



Broward Sierra Bulletin



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Earth Day 2026 - Water is at the Center of Everything

Our biggest event of the year, **Earth Day**, was held on **March 8, 2026** at Anne Kolb Nature Center. Firstly, we would like to thank our generous sponsors:

- Luke Furr
- [JazzSLAM – Jazz Supports Language, Arts, and Math](#)
- [C-HAWQ - The Coastal Habitat and Water Quality Initiative](#)
- [Shutts & Bowen LLP](#)
- [Rotary Club of Hollywood](#)

We would also like to thank our Speakers and Exhibitors!

Speakers:

- Dr. Jamie DeWitt: PFAS and organics. TED talk on water quality
- Debbie Wasserman-Schultz: United States Representative
- Phil Busey – Native Plants
- Dr. Natalia Sores: Local water issues
- Katrina Shaddix: How to be a successful activist
- Joanna Diamond: Beekeeping
- Adam Roberti: Xavier Cortada Foundation
- Renüable - Xavier De Roos: Composting

Exhibitors:

- Green Thumb
- Broward County Library
- Science Eye
- Broward Sierra Group & Junior Team
- 1000 Mermaids
- Broward Clean Air
- Friends of Our Florida Reef
- DEP’s Coral Reef Program
- Bonnet House
- League of Women Voters
- Rotary Club of Hollywood
- C-HAWQ
- Sea Turtle Oversight Protection
- Broward Environmental Caucus
- 3rd Act
- City of Plantation
- City of Hollywood
- Friends of Anne Kolb Nature Center
- Renüable
- Katrina Shaddix: Bear Warriors United
- Green Planet Waterways Restorations

Earth Day 2026

– **Adriene Barmann**, *Earth Day Chair*

As another successful Earth Day has come to a close, I would like to recognize and thank my incredible team of volunteers whose hard work and commitment made this event day truly exceptional. I also appreciate the dedication of my six Broward Sierra Group team players who have meticulously planned every aspect of this year's event, and they didn't miss a single beat! There were opportunities for everyone to learn from and to explore!

The Plastic Waste Art contest was overwhelmingly successful! The 21 students who participated in the contest were recognized for their hard work and creativity, which was clearly reflected in their art projects and essays. Their commitment to sharing powerful messages about the harms of plastic pollution affecting both humans and marine life was evident in their thoughtful and expressive creations. This made the judging process especially challenging, as each project demonstrated passion and originality.

In the end, it was a difficult decision for the judges to choose the winners. When the final votes were cast, County Commissioner **Beam Furr** announced the top three winners, along with an additional third-place award in recognition of the outstanding quality of all the students' work. I am truly proud of all the students, and their dedication to express their understanding about the harmful effects of plastic through their art and in their essays. I hope their participation in the art contest inspired them to continue advocating against plastic pollution in the future. And this year, 10 students from Hollywood will display their artwork from the contest at Hollywood City Hall beginning in April through Earth Day.

Check out the link to the [students art projects](#).

The Earth Day 2026 event theme of “**Water is the Center of Everything**,” and it offered attendees the opportunity to learn about PFAS “forever chemicals” found in our drinking water and waterways and their potential impacts on human health. One of the highlights of the day was the opportunity to learn about water quality from two leading water toxicologists.

Dr. **Jamie DeWitt, Ph.D.**, Professor of Environmental and Molecular Toxicology and Director of the Environmental Health Sciences Center at Oregon State University, delivered the keynote address, sharing insights from her groundbreaking research on how environmental contaminants affect human health and the immune system. As she described the long list of everyday household products that contain PFAS, it became a true eye-opener for the audience, revealing just how widespread and significant the problem has become.

Dr. **Natalia Soares Quinete**, Associate Professor of Chemistry and Biochemistry at Florida International University's Institute of Environment, presented her research on environmental contaminants that are impacting South Florida's waterways and drinking water. She shared her research about the presence of PFAS locally in South Florida, and some of the sources that have led to high contamination levels in multiple waterways.

Our third speaker, **Katrina Shadix**, a passionate advocate for wildlife and habitat preservation, spoke about her involvement in major conservation initiatives such as the Florida Wildlife Corridor Summit and research efforts including Bear Conservation, Ecology, and Behavior at the Wildlife Research Institute. She also shared her experiences challenging polluters through legal action and holding government agencies accountable; offering a powerful perspective on the role of advocacy in protecting Florida's ecosystems.

In the Exhibit Hall, native plant specialist **Phil Busey** shared his expertise to his attendees about the value of South Florida's native plant species and the benefits of incorporating them into local landscapes for beauty, sustainability, and environmental preservation.

Attendees also enjoyed a special presentation from Master Beekeeper **Joanna Diamond**, who highlighted the critical role honeybees play in pollination and demonstrated how bees live and produce honey within their hives.

In addition, **Xavier DeRoos of Renuable** led a hands-on workshop about the environmental benefits of composting and how individuals can incorporate it into everyday life.

In the Anne Kolb Courtyard, **17 exhibitors** representing organizations dedicated to turtle conservation, coral reef and marine animal research and protections, native plant education, local city sustainability water quality initiatives, wildlife and science education, research solutions to improve water quality in our waterways, and community outreach programs that promote literacy, leadership, community involvement, and environmental stewardship.

[See more pictures of Earth Day here!](#)

Throughout the day, the **Swamp Blues Band** provided lively background music, creating an engaging atmosphere that encouraged visitors to explore, learn, and deepen their appreciation for environmental advocacy and community involvement.

Our day ended with a dance party celebrating Broward Sierra Groups culmination of a Earth Day dedicated to environmental advocacy by using education and creative initiatives to inspire the attendees to acknowledge that water connects us, sustains us, and is a part of our everyday lives. Yet many of our communities face growing challenges as pollutants threaten our drinking water and the waterways we depend on. In the end we empowered our community to take meaningful action and to protect the resources that impact all of us. Everyone deserves access to clean safe water; it's a basic human right.....

And that's all!!!!



April General Meeting

Elisa Jones, Solid Waste Authority of Broward County

Thursday April 2, 2026 – In Person only!

Meeting begins promptly at 6:30 PM

[Veterans Park: 7600 NW 50th Street
Lauderhill, FL 33351](#)

**REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED – BRING YOUR
FILLABLE BOTTLE – NO PLASTIC BOTTLES**

[Registration Required - Click Here](#)



PROUDLY PRESENTS:



Topic: Trash & Recycling Beyond the Curb: We Have a Plan

Every minute in Broward County we are generating 20,000 pounds of waste! Most of it ends up in the landfill or waste-to-energy plant. With the waste-to-energy plant at capacity and the in-county landfill nearing capacity, we need to divert as much of our valuable waste as possible. Approximately 62% of the waste sent to the landfill or waste-to-energy plant could be diverted with the programs presented in the Master Plan. Disrupting the status quo is required to meet the needs of our growing population and economy.

Broward County stands at a pivotal moment in its environmental and public service evolution. As one of the most populous and diverse counties in the State of Florida, we are both uniquely challenged and uniquely positioned to lead in the transition to a more sustainable, efficient, and equitable solid waste and recycling system.

Elisa Jones is an admin and outreach staff member at the Solid Waste Authority of Broward County and a proud Broward Sierra Group member.

APRIL 2nd IN-PERSON ACTIVITY: **MINI ZERO WASTE SWAP!** Let's work hard to keep nice things out of the landfill. Bring some items you have around your home or garage that are in **good and usable condition that you no longer want** for other members to take home and reuse. Examples: kitchen, office or art supplies, textiles, books, small appliances, electronics, garden supplies, etc. Any swap items leftover from the evening will be packed up and donated.

IMPORTANT NOTE: *Please don't bring the whole house or the junk drawer! We are simply asking you to be thoughtful about whether someone might like to have this or use that. We recommend showing up around 6:15 PM if you have a lot of giveaway stuff to lay out on the tables.*

[May General Meeting](#)

**Commissioner Ben Sorensen, City of
Fort Lauderdale, District 4**

**Thursday May 7, 2026 – Hybrid (in Person
and on-Line)**

**Meeting begins promptly at 6:30 PM (in
person) and 6:45 PM (on-line)**

[Veterans Park: 7600 NW 50th Street
Lauderhill, FL 33351](#)

**REFRESHMENTS PROVIDED – BRING YOUR
FILLABLE BOTTLE – NO PLASTIC BOTTLES**

[Registration Required - Click Here](#)



PROUDLY PRESENTS:



[Topic: Sustainability, Conservation, and Resilience Initiatives in Fort Lauderdale](#)

Commissioner Sorensen was sworn into office December 3rd, 2024, Ben Sorensen returns to the City Commission after previously representing District 4 from 2018-2022, including two terms as Vice Mayor. A dedicated leader with a background in military service and community involvement, Commissioner Sorensen has worked closely with residents to solve key city issues. One of his top priorities is to position Fort Lauderdale as a leader in the ocean economy. He has worked diligently to expand mangrove plantings, implement a seawall incentive program, and progress innovative solutions that enhance the health and quality of our waterways. Ben served as an Intelligence Officer in the Navy Reserve for 17 years before redesignating to become a Chaplain in 2025. He is on the boards of the Lauderdale Isles Water Management District, Big Brothers Big Sisters of Broward, and History Fort Lauderdale. Ben and his wife, Anna, are proud parents of two daughters.

How To Control Your Emails

If you scroll down to the bottom of all mailings from the Sierra Club, it allows you to change some, or all, of the mailings you receive.

If you tire of the number of emails you get from the Sierra Club, please DO NOT hit **unsubscribe!** That will cut you off from our newsletter, *The Bulletin*.

The Bulletin shares issues we are working on, presenters scheduled for our General Meetings that you will want to attend, Outings that you will want to go on with our Outing Leaders, and so much more.

VERY IMPORTANT! - If you choose to forward your Sierra Club's mail to anyone, you must remove your name at the top and then go to the bottom and remove your name and email address. If not, the person(s) you send this copy to may choose to unsubscribe and you will be deleted, not the person that you sent it to!

Everglades Coalition Conference 2026

– Adriene Barmann, *Earth Day Chair*

I am so grateful to have the opportunity to experience the Everglades Coalition conference back in January 28th – 30th 2026.

It was really nice to be surrounded with like-minded people who had the same goal in mind. I enjoyed conversing with different people representing environmental organizations and those that were there to support and protect The Everglades initiative. I gained a deep appreciation for the work and dedication of those people who have their boots in the ground, using their expertise and commitment to advocate for and to save the wetlands and to restore the natural flow of the water to flow south.



I believe being part of the coalition which includes the multiple environmental groups and organizations, that embrace the same goals is a powerful opportunity to push for the progress and restoration efforts. The Everglades is our most vital ecosystem in South Florida and protecting the wetlands so the water flow will continue to enrich the

ecosystem's health, and this is the cornerstone of how essential this mission is for the health of the drinking water supply that supports the people who live in South Florida's communities.

Everglades Coalition



The panel discussions were interesting. My focus was to learn about navigating the threats to federal protections in the Everglades, discussing the weakening of the clean water act, further destruction of wetlands, cuts to CERP funding, and addressing the challenges of sea level rise. Thankfully with the dedication of advocates, with creative policy strategies, and having endless discussions about purchasing available private lands, there is reason for hope.

At this year's Everglades Coalition conference, one message rang clear across multiple panel discussions: long-term restoration and protection of the Everglades must continue — relying on advocacy and policy to get us through these challenging times. We must stand together and continue to practice sustained advocacy and education supporting Federal protections to keep the momentum moving forward to restore the Everglades and to keep the water moving south.

One of my most favorite presentations was by Xavier Cortada and how his foundation advocates for education about climate change by using art. His presentation focused on "Portals To The Everglades" that effectively advances Everglades conservation and restoration. And boy Xavier hit it right on the button. Check the link to see Xavier Cortada's Check Everglades in Motion Sculpture Park with art in motion <https://cortada.com/eim/>

I also enjoyed visiting the exhibitor tables, and I got to meet some very interesting environmentalists, and advocates representing different organizations. C-HAWQ which is a Coastal Habitat & Water Quality Initiative, had a very informative table and they agreed to be an exhibitor at Broward Sierra's Earth Day 2026 on March 8th.

One of the most compelling final sessions at this year's Everglades Coalition conference highlighted the transformative role of art and music which truly inspires a deeper connection to the environment. I experienced that moment when the presenters included a photographer whose work demonstrated the beauty of the Everglades through photography, an artist whose drawings brought to life the plants and beauty inside the Everglades ecosystem. The final presentation featured the musician Grant Livingston, a singer songwriter whose joyful music left everyone with a smile — and a renewed sense of purpose. His performance wasn't just an opportunity to enjoy some great funny tunes; it was a reminder of the power of music to inspire change and build a connection to nature.

As I was driving back to my home in Broward County, I realized how much I learned at the Everglades Coalition Conference and the importance of organizing our supporters to continue to advocate for policy advocacy, and using science to communicate what is important to advocate for - a healthier Everglades and plentiful water flowing southward.



Florida Legislative Session

Our wins:

- SB 302 / HB 1035 (Nature-Based Coastal Resiliency) – A great way forward in bringing green options to protect our coast lines
- SB 484 / HB 1007 (Data Centers) – A good start on protecting our communities and consumers from massive data centers. Last minute amendments took some teeth out of the bill, but it is a great stepping stone in our fight against data centers
- SB 546/ HB 441 (Conservation Lands) – A bipartisan proactive bill that brings much needed oversight and process to land swaps.
- SB 354/ HB 299 (Blue Ribbon Projects)- A massive and sweeping giveaway to only the largest landowners in the state, and YOU stopped it from passing.
- SB 1658/ HB 1421 (Cattle Grazing on State Lands)- Even though it moved through the House, we stopped it in its tracks in the Senate. We continue to lead on the protection of our state lands.

We continue fighting:

- HB 1217 (Net-zero Policies by Governmental Entities) – After we successfully stalled this bill in the Senate, the sponsor amended its language onto SB 7046 (Taxation) and they then proceeded to bring it into the house bill. Affordability is at the top of every voters issue list going into this election cycle and we will continue to fight for a more affordable and cleaner Florida. Many cities and communities are going to be affected by this legislation and that is where advocacy in our local county and city halls matters the most.
- HB 1451 (Utility Services) – An amendment added to this bill has overturned the will of the voters of Gainesville. It is important that EVERY SINGLE CANDIDATE that is looking for votes in the affected areas speaks to this issue and we will go into next session with the repealing of this language as one of our top priorities.



Javier Estevez, Political and Legislative Director

Sierra Club Florida