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Georgia Chapter

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Footnotes Issue #97: April 24th, 2015

Southern Co. Shareholders Call for Climate Stabilization Goals

Customers and regulators are demanding cleaner, safer, more reliable and affordable energy options. With [solar power getting cheaper](#) and [battery prices dropping](#), the old model of utilities providing power from large centralized power plants is certain to shift, posing a risk to utilities who are not adequately preparing for a carbon-free economy.



Southern Company (SO) shareholders [will be asked to vote on a resolution](#) which will have Southern Company set carbon reduction targets by November. Results of the vote will be announced at the Annual Meeting on May 27th at Callaway Gardens.

Filed by the Sisters of Charity of St. Elizabeth and a group of other shareholders, the resolution calls on Southern Company to set specific targets for reduction in greenhouse gas (GHG) emissions and dates for accomplishing these reductions ([see supporting Brief](#)). As one of the largest emitters in the world, Southern Company's failure to have an articulated plan matters to people everywhere.

Ballots are arriving in shareholder mailboxes now, which allow the owners of SO to call for GHG reduction goals. The Sierra Club urges you to [vote your shares](#) for the resolution and to ask your friends, neighbors and colleagues to do likewise. Own shares in a mutual fund? Contact the fund and request that they vote both your shares and all the others held by the fund to vote for the resolution. Nationwide, many pension funds, socially responsible funds, and faith institutions are voting Yes. Every vote sends a message that the time to set a goal is now, and is a call for a dialogue on how Southern Company will get there.

Southern Company's progress in developing cleaner energy is impressive when compared with its past record, and present efforts are to be commended. But when measured against their peers in the utility industry, Southern Company lags far behind, as [a study by the Ceres organization documents](#). And when measured against the hard physical realities of the pace of change needed to stabilize the climate, Southern Company's efforts are even more inadequate.

Speak out. Voting is happening now. If you own shares and would like to attend the annual shareholder meeting May 27th, or if you would be willing to allow another activist to voice your opinions for you, [please let us know](#). The shareholder meeting will be a great time to get Southern Company to accurately and reliably disclose their carbon emissions so we can discuss a path to an effective way for their reduction using clean, renewable energy for which the price of fuel is free.

For more information, email SouthernCanExcel@gmail.com.

Plant Branch Retired!



On Wednesday, April 15th, Georgia Power finished the retirement of Plant Harlee Branch, the state's first million-kilowatt power plant. Built in 1969, the plant sits on the banks of Lake Sinclair in Putnam County and was constructed by Georgia Power in order to use the water for cooling. As part of their Integrated Resource Plan, Georgia Power conducted a cost analysis to determine whether installing the equipment necessary to comply with the mercury rule was economical for the company. In January 2013, the retirement was announced, and is one of many across the nation, representing the end of the coal era. The closing of Plant Branch will reduce pressure on aquatic life at Lake Sinclair and reduce air pollution that has

been attributed to [2500 asthma attacks and 200 heart attacks](#). Workers at Plant Branch have been redeployed around the Southern Company system, and it is the hope of many that Putnam County will be the home of a large solar project to maintain some of their tax base. [Click here to read more!](#)

Sierra Club Meetings

RAIL Committee Meeting, Monday, April 27, 7:00 p.m.

Brionté McCorkle, brionte.mccorkle@sierraclub.org

Smart Energy Committee Meeting, Monday, May 4, 7:00 p.m.

Cecilia Harris, ceciliaharris@gmail.com

Wildlands & Wildlife Committee Meeting, Monday, May 18, 7:00 p.m.

William Tomlin, wmltom@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 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.](#)



May 8th - Wind Power Lunch - Please join Georgia Public Service Commissioner Tim Echols as he moderates an interactive panel discussion about the opportunities and challenges in Georgia's wind energy future. The Lunch & Learn will take place from 11:45 am - 1:30 pm at the State Bar of Georgia Offices, (104 Marietta Street, Atlanta, Georgia 30303) in the 3rd Floor Auditorium. Admission is \$25 per person and includes lunch. Credit cards, cash, or checks made payable to Friends of Tim Echols will be accepted at registration. RSVP to Stephanie Stuckey Benfield at (404) 659-3122, ext. 226 or sbenfield@greenlaw.org

May 12th - Georgia Water Coalition Spring Partner Meeting - Join us for the Annual GWC Spring Partner meeting on May 12, 2015. We will be discussing the future of the Georgia Water Coalition, Buffers on GA state waters, groundwater protection, 2015 legislative debrief, pipelines in GA, and more. We will honor our champion Senators and Representatives during lunch. Lunch is free but will be provided for registrants only, so please make sure you register in advance! [Click here to register.](#)





May 14th - Sierra Club 101 - You joined the Sierra Club to help protect the environment -- now what? 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! Please [register here](#) so we can bring enough refreshments for everyone.

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



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