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## Georgia Chapter

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Footnotes Issue #96: April 13th, 2015

### Georgia's Proposed Pipelines

Most people are familiar with the [Keystone XL Pipeline](#), the proposed 875-mile oil pipeline that would transport up to 830,000 barrels of dirty tar sands crude from Alberta, Canada to export facilities on the Gulf Coast. For the over two years, the Sierra Club has waged a campaign to urge President Obama to reject TransCanada's application to build KXL. **[While the President has recently vetoed Congress's bill to force approval of the Keystone XL pipeline, he still must make his final decision to reject the pipeline once and for all.](#)**



*Image courtesy of Kinder Morgan via Savannah Morning News*

For the Sierra Club, the fight over Keystone XL isn't just about a pipeline, it's about stopping the climate-destroying tar sands. However, the rejection of the KXL pipeline is one small part of a much larger battle: Around the country and here in Georgia, locals are fighting pipelines every day. The fight over these pipelines reflects the building tensions over which direction America's energy future will take. There are better ways to produce energy that help our climate and do not put future generations at risk!

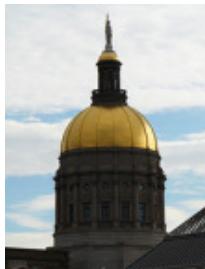
In Southwest Georgia, [the Sabal Trail pipeline proposed by Spectra Energy](#) would span 157 miles, and cross nine Georgia counties, four rivers, and three state parks. The pipeline, which is expected to cost \$3 billion and would supply Florida Power and Light with natural gas, puts thousands of acres of environmentally sensitive wetlands, forests and meadows in danger. The Georgia Chapter has joined forces with the Florida Chapter in order to oppose the pipeline. Although Spectra has made the case for the new pipeline by suggesting that two existing natural gas pipelines into Florida are near capacity and that Florida Power & Light and Duke Energy will need more gas in the future, we believe it to be bad energy policy that endangers natural areas and property rights. Both the Georgia and Florida Chapters have similar goals to encourage our utilities to ramp up renewables and energy efficiency instead of adding more natural gas power plants. The Sabal Trail natural gas pipeline is now in front of the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission. **[Please contact your Congressmen and ask them to tell FERC that the Sabal Trail pipeline is unneeded. If they find that there is a need, then the current route should be changed to protect private property and health.](#)**

Our Savannah River Group (Augusta) and Coastal Groups (Savannah) have also been engaged in a battle to stop the [proposed Palmetto Pipeline](#), slated to travel to Savannah and Jacksonville in order to transport gas, diesel and ethanol from South Carolina, Mississippi and Louisiana. The new 360-mile pipeline will parallel the Savannah River, putting the river at risk in the event of spills. The Georgia Chapter has voted to oppose the proposed Kinder Morgan Palmetto Pipeline, with our primary concern being that the construction of this pipeline alongside offshore oil drilling could result in spills that devastate the Georgia coast, much like the BP Oil spill did to the Gulf coast of Louisiana. **[The Push Back the Pipeline Coalition is planning a rally for noon on April 18th during Savannah's Earth Day Festival at Forsyth Park. Please join them, and attend the Georgia Department of Transportation's public hearing on the certificate application on April 21 in Richmond Hill.](#)**

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### Legislative Wrap-Up

The 2015 Georgia Legislative Session ended on midnight, Thursday, April 2nd. Over the course of the session, we saw numerous pieces of environmental legislation. Thank you for contacting your representatives when we asked you



to! Together, we had some significant wins, most notably with the passage of HB 57, the Solar Freedom bill. The law clarifies that third party financing of rooftop solar projects is allowed, which will allow our already hot solar market to really take off. Another big win was preventing the passage of SB 139, a bill that would have prevented local governments from regulating plastic bags. We also experienced a few losses, with one of the most disappointing being the transportation funding bill, which raises \$900 for roads and does nothing meaningful for transit while punishing electric vehicle (EV) drivers. **Read about more about our lobbying efforts, and the outcome of environmental legislation during the 2015 session on our [Legislative Blog!](#)**

## Sierra Club Meetings

**Wildlands & Wildlife Committee Meeting**, Monday, April 20, 7:00 p.m.  
William Tomlin, [wmltom@gmail.com](mailto:wmltom@gmail.com)

**RAIL Committee Meeting**, Monday, April 27, 7:00 p.m.  
Brionté McCorkle, [brionte.mccorkle@sierraclub.org](mailto:brionte.mccorkle@sierraclub.org)

**Smart Energy Committee Meeting**, Monday, May 4, 7:00 p.m.  
Cecilia Harris, [ceciliaharris@gmail.com](mailto:ceciliaharris@gmail.com)

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

## Other Events



**April, all month long! - The 2015 John Muir Outings Series** - Join us for our annual John Muir Outings Series as we Explore and Enjoy Georgia's beautiful wild places on each Weekend in April, and discuss how you can be a part of protecting them for generations to come. Based on the philosophy of the Sierra Club's famed founder, John Muir, these unique outings offer you the opportunity to learn about conservation efforts happening to protect the environment while also enjoying and exploring some of the most beautiful places Georgia has to offer. Join us, along with our special guests, as we share our environmental visions of how to enable a grand and sustainable Georgia, one of which our founder would be proud. There is a \$25 suggested donation for each outing. [For additional details on each specific outing and to sign up, please click here.](#)



**April 15th - ATL Raise Up National Day of Action** - Join workers, students, community members, and clergy from across the South for one of the largest labor actions in history, as we converge on Atlanta. All over the country the #Fightfor15 is growing as more and more workers demand living wages, the right to unionize, justice, dignity and a future for all, not just the super rich. [Click here for more information.](#)

### April 17th - 13th Annual EarthShare Earth Day Leadership Breakfast

**Breakfast** - The Earth Day Leadership Breakfast on Friday, April 17, 2015 will be held at 200 Peachtree. Now in its 13th year, the Breakfast will feature a keynote speaker, environmental updates from several environmental leaders, displays from area environmental groups supported by EarthShare of Georgia and business networking. [Click here to register.](#)



**April 19th - GreenLaw Earth Month Celebration** - Join GreenLaw for its Earth Month Celebration at The Falls on Sunday, April 19 from 2:00 - 5:00 pm. There will be a brief presentation at 3:00 pm followed by a guided tour of the property on McConaughey Nature Preserve & Historic Site. For more information, [click here](#).

**April 22nd - 20th Annual EarthShare Earth Day Party** - The Earth Day Party on Wednesday, April 22, 2015 is a celebration that includes food, music, and an Eco-silent auction and will be held at The Garden at Community Smith at the Renaissance Atlanta Midtown Hotel. The hotel welcomes guests with a trendy setting for music, the eco-silent auction and a locally sourced menu created by Chef Scott Keefer. We're bringing Earth Day to this urban retreat under the stars! [Click here to register.](#)



**April 25th - Outings Leader Training 101 & Basic First Aid** - Do you like spending time in the outdoors? Like seeing new places and meeting new people? If you have ever thought about leading outings, then this is the perfect volunteer opportunity for you! The Sierra Club has been offering outings for over 100 years, furthering the Sierra Club's conservations goals around the country. Attend our Outings Leader Training 101 to learn how you can lead outdoor events with the Sierra Club of Georgia. Special class location at REI Kennesaw in Cobb County taught by Sierra Club volunteers!

[Click here for more info and to register.](#)

**Looking for more? Check out our [Meetup Group](#) for even more events!**



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