



SIERRA CLUB

DELTA CHAPTER

GROUP MEETINGS:

ACADIAN-LAFAYETTE AREA
Twice a month, Wednesdays at 6:30PM
First United Methodist Church
703 Lee Ave, Lafayette 70501

BATON ROUGE
Fourth Thursdays, 6:30 PM at
The Backpacker
7656 Jefferson Hwy. 70809

HONEY ISLAND (Northshore)
Fourth Sundays, 4:30 PM at
Abita Springs Trailhead Museum
22044 Main St. 70420

NEW ORLEANS
Second Sundays at 6:30 PM at the
Audubon Zoo, Dominion Auditorium
6500 Magazine St. 70118

Meeting times and places are subject to change: Please SEE OUR CALENDAR which lists ALL UPCOMING EVENTS & MEETINGS AT OUR WEBSITE: SIERRACLUB.ORG/LOUISIANA

Delta Sierran

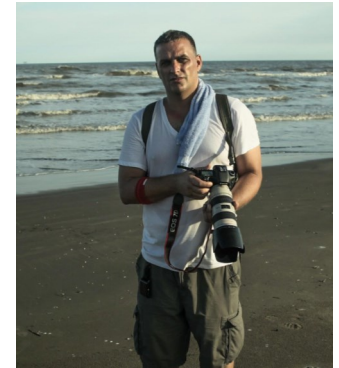
Sierra Club - Delta Chapter / Louisiana Newsletter

MEET OUR CHAPTER LOBBYIST, JONATHAN HENDERSON

Jonathan Henderson, J.D., M.B.A., cut his teeth in Louisiana legislation as a child surrounded by stacks of bills and resolutions sitting at the dining room table of his late father, a well-known progressive lobbyist and educator.

Jonathan first worked at the Louisiana Legislature as a Senate Page, then as Assistant Sergeant at Arms, and later as Legislative Assistant for the House of Representatives. He advocated successfully at the State legislature and in Congress on behalf of numerous private and non-profit organizations, and worked on numerous local, state, and federal political campaigns. Inspired by witnessing first-hand the destruction Hurricane Katrina had on his hometown of New Orleans, Jonathan joined the fight against climate change, for

coastal restoration, and to hold the oil and gas industry accountable. While on staff at the Gulf Restoration Network (2008-2015), his work in the field investigating pollution began in earnest in 2010 by taking dozens of monitoring trips by air and sea documenting the BP disaster. His work watchdogging the petrochemical industry by air and sea continues today; to date, Jonathan has documented and filed well over 100 pollution reports, leading to numerous successful investigations by the US Coast Guard. Jonathan frequently speaks on environmental issues, and countless local, national, and international media stories, as well as several documentaries, feature his work protecting Louisiana. Jonathan testified as an expert on



Jonathan Henderson, on the job documenting pollution and polluters!

environmental policy and pollution at several Congressional and State hearings. A graduate of Benjamin Franklin Senior High School in New Orleans, Jonathan holds a Bachelor's degree in Theater from Louisiana State University, a Master's of Business Administration from the University of Louisiana at Lafayette, and a Juris Doctorate from Southern University Law Center.

SIERRA STUDENT COALITION ALIVE & WELL IN LOUISIANA!

Did you know that we have an active Sierra Student Coalition, the 771 Alliance, here in Louisiana? Southern University at Baton

Rouge has a robust student group that has been working hard for over a year to bring about greater environmental justice to SU and the surrounding community. Via awareness workshops, efforts to get a recycling group at the campus, and attending hearings to give

push back on new chemical and industrial plants, 771 Alliance has worked diligently to hold accountable the oppressive systems preventing our state from advancing. We have recently received a grant from national, a grant that will support us in our efforts to expand or create recycling programs in each of the 6 largest cities in Louisiana. We are also working to reduce Styrofoam usage statewide, as Styrofoam

is carcinogenic and not biodegradable. Interested in working with us? Stay tuned as we are going to need you to help Louisiana reach these goals! Please email your questions and thoughts to 771alliance@gmail.com.
Editors Note: ExCom member Angelle Bradford is Advisor to the SSC 771 Alliance. Angelle is Chapter Leader for Moms Demand Action Louisiana and a Doctoral student at Tulane University.



SIERRA
STUDENT COALITION

LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK: WORKING BILLS IN BATON ROUGE

The 2019 Louisiana Legislative session convened Monday, April 8 - and we were ready. There were pre-filed bills seeking to tax electric vehicles and reduce limits on hazardous waste polluters, as well as measures we support set to improve our drinking water and increase air quality monitoring.

GET INVOLVED! Join our weekly conference calls at 7:00 pm to hear our legislative update from our chapter lobbyist, Jonathan Henderson. (Call in at 1-800-501-6174, Conference Code: 1003500), each Wednesday at 7:PM through June 12, 2019.

Bills we're tracking:

Topping our list of bills we're keeping an eye on this session: **HB 510/HB 615**, by Rep. Stuart Bishop (R-Lafayette). This instrument seeks to allow companies to pollute Louisiana land, air and water while avoiding consequences, letting them hide any discoveries of pollution from citizens and communities. HB 510 sets up a legal privilege that allows companies to withhold the contents of their internal environmental compliance audits from **regulators and the public**, allowing for environmental destruction to occur without penalty. HB 510 intends to encourage companies to perform their own internal queries and make adjustments; however, it will strip environmental regulators of their ability to gather all the facts necessary to hold polluters accountable. Studies across the US show there is no evidence these laws work as intended. *(Recently moved from Committee to floor vote as **Substitute Bill HB 615.**)*

Tying for first place in terrible ideas: **HB 542**, by Rep. Stephen Carter (R - Baton Rouge). At the same time that Georgia Republicans are proposing at \$2,500 tax credit on electric vehicles (EVs), one Louisiana Republican is proposing what would be the country's highest tax on EVs. Rep. Carter's HB 542 seeks to levy a \$300 annual tax on electric vehicles, along with a \$200 tax on hybrid vehicles, fees that would certainly impact the growth of electric vehicle ownership in the state. Unlike the gas-and-diesel portion of Rep. Carter's proposed gas tax, the EV portion does not "ramp up" gradually over time - it immediately raises the fee to its maximum level from zero tax today. With currently fewer than 2000 electric vehicles in the state, Louisiana is just scratching the surface of the possibilities of electrification, and stands to gain nearly zero income from the new EV tax. What is certain is that an outrageous EV fee in an early-stage market will put Louisiana at the bottom of yet another good list, and send even more jobs that our state might have gained to Houston and Atlanta. *(From EV-LA.org) (Currently in House Ways & Means Committee)*

How about some good news? **HB 175**, by Rep. Joseph Bouie (D - New Orleans), requires certain facilities to implement a fence-line air monitoring system at the property boundary of the facility closest to the nearest residential community after receiving three compliance orders for air permit violations. These systems shall include real-time data dissemination to the public, including a real-time text message or telephone call sent to a community alert system for first responders, municipalities, community members and any other person who choose to receive such information. The message or call shall be sent in the event of an exceedance of air quality standards or a public health threat. Sierra Club and other environmental organizations have called for these types of air quality monitoring systems for many years. *(Pending in House Natural Resources Committee)*

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CHAPTER EXCOM ELECTION - RESULTS!

These three join ExCom members Dave Stets, Nancy Grush, Angelle Bradford, Willie Fontenot, Jeff Wellborn and Woody Martin.

The Chapter membership has recently elected three new members, or returning members to the Delta Chapter Executive Committee. They are:

Matthew Allen, a first time ExCom member and activist in the environmental community in St. Tammany since 2007. Matthew is President of Little Tchefuncte River Association and a Certified Floodplain Manager. He's taught science and math for 20 plus years and is a lifetime resident river-rat having grown up with a canoe tied to his house!

Charlie Fryling, returning ExCom repre-

sentative, has been a member of the Club since 1968, and has weathered many battles. Charlie teaches landscape architecture at LSU and is the East Baton Rouge Parish representative to the Atchafalaya Trace Commission.

Diana Morgan, led the rebuilding of the Honey Island Group, has a BS in Field

Zoology, Master of Arts in Science Teaching, and over 20 years teaching high school. She is a certified Outings Leader and started a trend of "Roll & Stroll" hikes for those who need hard-surface trails to enjoy the outdoors.

Also, thanks to Kirk Green for running again and for his years of service.



Newly re/elected 2019 Delta Executive Committee members: (L to R) Matthew Allen, Charlie Fryling, Diana Morgan

EARL'S PEARLS: TROLLING THE RED CREEK TROLL

Earl Higgins, contributor to the Sierran since January 1980, gives us a bit of history with this issue: "The attached article is about a real event from many years ago on Red Creek. The annual Red Creek canoe trips were very popular in the 1970s and beyond, but they were generational in popularity. There were "regulars" who went every year, and most of them were older than I am. Younger people would go occasionally, but the popularity of primitive canoe-camping waned with younger people. We had no cell phones, did much of the cooking on driftwood fires, got caught in thunderstorms, and occasionally turned canoes over. But the beauty and tranquility of Red Creek made the trips rewarding. The "regulars" from those years are mostly dead, I haven't done a Red Creek trip in over 20 years. I miss it, but I know I'm probably not up to the physical challenge."

By 2019, the meaning of the term "troll" had evolved into someone who makes nasty, unpleasant remarks on social media. Originally – and even as far back as the 1980s – it meant a mean and quarrelsome creature who lived under bridges and otherwise harassed travelers. Delta Sierrans encountered a traditional troll on a memorable canoe trek in the late 1980s.

Beginning in 1972, the Delta Chapter sponsored a canoe trek on Mississippi's Red Creek every Labor Day weekend. Three days of drifting, paddling, camping, and camaraderie on moving water and brilliant white sandbars. A highlight of the trip was camping the final evening on a huge sandbar in the DeSoto National Forest where the stream made a sharp turn. The bar was wide and over 100 yards long, lots of room for lots of tents, fire pits, boats. There was abundant firewood, an ideal spot for a group camp. After two days of paddling and camping, the big sandbar was always a welcome sight. The ice was almost gone, and the beer and wine were still chilled.

One day there was a troll encamped

there. As we rounded the turn and pulled the canoes up the bank, we noticed a flag on a crude pole at the upper end of the bar, where we were, and a tent at the other end, far away. The bar was big enough for our group and the other campsite, we figured, and started to haul the boats higher and unload. Here came the troll moving rapidly through the soft sand with an air of threatened immediacy.

"You can't camp here," he proclaimed strongly. "This is my campground." His demeanor, especially his eyes, signaled fear and desperation. The term "madman" came to mind. Affecting as easy a smile as I could and with as calm a voice as I could speak, I said, "This sandbar is part of the national forest, public land. We've been camping here for years; there's room for all of us, we'll stay here at the upper end and leave you alone."

That comment annoyed him. "I've been here every weekend since Easter," he said loudly and emphatically. "See that flag? I've taken possession, this beach belongs to me." It was no use asking how he came up with the legal theory that he could claim national forest land by camping on it, and I had to bite my tongue to keep from asking if he had gone to law school at Schwegmann's. Then another Sierran forced the issue with the troll.

"We're camping here anyway. You keep to your end, we'll keep to ours. There's twelve of us, one of you. Lots of room." Hands on hips, he confronted the troll with a stare.

Now the creature was really enraged. He started waving his arms, stomping his feet like Rumpelstiltskin. "You can't stay here!" he yelled at us. I looked protectively at my two young sons and thought the best action was to let the mad troll be and camp elsewhere, but my camping colleague was ready for a confrontation with this strange wood-

land squatter.

"Whatcha gonna do if we stay?" He poked his face at the troll. Not a smart move with a nut case.

"I got a gun. I don't know if I could control myself if I had to use it." Now I knew we REALLY had to move on. There was a smaller, narrower sandbar on the far side of the creek that could provide a campsite, though not as expansive. I was the trip leader; I didn't want to report a gunfight with a lunatic as part of an official Sierra Club outing.



"Okay, everybody. We camp on the far side, we keep away from this man." There was grumbling, but the Sierrans knew it was the correct decision. Still, I was worried that the man actually had a gun. It crossed my mind to confront him with several of us, search his gear for a gun, take it for safekeeping, and return it to him as we left the next day. Discretion controlled, and we kept away from him.

Next morning as we paddled away, he was nowhere to be seen, but his flag and tent remained. I stopped at the sheriff's office after we took out and reported that we had been threatened by a deranged squatter. I never heard back.

The Red Creek tradition continued for several more years, never again to encounter the evil troll.

Sierra Club Delta Chapter

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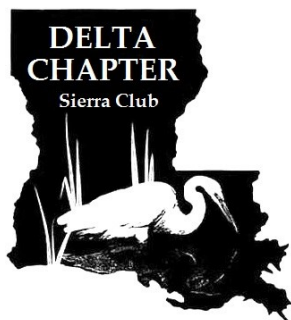
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the Planet"

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WILD & SCENIC FILM FESTIVAL COMING TO HAMMOND IN OCTOBER!

The Delta Chapter is a co-sponsor of the Wild & Scenic Film Festival Tour to be held at Southeastern University in Hammond in October, 2019. Watch our calendar for details: www.sierraclub.org/louisiana/calendar



LEGISLATIVE OUTLOOK: WORKING BILLS IN B.R.

Continued from page 2 --

HB 490, by Rep. Randal Gaines (D - LaPlace) aligns perfectly with Sierra Club's focus on reducing mercury in our air, land, and water. This instrument expands the definition of a child-occupied facility and expands data collection to include mercury hazards, in addition to current testing for lead hazards. All facilities would be tested, not only those constructed before 1978.

Also, Rep. Gaines seeks to require the state health officer to compile the results of this testing and report the findings to the legislature in the annual La. Health Report Card.

(Pending in House Natural Resources Committee)

Follow along with the Delta Chapter and find a complete list of the bills we're tracking on our website, <https://sierraclub.org/louisiana>, under the "Legislative" tab.

Take action! Send emails to legislators on bills of top priority to the chapter by clicking the "Take Action" tab on our website.

We update regularly, so you'll know you are getting the latest information when you check the Delta Chapter website.

-- Julie DesOrmeaux Rosenzweig, J.D.



Birding during 2019 Grand Isle's Migratory Bird Festival.
Photo: Margie Vicknair-Pray