

## Cooper Creek Environmental Assessment Released



This week the Forest Service released an alternative proposal for the Cooper Creek Watershed Project that would bring 1,679 acres of commercial timber harvests and 912 acres of non-commercial cutting to the Chattahoochee National Forest. In its draft Environmental Assessment, which includes the new proposal, the Forest Service admits to making decisions based on commercial interests while dismissing scientifically-based ecological concerns and explains that the project will lead to increased carbon emissions, threatening further climate disruption.

Sadly, the Forest Service merely glosses over the climate impacts of this project with conclusory statements and circular reasoning and relies on the tired rationalization that the carbon emissions from this project don't really matter because they will be small compared to all other emissions around the globe. This reasoning is out of step with the spirit of the landmark climate agreement signed in Paris last month and foolish in light of the severe weather and flooding North Georgia has seen this winter. The Forest Service should fully consider the consequences of its actions before moving forward with this project.

**[Sign our petition telling the Forest Service to put the health of our forest and our planet ahead of timber sales.](#)**

The original Cooper Creek proposal, released in May 2014, called for over 3,700 acres of cutting and the Georgia Water Coalition listed the project on its 2015 Dirty Dozen list, a list of the worst offenses to Georgia's waters.

While the decreased acreage subject to cutting in the new proposal is a welcomed improvement, those who care about Georgia's wild places shouldn't celebrate yet. This project is still exceptionally large and still includes some cutting on the steep slopes near Duncan Ridge. Chemical herbicides would be used on 1,327 acres, and burning would be carried out on over 11,000 acres.

The Forest Service states that the project contains no clearcuts, but tree cover will be greatly reduced over hundreds of acres under the new proposal. Overstory trees could be cut back to as little as 15 square feet per acre in some areas.

The project will also include the construction of 5 miles of new temporary roads and the reconstruction of 3 miles of existing roads. Many hikers are quick to point out that the Forest Service has trouble maintaining the roads it already has and doesn't more it can't take care of just to make timber harvests easier.

**Tell the Forest Service that you care about the health of the forest and our planet more than narrow commercial interests! [Visit our website to learn more,](#) and [sign and share our petition.](#)**

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## **The Georgia Chapter Celebrates MLK Day**





Our founder, John Muir, once said, "When we try to pick out anything by itself, we find it hitched to everything else in the universe." These words ring so true that decades later Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. echoed the sentiment when he stated, "It really boils down to this: that all life is interrelated. We are all caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied into a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one destiny, affects all indirectly."

As we work to clean up our state, protect our families from pollution, and fight against environmental threats like climate disruption, we must also stand up against the injustices Americans still face in the 21st century, from environmental injustice to racial injustice. For us-like so many others-Martin Luther King Day is a day on, not off. Please join us at one of the events below:

**1. Building the Beloved Community with Environmental Justice - Panel featuring Sierra Club President Aaron Mair**  
*Thursday, January 14th, 6:30 p.m. - 9:30 p.m.*

**2. 2016 Annual KSU MLK Celebration**  
*Sunday, January 17th, 6:00 p.m. - 7:30 p.m.*

**3. MLK Day in Marietta**  
*Monday, January 18th, 10 a.m.*

**4. 6th Annual Street Teams for Energy Efficiency**  
*Monday, January 18th, 10 a.m. - 12 p.m.*

**4. Martin Luther King Day March**

Monday, January 18th, 1:15 p.m.

**RSVP >>**

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## Sierra Club Meetings

**Smart Energy Solutions Committee, Monday, January 11, 7 p.m.**

Contact [Cecilia Harris](#)

**Wildlands & Wildlife Committee, Monday, January 18, 7 p.m.**

Contact [William Tomlin](#)

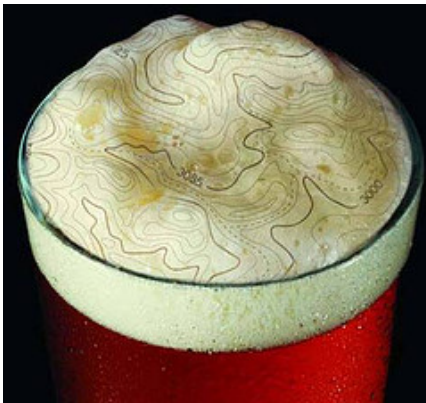
**RAIL Committee, Monday, January 25, 7 p.m.**

Contact [Brionté McCorkle](#)

**Don't live in Atlanta? Check out our [Local Groups](#).**

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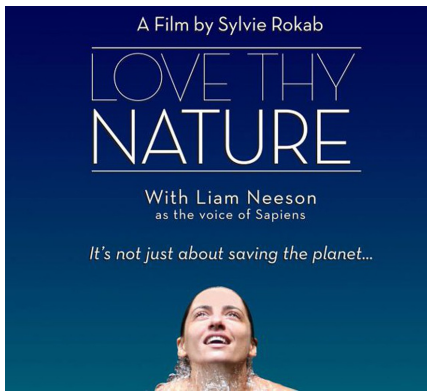
## Upcoming Events



**January 20th - Sierra Club & Beer** - Every other month, Sierra Club & Beer provides a space and great beer for meeting like-minded people, while learning a little something new. There's even team trivia to make the night more interesting! Be sure to stick around through the end, when we give out door prizes. This January, Robbie Ashe, MARTA Board Chair, will be speaking with us about MARTA's proposed expansion plans and the upcoming 2016 legislative session. [Click here for more details >>](#)



**January 31 - Atlanta ICO Training** - Sierra Club ICO is a community outreach program providing opportunities for urban youth to explore, enjoy and protect the natural world. The goal of the Atlanta ICO program is to help these young people discover the beauty of wild places, to foster an appreciation for nature, and to help them acquire the necessary skills to enjoy these places safely. This training is a requirement for those who want to become Atlanta ICO certified leaders. [Click here for more information >>](#)



**Save the Date! February 8th - Love Thy Nature Film Screening** - Join us as we explore how nature nourishes us through the film Love Thy Nature, a cinematic immersion into the beauty and intimacy of our relationship with the natural world. Afterwards, find out how to join the movement to protect our natural world! A stunning cinematic journey narrated by actor Liam Neeson, Love Thy Nature explores how a renewed connection with nature holds the key to addressing the climate crisis. [Click here to learn more >>](#)



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Looking for more? Check out our [Meetup Group](#) for even more events! Interested in reading more? If you have missed an issue of Footnotes Online you can view them in our archive by [clicking here](#).



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