

The Pelican Sierra Club Florida

THE OFFICIAL PUBLICATION OF SIERRA CLUB



Summer 2017

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A group of supporters join Miami Beach City Council (back row), Mayor Philip Levine and Sierra Club's Emily Gorman (front row center) to celebrate the council's commitment to Sierra Club's Ready for 100 campaign.

Mayors Embrace Clean Energy

MIAMI BEACH - The U.S. Conference of Mayors approved a historic resolution that establishes support from the nation's mayors for the goal of moving to 100% clean and renewable energy in cities nationwide. Meeting June 23-26 in Miami Beach, the Conference hosted leaders from more than 250 cities.

The weekend kicked off with Sierra Club's "Sunrise for Solar," a human aerial art formation on the beach behind the conference hotel which aimed at encouraging the U.S. Conference of Mayors to adopt the resolution. The bipartisan group of mayors unanimously backed the commitment for U.S. cities to run entirely on renewable sources such as wind and solar in two decades.

The Sierra Club's new Mayors for 100% Clean Energy campaign was launched nationally this spring and is co-chaired by Miami Beach Mayor Philip Levine. Jodie Van Horn, national Sierra Club organizer of the Ready for 100 campaign, attended the conference and met with Sierra Club volunteers and staff from across the country.

So far, 36 cities across the United States have

now committed to transition to 100% renewable energy, and 129 mayors have signed onto this vision.

"Cities don't need to wait for Washington, D.C. to act in order to move the ball forward on clean energy," said Sierra Club Executive Director Michael Brune.

Sierra Club's Emily Gorman worked tirelessly, along with a core team of volunteers, to pull off the early-morning aerial human text message on the beach. It required renowned aerial artist John Quigley to create the design to scale and organize over 120 volunteers to form the letters in the sand with the aid of beach chairs and umbrellas. The image was broadcast nationally on news outlets and social media.

Past measures at the U.S. Conference of Mayors have been instrumental in setting standards and providing resources to cities, says Gorman. The Energy Efficiency and Conservation Block Grant (EECBG) Program, for example, was the result of efforts at the U.S. Conference of Mayors.

(Continued on page 2)



More than 120 people helped create this aerial human text message calling for mayors to join the campaign for 100% clean energy.

(Continued from page 1)

For the first time in U.S. history, the EECBG program made it possible for cities, counties and states to receive grants specifically to fund energy-efficiency projects.

Shifting from dirty fossil fuels to clean sources of energy like wind and solar strengthens communities by spurring economic growth, addressing climate change, and reducing pollution, says Gorman. “These leaders recognize the importance of lower energy costs, improved public health, and stable, local jobs in protecting the physical and financial well-being of their residents.”

Sierra Club Florida has the



Mayors for 100% Clean Energy include (L-R) Henry (Daytona Beach), Benjamin (Columbia, SC), Kriseman (St. Petersburg), Biskupski (Salt Lake City, UT)

support of many other environmental groups, businesses and community organizations across the state involved in the Ready for 100 clean energy campaign.

To learn more about Ready for 100, contact Phil Compton at phil.compton@sierraclub.org.

Sarasota, Dunedin Ready for 100% Clean Energy

The City of Sarasota and the City of Dunedin this summer joined Orlando and Miami Beach in committing to the Ready for 100 campaign.

With a focus on sustainability and quality of life in Sarasota, the City Commission on June 19 unanimously approved joining the Sierra Club’s Ready for 100 campaign to transition to 100 percent renewable energy sources. The Sarasota Climate Justice Coalition, which includes Sierra Club Florida along with concerned local citizens, organizations and businesses, presented the commission with 2,000 petition signatures supporting the measure. The City of Sarasota municipal operations plans to be powered by renewable energy sources by 2030. The initiative includes a community-wide goal to convert to 100 percent renewable energy by 2045.

On July 13, Dunedin Mayor Julie Ward Bujalski officially joined the Mayors for 100% Clean Energy campaign and City Commissioners unanimously approved moving the city to entirely clean and renewable energy.

Mayor Buddy Dyer issued a proclamation in late May endorsing a goal of powering Orlando entirely with clean and renewable energy by 2050. Mayor Philip Levine of Miami Beach signed on in May with a plan to update the city’s Climate Action Plan and commit the city’s municipal buildings to 100% clean and renewable energy supply by 2025.

Sierra Club Florida is working with cities and municipalities on transitioning to clean energy. For more information, email phil.compton@sierraclub.org or check out sierraclub.org/ready-for-100

The Pelican, Vol. 50 No.2

Marcia Biggs, Editor

The Pelican is published by Sierra Club Florida and mailed to Sierra Club Florida members. Annual membership dues include \$1 for the Pelican newsletter. Address all inquiries to Sierra Club Florida, 1990 Central Avenue, St. Petersburg, Florida 33712 or e-mail marcia.biggs@florida.sierraclub.org

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Committed to Clean Energy Future

Congratulations to these Florida mayors and cities for joining the 100% Clean Energy campaign:

Rick Kriseman - St. Petersburg

Willie Shaw - Sarasota

Phillip Levine - Miami Beach

Jeri Muoio - West Palm Beach

Richard Kaplan - Lauderdale

Phil Stoddard - South Miami

Eugene Flinn - Palmetto Bay

Daniel Dietch - Surfside

John Adornato - Oakland Park

Harry Dressler - Tamarac

Buddy Dyer - Orlando

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Lamar Fisher - Pompano Beach

Judy Paul - Town of Davie

Cary Glickstein - Delray Beach

Derrick Henry - Daytona Beach

Gary Resnick - Wilton Manors

Julie Ward Bujalski — Dunedin

Deep Injection Wells Bad Idea for Everglades

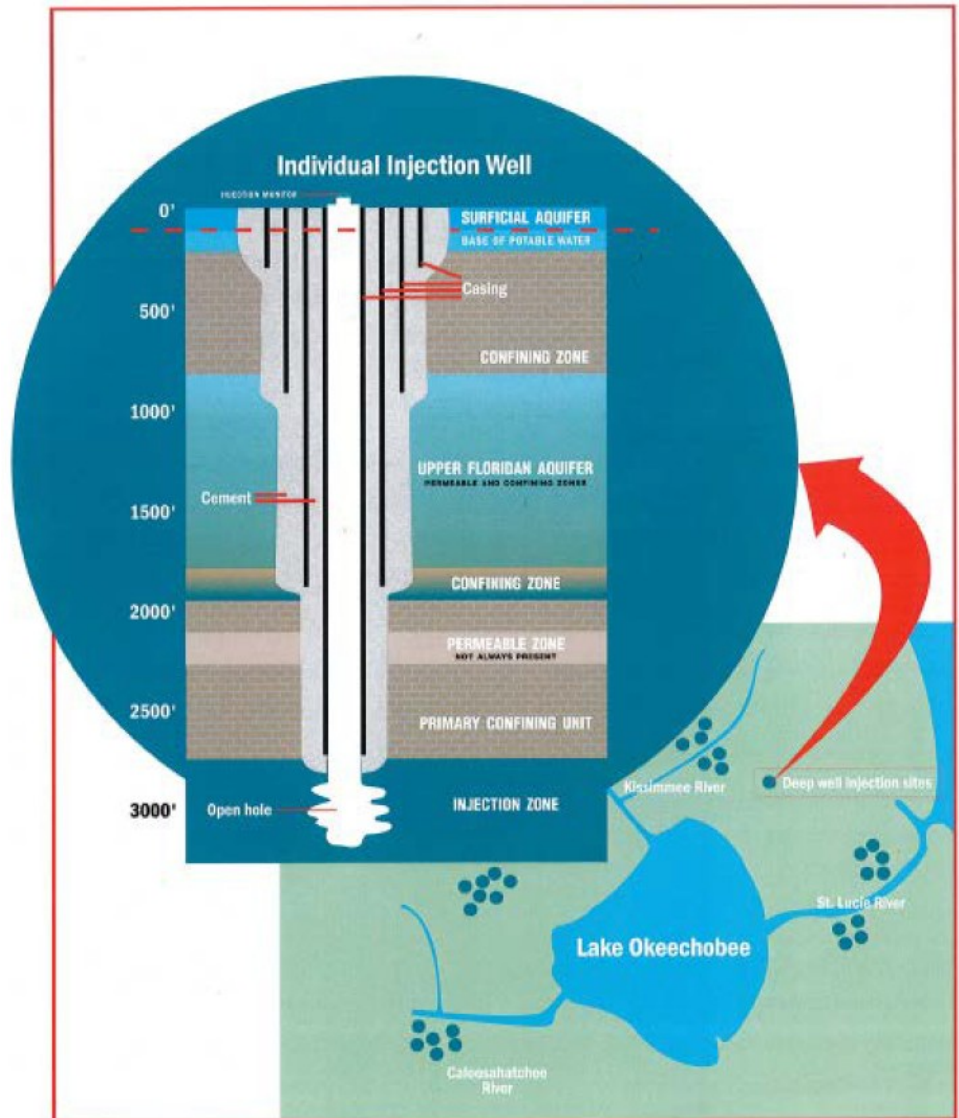
The Everglades is once again being threatened – this time it may become a disposal site for billions of gallons of untreated freshwater using deep injection wells.

South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD), without any public notice, recently voted to develop a plan to permanently get rid of untreated freshwater deep underground in the Everglades. The move came after the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers rejected further consideration of these deep injection wells (DIW) because they were never part of the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan (CERP).

Instead, the Corps suggested a comprehensive regional study to learn about the potential impacts of deep injection wells across the Everglades ecosystem. The Corps recognizes the high risk of using these wells given the limited hydrogeologic data in the proposed area where water would be dumped, a layer of cavernous rock about 3,000 feet underground and below the Floridan Aquifer. This layer could be prone to vertical cracks that might allow untreated surface water to migrate back up into drinking water sources.

Supporting the use of deep injection wells to dispose of freshwater are the three largest sugar corporations (US Sugar, Florida Crystals and Sugar Cane Growers Cooperative) who proposed DIWs in the Lake Okeechobee Watershed CERP project. As many as 100 wells could be part of the plan being considered north of the Lake, with estimated construction costs as much as a billion dollars.

Sierra Club Florida believes deep injection wells do NOT help restore the Everglades as some have suggested. We all desire a stop to harmful Lake Okeechobee discharges to the St. Lucie and Caloosahatchee estuaries, but the solution is not to create a new problem. Deep injection wells will divert state taxpayer dollars needed for land purchases north and south of the lake to restore wetland habitats and to send more



Graphic showing potential deep injection well sites provided by SFWMD

clean water south to the Everglades and Florida Bay. The water would be unavailable during droughts, or to help replenish the aquifer, or to fight saltwater intrusion and sea level rise.

We need project alternatives that are closer to true restoration of the Everglades, and natural surface water storage and flows that benefit people and wildlife.

To join the fight against deep injection wells in the Everglades or to learn more, contact Sierra Club organizer Diana Umpierre at diana.umpierre@sierraclub.org



Deep injection wellhead/Photo from FDEP

Panther Endangered Species Status May Be Threatened

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has announced that it will review whether Florida panthers are still an endangered species. The review, which is required every 5 years under the Endangered Species Act, comes after a panther population rebound has led to growing calls from hunters and ranchers to take the big cats off the endangered species list.

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission has increased its estimate of the Florida panther population to as many as 230 adults, most of them in Southwest Florida.

Sierra Club Florida and other state wildlife protection organizations have long worked to protect the Florida panther's population through land conservation and its listing as an endangered species.



"If Donald Trump's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service removes endangered species status for the panther, it would open the door to the intentional slaughter of Florida's big cats. We won't let this happen!" said Sierra Club Florida Director Frank Jackalone.

Recent reports that the panther may no longer be categorized as a "Florida" panther due to past breeding with Texas cougars (therefore losing its endangered status) is more cause for concern. The current federal recovery plan for Florida panthers requires at least two breeding populations of 240 panthers each before the panther can be listed as threatened instead of endangered; three such populations are required before the panther can be taken off the list altogether. In March, FWC downgraded the status of the manatee from endangered to threatened.

Despite its seeming "comeback," the relatively small population of panthers continues to be decimated by car strikes. In 2015, a record 30 panthers were hit by cars and killed. In 2016, 32 were killed by cars, and the total number of panther deaths combined was 42 (road kills and other causes).

As part of the status review, new information may be submitted about population trends, habitat conditions, and threats until August 29. Sierra Club's legal team will be submitting a detailed legal comment letter, Jackalone added.

The review considers the best scientific and commercial data available since the last review, which was in 2010. No public comment workshops have been announced. Submit updated information to David Shindle at david_shindle@fws.gov or fax (772) 562-4288 or mail to: South Florida Ecological Services Field Office, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 12085 State Road 29 S, Immokalee, FL 34142

Join the Fight

The Trump administration is unleashing harm on our environment and the health of our nation with one outrageous act after another. Your help is needed now more than ever!

Go to sierraclub.org to sign petitions, renew your membership and take action. Be sure to watch for e-mails and join the Facebook page of your regional group to keep abreast of local events. To find your regional group, go to sierraclub.org/florida/groups



Seismic Blasting to Map for Drilling is Cruel, Needless

The Trump Administration wants to allow the use of seismic airgun blasting to map the ocean floor from Florida to Delaware in the search for oil and gas, and recent testimony by Secretary of the Interior Ryan Zinke at House Natural Resources Committee has made it clear that seismic testing in the eastern Gulf of Mexico will follow next.

Giant air horns, so loud they would shatter the human ear, generate blasts of up to 250 decibels reaching miles into the sea. Experts say the blasts impair hearing in marine mammals responsible for their navigation, communication, eating, and mating and would injure or kill 138,000 dolphins and whales. It would pose risks to nesting female and young sea turtles, whose behavior is altered by low-frequency seismic sounds.

There is evidence to support this.

In Madagascar and Peru, mass beachings took place around the time of airgun testing. In 2008 in Madagascar, dozens of whales washed up on shore. In 2012 in Peru, 900 dolphins and porpoises washed ashore. Necropsies showed blood coming from ears and fractures of ear bones.

In Florida, nearly 40 cities and counties have already passed resolutions opposing offshore airgun seismic exploration for the purpose of drilling. Even the State of Florida in 2015 recommended delaying airgun permits due to insufficient data on the impact on natural resources.

Floridians need to coalesce around this issue. Call your representatives, locally and in Congress. Tell them there is no need for airgun blasting or offshore oil drilling. The fastest growing form of energy is not oil or gas, but renewables like solar and wind. We have the ability to produce energy without threatening our coasts and our marinelife.

Adapted from an opinion piece by Sierra Club Florida Director Frank Jackalone that ran in newspapers across Florida.

Summer Fertilizer Bans More Important Than Ever

By Cris Costello

After nearly 10 years of strong urban fertilizer ordinance protection along the Gulf Coast, Florida Sierra Club is urging a strong ordinance for Orange County. So far, 11 counties and 82 municipalities in Florida are covered by strong urban fertilizer ordinances that include a strict application ban during the summer rainy season.

In December 2014, the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services updated the labeling requirements for do-it-yourself bags of turf fertilizer in the state to include the following language: "Check with your county or city government to determine if there are local regulations for fertilizer use." FDACS recognizes the stronger local rules and has never challenged the legality or the science behind any of the existing ordinances.



Florida law in 2009 mandated limited certification for all commercial applicators by Jan. 1, 2014. But the certification testing process is flawed. Applicants can fail parts of the test but still get a passing grade. But even more relevant to the discussion regarding urban fertilizer management is the fact that someone could have a doctorate in urban fertilizer and still be at the mercy of our notorious Florida downpours.

No matter who applies fertilizer during the rainy season — homeowner or professional — the product is likely to be washed down the storm drain before it can be used by the turf or landscape plant. This is why the rainy season application bans along the Gulf Coast and the Indian River Lagoon are broadly accepted and implemented.

There are good reasons to focus on urban fertilizer:

- Strong ordinances are low-cost alternatives that can make the difference without onerous enforcement measures.
- Preventing fertilizer pollution is much more cost-effective than taxpayer-funded clean-up projects.
- Strong ordinances have been successful in both reducing the amount of nutrient pollution in at-risk water bodies and maintaining lush Florida landscapes.

When it rains in Florida, it pours pollution into our waterways. It is time for Orange County to adopt strong fertilizer-management practices that will lead professionals and citizens alike to more wisely manage residential fertilizer.

Adapted from an opinion piece by Cris Costello published in the Orlando Sentinel. You can reach her at cris.costello@sierraclub.org with questions on fertilizer ordinances.

WE WANT YOUR OLD VEHICLES!

Is there a broken down car, RV or boat in your yard that needs removing? Maybe you are buying a new car and need to get rid of your old one?

Consider donating your vehicle to the Sierra Club Foundation CARS Donation Program and it will be towed away for free ... and you will receive a receipt for your tax-deductible gift! The CARS Donation Program offers an easy way to get rid of unused vehicles while providing funding that will go directly to the Florida Chapter to secure protections for our public lands and waters, promote healthy ecosystems and communities, and fight for clean air and water. Everyone benefits!

CARS will pick up most cars, trucks, trailers, boats, RVs, motorcycles, off-road vehicles, and heavy equipment, making it easy for you to support the Sierra Club's mission to move toward a greener future.

CALL 844-6-SIERRA OR 844-674-3772



DONATE NOW – IT'S EASY!

Simply go to scfch.careasy.org. Many questions can be answered by clicking on the FAQ tab. Fill out the form. Under **Select a Chapter** be sure to scroll down to **FLORIDA CHAPTER**. You will receive a phone call from a program rep to make arrangements for towing. Or call 844-674-3772

Some restrictions apply. For example, exceptions include older vehicles whose value would not offset the cost of towing.

Around the State



Suwannee-St. Johns leaders (L-R) Brack Barker, Whitey Markle, Jan Hitchcock, Kathryn Taubert, and Capt. Britt Cottrell of Rainbow Water Taxi hosted the river outing.

SSJ hosts Special Rainbow River Outing

Residents of assisted living facility Harbor House of Ocala were treated to a pontoon cruise on the Rainbow River courtesy of the Sierra Club Suwannee-St. Johns Tri-County Working Group. The cruise was designed to help those no longer able to regularly engage in outdoor activities due to age, infirmity or disability, said **Kathryn Taubert**, Assistant Chair of the Suwannee-St. Johns Executive Committee. Local sponsors banded together to make this event free for participating seniors from the assisted living facility. A member of Citrus County Audubon Society also volunteered his time to be tour guide and bird identifier along the river. The Ocala Star Banner even published photos and a video on the excursion!



Climate March Madness

Hundreds of Sierrans across Florida took part in the People's Climate March on April 29, but the march to Mar-A-Lago was a rather, um, festive affair. A colorful banner depicted Donald Trump floating in a raft as his private club in West Palm Beach is engulfed in flooding caused by sea level rise. Sierra Club organizer **Patrick Ferguson** is on the left holding the bullhorn.

RECOMMENDED READING

Travels on the Green Highway: An Environmentalist's Journey by **Nathaniel Pryor Reed** (hardcover, \$45) is an amazing journey through the many environmental battles of the 1960s-'70s fought by a political pioneer. Reed presents a series of essays detailing his remarkable accomplishments passing environmental legislation both in Florida and across the United States. Sierra Club gets an occasional nod and it's great fun to learn what was going on "behind the scenes." A few of my favorite essays: "Defeating the Miami Jetport and Creating a National Preserve" and "A Boondoggle: The Cross Florida Barge Canal" are just a couple of the fascinating stories recounted in vivid detail. Available on amazon.com.
— *Marcia Biggs*

Save the Date for Cedar Key Weekend

A special weekend November 10-11 will look back at Sierra Club founder John Muir's trek from Kentucky to Cedar Key in 1867, and look forward to the inevitable changes that sea level rise will bring to this tiny island southwest of Gainesville. On Friday, Nov. 10, a **Climate Change Conference** will convene at Cedar Key Community Center featuring sustainability expert Dr. Kathryn Frank from the University of Florida and noted climate change authority Dr. Yogi Goswami from the University of South Florida. Evening clambake dinner and live music wraps up the day. On Saturday, Nov. 11, a day devoted to history and **John Muir** will feature presentations on his time spent in Cedar Key, a visit to the Cedar Key Museum State Park, and a rededication of the Muir Marker. Saturday evening will bring a social with food and live music hosted by the Suwannee-St. Johns Sierra Club. More information via an Eventbrite registration page will be available later this summer. The event is being organized by Tampa Bay group leader (and history buff) **Paul Thibault**. For more information, contact paul.thibault@florida.sierraclub.org



New Chapter Staff

The new Senior Campaign Representative for the Beyond Coal Campaign in Florida is **Susannah Randolph**. Susannah is based in Orlando and is focused on environmental leadership and the retirement of Florida's coal plants. Susannah is a former community organizer and Congressional District Director. To reach her, email susannah.randolph@sierraclub.org



Around the State

Hands Across the Sand



Photo by Steve McMurtry

Sierra Club members joined and helped organize Hands Across the Sand events on beaches and cities across Florida on Saturday, May 20. At noon, for 15 minutes, participants locked hands to say no to fossil fuels and yes to clean energy.



Fighting Shoreline Development

Manatee-Sarasota Sierra Group is opposing the dredging of a massive lagoon on Sarasota Bay for a real estate development called Aqua by the Bay. The development would include 2,894 residences on 529 acres and dozens of docks. It is located on Long Bar Pointe, the last unspoiled mangrove shoreline on Sarasota Bay. The centerpiece of Aqua by the Bay is a 2½-mile, 120-foot wide, linear lagoon which has to be dredged, and the Manatee County Comprehensive Plan clearly forbids it. Nevertheless, developer Carlos Beruff has been granted conceptual dredge and fill permit for the lagoon from the Southwest Florida Water Management District.

Sierra Club is urging Manatee County Commissioners to deny permission to dredge the lagoon. Sierra Club joins many other groups and residents in claiming the lagoon will irreparably damage the ecosystem, endanger seagrass, shorebird habitat and fishing.

To sign a petition, go to www.ipetitions.com/petition/Save-Longbar-Pointe-on-Sarasota-Bay

Groups Back in Action

Sierra Club members around Tallahassee and North Florida should know that the **Big Bend Group** is hosting monthly meetings, outings and taking action on local environmental issues. Find the group's website at sierraclub.org/florida/big-bend and find them on Facebook. **Volusia-Flagler Group** in those counties is also scheduling regular meetings and events. Find them at sierraclub.org/florida/volusia-flagler and on Facebook.

Glades Group Works to Halt Sugar Field Burning

A crowd of 30 people attended a press conference on April 17 outside Belle Glade City Hall to raise concerns about sugar burning. Sierra Club, local elected officials, sugar growers and local community members were among the crowd.

Afterwards, local activists from the Stop Sugar Field Burning campaign team introduced the campaign to the Belle Glade city commissioners, and the public, at the weekly commission meeting. The following night they addressed the nearby South Bay City Commissioners about the campaign as well.

The events demonstrated the growing local demand for the adoption of green harvesting instead of dangerous sugar burning in the Glades communities. The campaign will be presenting to other city commissions throughout the Ever-



glades Agricultural Area this summer to increase awareness of sugar burning issues and the solution of green harvesting. These presentations to local leaders will continue to fuel the growing public demand for green harvesting and all the benefits it can bring to the Glades communities ahead of the next pre-harvest burning season.

– Patrick Ferguson, Sierra Club Organizer

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St. Petersburg, Florida 33712

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number located on the mailing label.



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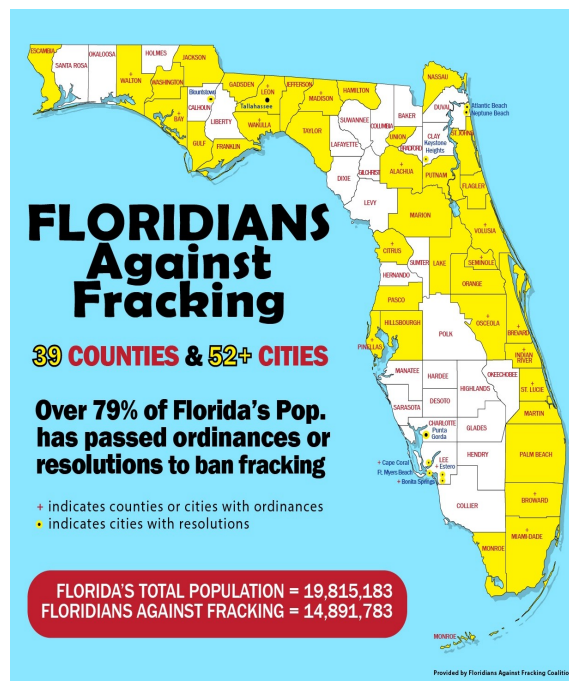
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Fight to Ban Fracking in Florida Continues

Although a state ban on fracking never made it through the last Florida Legislative Session, Sierra Club Florida is continuing its efforts to support a statewide ban on the dangerous practice. Fossil fuel extraction via hydraulic fracturing, or fracking, leaves communities burdened with health problems, damages the environment and infrastructure, threatens the Floridan Aquifer and creates a weaker economy for the long-term.

Some 90 communities across the state, including 39 counties, have passed local measures against fracking and are in support of a statewide ban. The practice threatens to pollute clean drinking water sources, and is reportedly the cause for many earthquakes in the Midwest where fracking is a widespread practice.

A fracking ban is predicted to be hotly debated during the 2018 Florida Legislative Session, so Floridians Against Fracking, a coalition of environmental, health,



Graphic from Floridians Against Fracking

Find Floridians Against Fracking on Facebook

social justice, community and business groups, including Sierra Club, is preparing now to inform and educate the public and our state legislators on the need for a statewide fracking ban.

“It’s going to take continued, collective action from people all over the state to convince our legislators that a statewide ban is in the best interest of our environment and the health of our communities,” says Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson, lead organizer for the fracking ban campaign for Sierra Florida. Members are urged to work with city and county officials to pass local ordinances and state legislators to pass the statewide ban next session.

To learn about how you can become involved, contact Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson at merrilee.malwitz-jipson@sierraclub.org