anticipated that the Baton Rouge Metro Council will do the same.

Who knows? Maybe the B.R./N.O. region will one day be listed with those of Portland, Denver, Cleveland, and Detroit when highlighting highly successful rail connections. Although the ever common refrain is that we lack the financial resources needed, one must realize that in some places, private entrepreneurs are hopping on the train (pardon the pun)! For example, in Denver, a public/private partnership (with the private partner investing \$1 billion to "jump start" the project) is financing a 36-mile commuter rail linking Denver's downtown with its airport and outlying residential communities.

For information on how you can help with efforts to establish the N.O./B.R. rail, go to CPEX' website (listed above), contact your legislative delegation and council members. You can also be part of the Baton Rouge Group's campaign by contacting me at [nancygrush@gmail.com](mailto:nancygrush@gmail.com)

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The Delta Chapter is 3,000 of your neighbors supporting the work of the Sierra Club in Louisiana. We advance the cause of protecting Louisiana's environment in a variety of ways, including lobbying the state legislature in Baton Rouge to create clean jobs, develop renewable resources like wind and solar and most important to protect our natural heritage for our families and future generations. We work to save the Cypress, keep the Atchafalaya Wet and Wild and promote restoring our wetlands, the natural coastal barriers. We also go outside and enjoy our beautiful planet with canoe trips, hikes and camp outs.

## SIERRA CLUB REGIONAL OFFICE

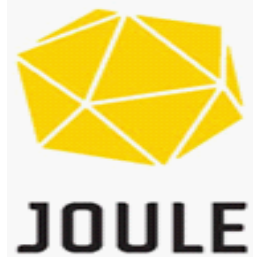
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# HANDS ACROSS THE SAND™



Hands across the Sand event sponsored by the Sierra Club and partner organizations was held June 25th in New Orleans, Lafayette and Grand Isle. More pictures and information is available on our Facebook page. Photo by Mac Mackenzie.

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