



May-June 2015

## Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club

# Sierra Sentinel

### Executive Committee

**Chair** Mary Goodman 817-293-7492  
fw.sierra.chair@gmail.com

**Vice Chair** Larry Goodman  
817-293-7492

**Treasurer** Diane Lancaster  
817-845-4139  
fw.sierra.treasurer@gmail.com

**Secretary** Diane Lancaster  
817-845-4139  
fw.sierra.secretary@gmail.com

**Outings Chair** Nancy McVean  
817-596-5209  
fw.sierra.outings@gmail.com

**Membership Chair** John MacFarlane  
817-944-2086  
fw.sierra.excom@gmail.com

Deena Angeley  
fw.sierra.excom@gmail.com

Lisa Gowan  
fw.sierra.excom@gmail.com

### Conservation Contacts

**Co-Chair** John MacFarlane 817-944-2086, fw.sierra.excom@gmail.com

**Co-Chair** Dewayne Quertermous  
214-558-1407  
dewayne.quertermous@sierraclub.org

### Special Interest Contacts

**Program Chair** Claudia Blalock  
817-924-6242  
fw.sierra.programs@gmail.com

**Newsletter Editor** —Diane  
Lancaster 817-845-4139  
dianelan@gmail.com

**Webmaster**—Dewayne  
Quertermous 214-558-1407  
dewayne.quertermous@sierraclub.org

**Chapter Delegate** - Dewayne  
Quertermous 214-558-1407  
dewayne.quertermous@sierraclub.org

## *Homes, Daycares, Local Businesses at Greater Risk with Passage of Pro-Polluter Bill HB 40*

AUSTIN, Texas – On May 4th, the Texas Senate passed HB 40 – a bill that strips away the right of cities to protect their citizens from hazardous oil and gas operations – without debate. The bill was largely written by the oil and gas industry and sponsored by Sen. Troy Fraser (R-Horseshoe Bay), whose election campaigns have been heavily funded by oil and gas companies.

In response to the passage of HB 40, **Sierra Club Conservation Director Cyrus Reed** issued the following statement:

“This bill jeopardizes the health and well being of families across Texas. What the Texas Legislature has proven today is that oil and gas reign supreme over health, disaster preparedness, and virtually everything else – schools, daycares, homes, parks, local businesses.

Common sense amendments, which would have allowed for limits to how close oil and gas operations could be to these places, were summarily rejected in the house and not even offered in the Senate as the bill passed on a 24-7 vote. In fact, the House and Senate author rejected amendments to allow cities to inspect and enforce state rules, allow cities to require insurance or require shut-off valves in hurricane zones, or allow regulation of injection waste wells. In the coming years, if your home suffers damage because of nearby oil and gas operations or your health is affected by it, know that your ability to do something about it has all but been taken away by the Texas Legislature.”

### Wed. May 20, 7:00 p.m. - General Meeting

Dr. Dotty Woodson, Texas A&M Extension Water Resource Specialist and former Tarrant County AgriLife horticulturalist, will discuss landscape water conservation practices for our urban environments. Conservation is the easiest and least expensive method to make water resources sustainable. Many water utilities have set their water conservation at 30 to 40 percent. Since water use increases 45% during the summer irrigation season, adapting a few simple landscape water conservation practices can save water, reducing both your water bill and the amount of water required to go through the water treatment plant. We meet at 7 PM in the Azalea Room of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Center, 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd. at University Drive, just north of I-30 in Fort Worth. All are welcome!



## **MEET AND GREET AT R.J. GATORS TUES. MAY 12, 5:00**



Please join us at R.J. Gators for libations, food, and fun. R.J. Gators is located at 4413 Trail Lake Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76109. <http://rjgatorsfw.com/home/319619>. If you don't know where Gators is, click on the "Contacts" tab on their website home page and you will find a map. R.J. Gators has a large patio, so if it's not raining, we'll meet there. Otherwise, look for us indoors. This is a come and go event, so if you can't make it by 5:00, join us when you can. Learn more about the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club and our activities, and meet some new people who are also interested in enjoying the great outdoors and conserving our land and resources.

## **Wed. June 17, 7:00 p.m. General Meeting**

Martha Ohlson of Allen, TX, will share her wonderful photos and travel experiences from a 5-week trip to Vietnam in 2013. Martha is an accomplished photographer, has explored more than 40 countries, camped and backpacked around the world, and is a member of the Dallas Sierra Club. We meet at 7 PM in the Azalea Room of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Center, 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd. at University Drive, just north of I-30 in Fort Worth. All are welcome!



## **Congress Passes Measure to Allow Selling Off National Forests and Other Public Lands**

In March, the U.S. Senate passed a budget amendment sponsored by Sen. Lisa Murkowski, R-Alaska, the chair of the Energy and Natural Resources Committee, supporting the idea of selling, transferring or trading federal lands to the states. The measure is purely symbolic in nature and doesn't cover any specific parcels or give Congress any kind of new authority to chuck federal holdings. Proposals still have to make it past the House, Senate and the White House to go through. But the amendment is a "signal" that considering such bills is a priority of the Congress, says Robert Dillon, communications director for Murkowski's energy committee.

This surprising news of the passing of measures that would allow the sale or outright giveaway of most public lands is revealed in a New York Times editorial by Will Rogers, president of the Trust for Public Lands, titled "[Our Land, Up for Grabs.](#)" While it's unlikely that President Barack Obama would support such an extreme measure, if a Republican president is elected in 2016 and Republicans maintain control of both houses of Congress, losing our cherished public lands could be a very real possibility.

The two measures vary in just how far they would go. The Senate measure, which passed by a mere two-vote margin, would allow the federal government to sell or give away all federal lands to states or local governments that could auction them off, except for national parks and monuments. This could include bands of wilderness or forest lands surrounding national parks such as Sequoia, Grand Canyon and Yellowstone.

The House measure, which passed 228 to 119, would similarly turn over public lands to states and local governments to give them "more control over the resources within their boundaries" to lead to "increased resource production and allow states and localities to take advantage of the benefits of increased economic activity."

That could mean opening up these protected lands to oil drilling, fracking, mining, or development for commercial, industrial or residential projects. It would be up to each state or local government to decide the future of these federal lands. State and local parks could fall to the Congressional budget axe too, since next up the Land and Water Conservation Fund reauthorization vote looms, which provides money to partially underwrite state and local parks and recreation, conservation easements, and also money for national parks, forests and wildlife refuges. It expires September 30<sup>th</sup> if Congress won't reauthorize it.

Ironically, it was a Republican president, Theodore Roosevelt, who started the federal system for preserving lands for posterity for the public enjoyment, after his visits to Yosemite and Yellowstone inspired him to launch the national parks and national forest systems.

Over 400 million people a year visit our federal public lands, pumping \$41 billion into the U.S. economy. But the real benefit is in giving Americans pride in our national heritage – our beautiful public lands –and an appreciation for the wonders of nature. Indeed, many species of wildlife could well go extinct if the federal government stopped protecting millions of acres of public lands. Rogers concludes, "Rather than selling off the lands we all own...our leaders should listen to voters and find ways to protect more of the places that make America special."

## Where Are We Now?

### Five Years After the BP Oil Disaster

April 20th marked the five-year anniversary of the Deepwater Horizon oil rig explosion in the Gulf of Mexico, which killed 11 workers and began what would become the worst environmental disaster in U.S. history. Between April 20th and July 15th, the uncapped oil well gushed an estimated five million barrels of crude oil and four million pounds of natural gases, including methane, propane, ethane, and butane, into the Gulf's waters. An estimated 68,000 square miles of Gulf waters and nearly 500 miles of coastline from Louisiana to Florida were affected by the spill. Tar balls are still washing up on the shores of Alabama and they are likely to continue washing up for years to come across Gulf Coast beaches.



The impacts on wildlife in the Gulf have been extensive. The Gulf of Mexico is home to more than [15,000 species of wildlife](#), many of which are economically important for commercial and recreational fishing. Two of the Gulf Coast's main economic drivers are commercial fishing and tourism. Both industries are heavily dependent on healthy beaches and waters to flourish and were significantly damaged when the Macondo well blew. As the environmental damage lingers, so does the negative economic impact, which will be felt for years to come.

Despite the massive oil disaster in the Gulf, and the ongoing environmental, economic and health crisis Gulf residents are enduring, the Obama administration is now proposing to open the Arctic and Atlantic coasts and their residents to the same risks. The President has included the Atlantic and Arctic Oceans in his administration's draft five-year plan for offshore drilling. If drilling commences in the Atlantic, East Coast residents could be the next victim of our fossil fuel addiction.

Luckily Senator Menendez of New Jersey along with nine other original cosponsors (Markey, Booker, Sanders, Mikulski, Cardin, Whitehouse, Warren, Blumenthal, and Reed), stood up on Earth Day and introduced the "[Clean Ocean and Safe Tourism Anti-Drilling Act](#)" or COAST Act. The COAST Act would ban drilling in the Atlantic outer continental shelf. It is important that we protect our natural resources and do not allow the Atlantic to fall victim to the irresponsible and negligent actions of Big Oil. It is time that we realize that drilling leads to spilling and that the industry's promises of safety cannot be believed. The oil in the Gulf is still there and it is a constant reminder of the dirty legacy of offshore drilling. It is time to finally invest in the clean and safe energy production of offshore wind and leave our dirty fuels in the ground where they belong.

-- by *Natalie Mebane*, dirty fuels policy expert, Sierra Club's *Our Wild America* campaign



**Davis Mountains State Park**

*Photo Courtesy Texas Parks & Wildlife*



# Calendar of Events

**TUES. MAY 12, 5:00 -- MEET AND GREET AT R.J. GATORS.** Please join us at R.J. Gators for libations, food, and fun. R.J. Gators is located at 4413 Trail Lake Drive, Fort Worth, TX 76109. Here is a link to their website: <http://rjgatorsfw.com/home/319619>. If you don't know where Gators is, click on the "Contacts" tab on their website home page and you will find a map. R.J. Gators has a large patio, so if it's not raining, we'll meet there. Otherwise, look for us indoors. This is a come and go event, so if you can't make it by 5:00, join us when you can. Learn more about the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club and our activities, and meet some new people who are also interested in enjoying the great outdoors and conserving our land and resources. See ya there!



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**SAT MAY 23, 8:30 a.m. - DAY HIKE AT CEDAR RIDGE PRESERVE.** Enjoy a two-hour day hike at the Cedar Ridge Preserve, Cedar Hill, TX. We will hike about 4-5 miles (approximately two hours) and the trails have several 100 ft elevation changes both up and down. Meet at the parking lot at the Preserve at 8:30 AM. I will be bringing a loaded backpack for conditioning; feel free to bring yours! The Preserve is a not-for-profit natural habitat of 633 acres featuring 10 miles of hiking trails, a native plant nursery and butterfly gardens. Find your way to Interstate 20 just east of Grand Prairie and take exit 458 for Mountain Creek Parkway. Go south for a few miles and you will see the entrance to the Preserve on your right. The park does ask for a modest donation, strictly voluntary. Please contact the leaders Carla Egyed at 214-886-1814 (email [cegyed@sbcglobal.net](mailto:cegyed@sbcglobal.net)). Please, no dogs on this hike.

**FRIDAY MAY 29—SUNDAY MAY 31. CADDO LAKE STATE PARK CAMPING AND PADDLING WEEKEND.** Join us for a weekend of camping and paddling on beautiful Caddo Lake, Texas' only natural lake. Leader approval is necessary. Participants limited to 18. Camp at State Park Friday and/or Saturday. Paddle Caddo Lake on Saturday. Canoes available for rental at park. Meet at Mill Pond and be ready to paddle by 10 AM Saturday. Sierra Club liability waiver required. Contact Tolbert Greenwood at [tolbertgreenwood@gmail.com](mailto:tolbertgreenwood@gmail.com) or (817) 455-3302 to register and for approval. Additional information and emailed trip details on request.

**FRIDAY, JUNE 5—SUNDAY, JUNE 7 - CAR CAMPING AT CHICKASAW NATIONAL RECREATION AREA.** Join us for a weekend of car camping in this beautiful recreational area in Oklahoma, known for its hiking, fishing, and water - lakes, streams, small waterfalls and mineral springs. On Saturday you can explore the park through a choice of two hikes. The first hike will be approximately 3 miles in length. The second hike will be slightly longer at 4-6 miles. There will be time in the afternoon to relax, visit the Travertine Nature Center, or try your hand at fishing. We'll meet for a potluck dinner Saturday night. There is the possibility of a short hike on Sunday morning. After leaving the park on Sunday you will have the option of lunch and a tour of the Chickasaw Cultural Center. This center explores the rich history of the Chickasaw people. Leader approval is needed. The trip is limited to 16 people. Contact Lisa Gowan, trip leader ([lgowan10@yahoo.com](mailto:lgowan10@yahoo.com), 817-691-9901) or Mary Goodman, co leader, ([Larry-goodman@sbcglobal.net](mailto:Larry-goodman@sbcglobal.net), 817-300-7982) to register. Additional information about campsite reservations and trip details will be emailed to trip participants. **NOTE: Trip is full. Please contact leader if you would like to be placed on wait list.**

*Continued Next Page*

**WED. JUNE 17 - GENERAL MEETING.** Martha Ohlson of Allen, TX, will share her wonderful photos and travel experiences from a 5-week trip to Vietnam in 2013. Martha is an accomplished photographer, has explored more than 40 countries, camped and backpacked around the world, and is a member of the Dallas Sierra Club. We meet at 7 PM in the Azalea Room of the Fort Worth Botanic Garden Center, 3220 Botanic Garden Blvd. at University Drive, just north of I-30 in Fort Worth. All are welcome!

**DAVIS MOUNTAINS STATE PARK CAR CAMPING - THURSDAY, AUG. 13—SUNDAY, AUG. 16**

Need a cooling off during the hot days in Texas? The Davis Mts. are your relief from the heat! You will need a jacket during the beautiful mornings and evenings in the Davis Mts. Hiking in August? When it is only in the 80's - you bet! This is one of the jewels of Texas. Some of the events of this outing - dinner in Marfa at the El Paisano Hotel where Liz, Rock and James stayed while filming GIANT - and (hopefully) view the amazing Marfa lights, short hikes at the Chihuahua Desert Cactus research Station, other hikes in the mountains and at the Nature Conservancy Land.

That is just the beginning of our adventure. The highlight will come at our visit to the McDonald Observatory - one of the best places for viewing the night sky in the world! Here is the best part - the PERSEID METEOR SHOWER will peak on August 12 - 14. A new moon on August 14, 2015 will create perfect conditions for observing the shower. Astronomers suggest watching after midnight on August 13, 2015. The Perseid meteor shower is one of the brighter meteor showers of the year.

Davis Mountains State Park is the only state park where you can bring an RV, camp in a tent, or stay in the beautiful Indian Lodge. (nice restaurant in the lodge) You can make your reservations for RV's, camp sites or rooms in the lodge through the Texas Park and Wildlife website. The lodge fills up fast, so make reservations asap. Please contact [nancymcvean@gmail.com](mailto:nancymcvean@gmail.com) - 817 596 5209 before making reservations. Nancy needs to know that you are coming and where you are staying.

## 2015 Lone Star Land Steward Awards Announced

More than 94% of Texas is privately owned or operated, making landowners' wildlife and habitat conservation vitally important. The 20th annual [Lone Star Land Steward Awards](#) honor some of the finest examples of private land stewardship and restoration in land, water and wildlife stewardship across the eco-regions of Texas. This year's winners are:



- **Edwards Plateau-** Carpe Diem Ranch, Menard County. Charlie and Marci Granstaff, owner/operators
- **Gulf Coast Prairies and Marshes-** Gore Family Farm, Jackson County. Gore Family, owner/operators
- **Lost Pines-** Rancho Zunzun, Bastrop County. Elvis and Roxanne Hernandez, owner/operators
- **Post Oaks-** Lavaca Rio, Jackson County. Wynne Snoots, Jason DeLorenzo, and Marty Phillips, owners, Brent Friedrichs, manager
- **Rolling Plains-** Mill Iron Ranch, Collingsworth County. Don and Al Allred, owner/operators
- **South Texas Plains-** H. Yturria Land & Cattle Co., Kenedy, Willacy, and Hidalgo Counties. Butler family, owners, Rudy Bazan, manager
- **NGO/Corporation-** Neches Refuge, Houston County. Forestar Group, Inc., owner, Stan Cook and Jeff Portwood, managers.

*Courtesy of Texas Parks and Wildlife*



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## GREEN SOURCE DFW

**Want to keep informed about upcoming events in North Texas involving environmental groups? Want to learn more about green businesses in the area and opportunities for environmental education? Then subscribe to the Green Source DFW newsletter.**

The stated goal of Green Source DFW is to advance the environmental movement in the Dallas-Fort Worth area by promoting: green living, sustainable practices, nonprofit environmental organizations, eco-friendly green businesses, environmental education, scientific information, public policy discussions, and socially responsible investing.

The newsletter is a great source of information and a good way to learn about and communicate with green groups and businesses in the area. Please visit their website at <http://greensourcedfw.org/> to sign up.



## ASK MR. GREEN

Hey Mr. Green,

I sometimes make a point to plug my phone into the car charger when I drive, thinking that the energy required to charge the phone or iPad doesn't decrease fuel efficiency and therefore is kind of free. Is that true?

Alas, there is no free energy. The electricity produced when your engine spins an alternator requires a teeny weeny bit more gasoline to create additional electricity for charging. The car's voltage regulator allows the alternator to generate more or less power, according to demand, and your phone adds to that demand. So you'll use a teensy-weensy bit more net energy overall than you would by plugging the phone in at home, because power plant dynamos are typically 30 percent to 40 percent efficient, while gasoline engines are from 14 percent to 30 percent efficient, depending on speed and other variables. Moreover, if your power company does not rely heavily on fossil fuel, you will be putting a tad less carbon dioxide into the air if you charge at home instead of in the car.

Note that we're talking a minute amount of energy here. More important is to unplug the charger as soon as a phone or other device is fully charged. This is because many chargers continue to suck electricity after the battery is fully charged, which is why this wasted electricity is called "vampire power." You don't need to worry about unplugging if you have a "smart" charger, because these automatically stop drawing power when the battery is fully charged.--**Bob Schildgen**

### Have you Signed our Single-Use Bag Ban Petition?

If not, you can sign it by going to <http://www.thepetitionsite.com/622/890/475/support-a-single-use-plastic-bag-ban/> . We have over 300 signatures and counting. Please help make Fort Worth an environmental leader by signing our petition to ban single-use plastic bags in Fort Worth. And remember, when you shop, bring your bag!





## C'mon, Join the Club!!

Did you know that for only \$15.00, you can join the Sierra Club and enjoy all the benefits of membership? Such as a one-year subscription to the Sierra Magazine and automatic membership in your local chapter. And for a limited time, receive a free gift when you join. So please help support the Sierra Club by joining today!

To join and find out more, please click here → → → →



### *Sierra Club Mission Statement*



*To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these*

*objectives. For more information, please visit [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org).*

### **Do you Shop at Tom Thumb?**

If your answer is yes, how about helping the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club earn money while you shop? Just link your Tom Thumb Reward card to the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club, and every time you purchase groceries, the store will donate a portion of the purchase amount to the Club. Just go to <http://www.tomthumb.com/IFL/Grocery/Home>, click on "Community Caring" at the bottom of the page, click on "Good Neighbor" in the column on the left, and then click on "Get Application and Start Saving Today." That link will take you to a form you can fill out to link your card to the Club. The Club's number is 4659. If you shop at Tom Thumb, please take advantage of this easy way to contribute. Thanks for your support!





## Social Connections



Are you on [Facebook](#)? So are we. Like us to stay up to date on outings, conservation issues, and any events we are having.



[Meetup.com?](#)  
Find us there too and meet others who are interested in the same activities as you.



Visit the Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club's [web page](#) and see a list of our outings, events, and upcoming meetings, learn about our bag ban campaign, and find lots of good links!

### How to Join a List Serve and Why Should I?

If you would like to receive current information about club news, outings, and conservation issues, please sign up for our list serves. That way you won't miss out on any important news and will be informed if there are any last-minute changes to any of our outings. Occasionally an outing may be cancelled because of weather conditions, etc., so if you are on our Outings list serve, you'll be the first to know. And if you're on our News list serve, you'll receive a reminder about our general meeting each month. And don't worry, you won't get spammed. We don't distribute email addresses to anyone, so the only organization you'll be getting emails from is us! To sign up, go to the home page of our website or click on these links.

[Lonestar-FTW-News list serve](#)

[Lonestar-FTW-Outings News list serve](#)

[Lonestar-FTW-Conservation Forum list serve](#)

#### Cyberspace Contacts

Webmaster -Dewayne Quertermous 214-558-1407  
fw.sierra.webmaster@gmail.com

#### How to Volunteer and Where am I Needed?

Volunteers are essential to any organization, especially one that doesn't have a full-time paid staff. Currently the Fort Worth Sierra Club needs help with:

- Outings leaders for car camps, hikes, and backpacks
- Fundraising
- Volunteers to bring light snacks and drinks to our monthly general meetings

If you want more information or are interested in helping us, please contact Claudia at 817-924-6242 or [claudia.blalock@att.net](mailto:claudia.blalock@att.net)

**Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club**  
2905 Benbrook Blvd.  
Fort Worth, TX 76109-2344  
(817) 307-4808  
[ftwsierra@gmail.com](mailto:ftwsierra@gmail.com)



## JOIN THE SIERRA CLUB NOW AND HELP US MAKE HISTORY.

Name \_\_\_\_\_  
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 Email \_\_\_\_\_

**YES! I would like to give a gift membership to**  
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 Card Number \_\_\_\_\_ Exp. Date \_\_\_\_/\_\_\_\_  
 Signature \_\_\_\_\_

Membership Categories	Individual	Joint
<b>Special Offer</b>	<input type="checkbox"/> \$15	
Standard	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$49
Supporting	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35

Contributions, gifts and dues to Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and \$1 for your Chapter newsletters.

**Enclose a check and mail to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 421041, Palm Coast, FL 32142-1041 or visit our website [www.sierraclub.org](http://www.sierraclub.org)**

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