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A Big Week for the Endangered Species Act

On Tuesday, the US Fish and Wildlife Service [released their response](#) to the petition for listing the Gopher Tortoise east of Mobile Bay in Georgia, Florida and South Carolina under Endangered Species Act. The Gopher Tortoise west of Mobile Bay is already protected by the Endangered Species Act.

The decision? **The gopher tortoise meets the criteria for protection, but the agency doesn't have the resources to provide such protection.** They currently have a backlog of 260 species they have determined need protection but have not adopted regulations to implement.



In 2006, Save Our Big Scrub and Wild South filed the petition, documenting the many threats to the gopher tortoise, including: habitat loss, fragmentation and degradation, predation, inadequacy of regulatory mechanisms, and incompatible use of herbicides in forest management. USFWS will continue to closely monitor the status of the Gopher Tortoise.

Gopher tortoises need relatively deep, sandy soils in which to burrow, open sunny sites for nesting, and abundant non-woody food plants. Favored foods are beans, broadleaf grasses, and selected plants in the sunflower family. Gopher tortoises also eat blackberries, blueberries, gopher apples, and other low-growing fruits. They thrive in longleaf pine forests and enjoy the same type of habitat as the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker.

In other Endangered Species Act news this week, the **US House defeated the so-called "Extinction Rider,"** that would have prevented USFWS from spending any money on any new species listing. The Georgia delegation split along party lines with our five Democrats supporting species and our eight Republicans voting no.

Kick Coal Kickball

Savannahians braved the heat last Saturday to try their hand at scoring a run for clean energy. State Senator Lester Jackson and Tybee City Councilman Paul Wolff joined Coastal Group members. Watch the [WSAV coverage](#) and the [WTOC coverage](#).



Sierra Club Meetings

Smart Energy Team Meeting, Monday, August 1st, 6:30p.m. refreshments, 7p.m. start, Mike Walls - Chair, mwalls@ellijay.com

Beyond Factory Farming, Monday, August 8th, 7p.m., Leah Garces - Chair, Leah.Garces@ciwf.org.uk

Wildlands and Wildlife Committee Meeting, Tuesday, August 16th, 7:00p.m., Mike Murdock - Chair, murdock1@mindspring.com

RAIL Committee Meeting, Monday, August 22nd 7:00 p.m., David Emory - Chair, david.emory@gmail.com

Atlanta Inner City Outings (ICO), Tuesday, August 23rd, 7:30p.m., contact Allison Williams adwilliams8@yahoo.com

Fundraising Committee, Wednesday, August 24th, 7:00p.m., Erin Wetty - Chair, ewetty@seyfarth.com

Georgia Chapter Retreat - September 30th-October 2nd



Sierra Club Executive Director **Mike Brune is coming to Georgia!** The Georgia Chapter Retreat will be **September 30th-October 2nd** on Jekyll Island. Dolphin watching, riding bikes, fishing, kayaking, and learning more about how you can help the Georgia Chapter enjoy, explore and protect the planet. Click [here](#) for more information and registration. We are looking for **items for our Silent Auction!** Anything handmade, weekend at your cabin, home energy audit, Falcons tickets, would be most appreciated! Contact colleen.kiernan@sierraclub.org to donate.

Comment on the Dawson Forest Reservoir - August 8th and 22nd

The Dawson County Commission will hold two public hearings on the proposed Dawson Forest Reservoir Sept. 8 and 22 at 4 p.m. at the G.L. Pete Gilleland Chambers at City Hall, [415 Hwy 53 East, Dawsonville, GA 30534](#). The Georgia Chapter encourages its Dawson County members to attend this meeting and voice their opinions about the future of the 10,000-acre Dawson Forest Wildlife Management Area.

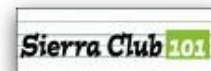


Plant Washington Revised Air Permit Issued, Hearing in Sandersville - August 18th

As you may remember, our GreenLaw and Southern Environmental Law Center attorneys convinced a judge that she needed to send the Plant Washington air permit back to Georgia EPD. The new permit has been issued and the public hearing is at 6:30 pm on Thursday, August 18th at Oconee Fall Line Technical College in Sandersville. Stay tuned for more information!

Sierra Club 101 - September 10th

You got on our mailing list because you care about the environment and want help -- now what? Sierra Club 101! Come learn about the Sierra Club and how to get involved in our local efforts. Open to members and non-members alike -- bring a friend! Breakfast and coffee provided. September 10th, 10:30am-12pm. Register online by clicking [here](#).





Interested in reading more?

If you have missed an issue of *Footnotes Online* you can view them online in our archive by [clicking here](#). You can also sign up for alerts in order to take action at times when we need decision makers to hear from you. [We need your help!](#)



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