



Adventure Coast Group // Florida Chapter

Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group August 2026 News, Events & Action Alerts

Check out all that's going on!

**Sierra Club Pasco Conservation
Committee Monthly Zoom Aug. 5th
Green Belt Trail hearing Aug. 11th
Info Session Friday August 15th**

**Join us! Adventure Coast Executive
Committee Zoom Wednesday, August 12th**

**Adventure Coast MeetUp August 19th
With Don Wright on Adapting to
Hot Seas & Storm Threats**

**Adventure Coast MeetUp September 16
Don Hall on Regeneration:
Transform Yourself to Transform the World**

**Save our Waters Week Chassahowitzka
River & Coastal Clean-Up Sat. Sept. 19th**

**Tampa Bay Master Coastal Plan
Risk Assessment Underway**

**Hyper Scale Data Centers:
A new Challenge in Florida**

**Citrus Conservation Report
Two hearings in August**

**Hernando Conservation News
New Tower at Linda Pederson Park
on BOCC Agenda Aug. 11**

Sierra Club Magazine

SIERRA CLUB FLORIDA PASCO CONSERVATION COMMITTEE



1st Wed. @ 8pm on Zoom



Wednesday, August 5th Zoom: Join our ZOOM meeting the first Wednesday of each month at 6:30 PM at: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/7674695843> with the Zoom ID: 767 469 5843.

The Sierra Club Pasco Conservation Committee is dedicated to preserving, protecting, exploring and enjoying nature in areas of Pasco County. The Pasco Conservation Team is working towards spinning off into its own Nature Coast Sierra Club Group. If you would like to join us in leading the way to educate and protect Pasco's natural open spaces, please email Sasha sashabuddha@gmail.com or call (727) 326-2646.

Orange Belt Trail Vote August 11th

The Pasco County Board of County Commissioners will hear the final proposed alignment alternative for the Orange Belt Trail on Tuesday, August 11, 2026, at 10:00 am at the Historic Pasco County Courthouse, 2nd Floor, [37918 Meridian Ave., Dade City, 33525](#).

The proposed alignment that will be presented to the board starts at US 41 and travels east to the Hardy Trail in Dade City, which is more than 23 miles in length. The most recent version of the trail was studied in five segments, with each segment offering several alignment alternatives. Learn more at: [Orange Belt Trail – Trinity to Trilby](#). The public is invited to attend this public meeting.

Action Alert: Info Session Friday August 15th at 10am Pasco Friends and Neighbors: *Speak Up; Protect Targeted Green Space*

Attend a free information session at The Angelus, 12413 Hudson Ave, Hudson 34669. We will discuss the application to develop 123 acres at [13450 Hudson Ave, Port Richey, FL34666](#). Commercial development of this beautiful agricultural wetland area would increase air & noise pollution, decrease property values. Increase traffic, decrease wildlife habitats and ground water, drying up wells.

Contact the Pasco Commissioners today to ask them to deny this application

Ron Oakley: roakley@mypasco.net
Seth Weightman: sweightman@mypasco.net
Kathryn Starkey: kstarkey@mypasco.net
Lisa Yeager: lyeager@mypasco.net
Jack Mariano: jmariano@mypasco.net
Charles Grey (Chair): cgrey@mypasco.net
Jaime P. Girardi, P.E. (Vice Chair): jgirardi@mypasco.net
Derek Pontlitz: dpontlitz@mypasco.net
Jon Moody, P.E.: jmoody@mypasco.net
Christopher B. Poole, CPG: cpoole@mypasco.net
Matthew Munz, P.E. — mmunz@mypasco.net

Ask them to preserve this land for current and future generations for recreational and school outings, bird watching, summer camps, biking, walking & hiking trails, water/storm damage protection.

Join us! Adventure Coast Executive Committee Zoom Wednesday, July 8th



L to R: Delaney Coleman College Intern, Emily Van Sickle new Citrus Student Leader, Noa Adera, current Citrus Student Leader, Taylor Masnjak Executive Committee member

Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group is seeking members interested in getting involved. Please consider joining our team to actively protect our environment, educate our community and advocate to defend it. To get started, attend our monthly Executive Committee ZOOM meeting held the second Wednesday of each month. This is where we discuss and determine how to achieve our annual goals. We are all volunteers and you can choose how much or how little time to engage.

The next monthly Executive Committee meeting is Wednesday, August 12th via Zoom 5pm—6:30pm. It is open to the public and you are welcome to join us online at: <https://zoom.us/j/98626505635?pwd=4Aayd4E7vcTmXqtUKomYP33Ab5lIJQ.1>

Meeting ID: 986 2650 5635 Passcode: 392529

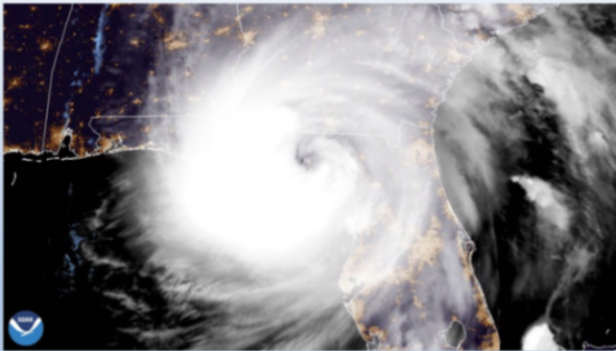
Next year, we will have vacancies on the Executive Committee, so we are planning ahead and want to get others familiar with group activities. For more info, please reach out to DeeVon Quirolo at sierraclubadventurecoastcc@gmail.com or call 352-277-3330 (landline).

August 19th 2026

SIERRA CLUB ADVENTURE COAST MEET UP

***with Don Wright on Adapting to
Hot Seas & 2026 Storm Threats***

*At the Historic Brooksville Woman's Club,
131 S. Main Street in Brooksville, FL.*



NOAA- NESDIS satellite image of category 4 Hurricane Helene at landfall in Florida's "Big Bend" region September 26, 2024



Dr. Wright is a Citrus County resident with a long record of expertise beginning with a PH.D. from the Coastal Studies Institute of Louisiana State University to Professor and Dean of the School of Marine Sciences, Virginia Institute of Marine Science at College of William and Mary, Professor at University of Sydney and Louisiana State University to Director of Coastal and Environmental Research for the Southeastern University Research Association of Washington, D.C. in addition to numerous publications on the impacts of climate change on coasts. Dr. Wright will speak on the need to anticipate and adapt to hot seas and storm threats this year along the Nature Coast of Florida.

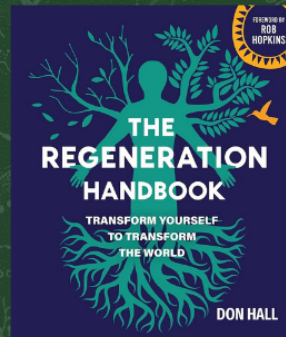
Social at 6:30 PM and meeting at 7 PM. Join the meeting in person or via Zoom. To participate remotely via Zoom, please register in advance at: <https://zoom.us/meeting/register/dTTFmsBpS-iYu5uwj4JjyQ>

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September 16th 2026

SIERRA CLUB ADVENTURE COAST MEET UP *with Don Hall, author of The Regeneration Handbook*

*At the Historic Brooksville
Woman's Club, 131 S. Main
Street in Brooksville, FL.*



Don is the founder of Evolutionary Change and author of *The Regeneration Handbook: Transform Yourself to Transform the World* (New Society Publishers, 2024). He is an internationally-recognized leader in the Transition Towns Movement, serving in several different capacities over the past 17 years: first as Education & Outreach Coordinator for Transition Colorado, then as founder and Executive Director of Transition Sarasota (Florida) and Executive Director of Transition US. Don now serves as Training Coordinator for Transition Network International. He also holds a Master's in Environmental Leadership from Naropa University, a certification in Permaculture Design from the Central Rocky Mountain Permaculture Institute, and regularly teaches on a wide variety of topics including leadership development, community organizing, effective collaboration, and local food systems.

In 2019, Don edited and published *10 Stories of Transition in the US: Inspiring Examples of Community Resilience-Building*. His journey from local grassroots organizing right here in Florida up to national and global scales has provided an incredible blueprint for community-led change. He now lives in Boulder, Colorado and loves hiking in the mountains, playing music with friends, and practicing Tibetan Buddhist meditation.

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https://zoom.us/meeting/register/YFo8R7lcQi6XgSJ_bUp11w

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**Chassahowitzka River &
Coastal Clean-Up Sat. Sept. 19th**



Keep Citrus County Beautiful and Save Our Waters Week Committee, in partnership with the Citrus County Aquatics Service Division, invites the public to participate in the county's 2026 37th Annual Lakes, Rivers & Coastal Clean-Up scheduled for Saturday, Sept. 19th from 7:30 to 11:30 a.m.

The event is conducted each year in partnership with the Citrus County Government, Southwest Florida Water Management District, and others to promote public awareness to save Citrus County's rivers, lakes, estuaries, and springs from further deterioration and ecological disaster.

Friends of the Chassahowitzka River, the Nature Coast Ramblers and Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group will again participate. If you wish to help in this cleanup, please sign up by replying to this notice.

Deadline to register is September 3rd if you wish to join our group and get a t-shirt. Reply to Ben (352-897-0479) with an SMS text, or email to bfberauer@aol.com to sign up.

Tampa Bay Coastal Master Plan Risk Assessment Underway



A project update on community outreach, flood survey results, and creating a watershed-based flood risk assessment methodology for the Greater Tampa Bay Coastal Master Plan was presented to 60 participants at the recent meeting of the Tampa Bay Regional Planning Council (TBRPC). The primary focus was presentation of the risk assessment's purpose, methodology, and geographic framework by the lead engineer.

The results of 33 listening sessions attended by 227 residents and organized by 16 hosts including 9 organizations and 391 flood survey responses over the seven-county area were analyzed. It was reported that extreme rainfall was identified as the top reported flood driver. TBRPC will publish the flood-survey summary report on the website under publications and will be shared with local governments and the Coastal Master Plan mailing list in September.

The preliminary themes from the listening sessions were: flooding is a threat to safety, property, mobility, and well-being; participants perceive flooding is increasing due to development, aging infrastructure, inadequate maintenance, and environmental change; and residents requested solutions combining infrastructure, accountability, environmental protection, and meaningful community participation in planning.

The Risk assessment phase is now underway utilizing a watershed-based, multi-layered analysis of

flood vulnerability that includes metrics on disability, low income, mobile homes, and toxic-site proximity. The project team is using survey and listening-session data to ground-truth the open-source public datasets to produce risk assessment analysis. A dozen community anchors are participating to elevate historically underheard and underserved communities. The technical team will incorporate and validate the mapped geographic flood-location data.

The project team will identify priority study areas at roughly the neighborhood-collection scale (about 5–10 square miles) and test 30-square-mile basins as candidate priorities. The project team will coordinate with TBRPC and the estuary program to include information about ongoing and planned flood projects and incorporate available project inventory data into the regional hotspot analysis while maintaining a focus on larger-scale priorities. A Clearwater green-space property will serve as a potential model project and the team will share visual risk maps for review and critique by stakeholders.

The four-year project timeline review noted the project is in year two (2026), and is conducting the flood risk assessment to develop an evaluation matrix to prioritize projects before finalizing the plan.

Hyperscale Data Centers A New Challenge in Florida



Sierra Club: Meta data center in Mesa, Arizona.

This year saw a dramatic increase in local opposition to data centers, driven by concerns about electricity affordability, increased fossil generation buildout, air pollution, water use, noise, and land use.” Both Citrus and Hernando Counties have passed moratoriums on Hyperscale Data Centers and are now writing amendments for their comprehensive land use plans to guide county policy for them. Adventure Coast Group has provided recommendations to avoid such impacts that would make it difficult for them to be approved without adoption of clean energy and mitigation of all impacts on our water, air, lands and communities.

Sierra Club recently released “Data Center State Policies, 2026 Mitigating the Impacts on Environment, Communities and Affordability.” It stated that, “The rapid growth of data centers is quickly overwhelming utilities, undermining environmental goals, increasing public health impacts, and putting ratepayers at risk of dramatically increased costs for the infrastructure and extraordinary power demands of these facilities.”

Sierra’s policy paper notes that “Coupling opposition to problematic data center developments with pragmatic state and regional policies can steer data center investments towards more sustainable climate, community, and equity outcomes. These state policy options are meant to provide practical, commonsense protections for ratepayers, the environment, and communities, and are meant to be achievable across geographies and preexisting political frameworks.

The report covers four major categories of guardrails, and articulates specific policy options for each category, with regulatory and policy examples here applicable: * Protect Customers * Clean Energy Comes First * Fair Rules for Tech * Protect Public Health. Read the report [here](#).

Florida’s SB 484 (2026) is a comprehensive data-center regulation bill (Chapter 2026-65) that sets new rules for large-load electricity customers, restricts water-use permits for large-scale data centers, and requires utilities to adopt special tariffs by October 1, 2026. The bill empowered local communities to

reject Hyperscale Data Centers but contained loopholes for those who do permit them. An article published in USA Today on 7/17/26 quoted Governor Ron DeSantis. "So, this makes sure that local governments are ultimately in control about how their communities are developing vis-à-vis these hyperscale data centers," DeSantis said. "It also includes strict definitions of large-scale data centers so that costs are not permitted to be passed on to consumers."

That leaves communities with the responsibility of avoiding the impacts from data centers from affecting their communities and environment with strong comprehensive land use regulations that effectively prevent those impacts by restricting them. We hope that is what Citrus and Hernando have in mind. We'll keep you posted when the new land use provisions come before our county commissions so that we can all plan to attend and speak out.

Citrus Conservation Report Two hearings in August



Conservation Co-Chair Maxine Connor
speaks before Citrus County Commission

Adventure Coast Citrus Conservation Co-chair Robin Orlandi reports two pending development applications before the Citrus County Commission with hearing dates in August that people should pay attention to and prepare/submit comments.

The first application is set for hearing before the Planning and Development Commission on August 20, 2026 at 9am at the Lecanto Government building, [3600 West Sovereign Path, Room 166, Lecanto, FL 34442](#). Pigeon-Ardurra LLC, on behalf of Bravo Land Group, LLC, requested a Planned Unit Development amendment (PUD2733) to the **Betz Farm Development** of Regional Impact (DRI). The amendment proposes 1,466 dwelling units at [3406 N Turkey Oak Drive](#) in Crystal River. It is tentatively set for hearing before the County Commission on October 13, 2026, at 5:05pm.

Betz farm property in Crystal River was provided to the county for conservation as part of a mitigation agreement years ago. The parcel is heavily wooded, features wetlands, wildlife, and specimen trees and is within the SPZ for Kings Bay. This large development will negatively impact springs recharge and demand significant increases in water withdrawal. Several past attempts at tentative purchase agreements between developers and the county failed. This past May, BOCC terminated the current applicant's contract due to the buyer "failing to submit its Land Use applications within the time frame allotted." But a few weeks later, under threat of legal action, the BOCC reinstated it-citing the potential costs of lawsuits—in a controversial about-face that has generated significant public attention and calls for the parcel to remain as undeveloped land for public use and recreation. The Betz Farm parcel should be zoned as conservation land for Citrus County to protect local springs, wildlife, and groundwater resources, and to offset increasing rates of development in the Crystal River and the 19/98 corridor, including already approved local projects as well as future planned developments of regional impact like the final extensions of the Suncoast Parkway.

Concerned residents should plan to attend public hearings for this project and make their support of conservation as a priority heard. Submit written comments at least 10 days in advance of any hearing to the Office of Growth Management at:

https://www.citruscounty.gov/departments/growth_management/land_development/index.php

In-Person Office: Lecanto Government Building, [3600 W Sovereign Path, Suite 267, Lecanto, FL 34461](#) (Monday – Friday, 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m.) or

For in-person meetings at the **Lecanto Government Building** ([3600 W Sovereign Path, Lecanto](#)), fill out a speaker form when you arrive with your name, address, and application number. Time limits are typically 3 minutes for individuals and 5 minutes for organizations.

The second application is set for hearing by the County Commission on August 25th, 2026 at 5pm at the Citrus County Courthouse, [110 N. Apopka Ave, Room 100, Inverness, FL 3450](#). Kimley-Horn on behalf of Pulte Home Company, LLC has requested a Planned Unit Development (PUD-2026-00002) called River Oaks to allow up to 667 residential units on 267.2 acres at [6450 N Carl G Rose Hwy \(SR-200\)](#) in Hernando. The Planning and Development Commission (PDC) denied this request on July 2nd, 2026, based on intensity of use, incompatibility with existing residential use, and unacceptably high Impervious Surface Ratio (ISR) of 65%. The parcel's zoning (low-density residential) has an ISR limit of 35%. Proximity to surface water resources (Tsala-Apopka and Hernando lakes) and recharge /wetland areas on this heavily wooded parcel is an issue yet no hydrology study was included in the application.

Public turnout at the BOCC hearing is important to re-enforce the reasons for the PDC's denial and convince commissioners that the public wants this area to remain low density. It is adjacent to Deltona's 800-acre proposed expansion of the Holder Industrial Park. Application files: <https://citrusclerk.portal.civicclerk.com/event/8985/files/agenda/11287>.

See video of PDC hearing with commissioner comments at the end giving reasons for denial. They address the larger burden of growth issues in Citrus County at: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=96MvHarf7Cc&list=PLTSBrZ4QutSB-Fz7f95P_jXMTvTix3Tks&index=2&pp=iAQB.

Hernando Conservation News New Tower at Linda Pederson Park Hearing August 11th BOCC Agenda



Linda Pedersen Park is a scenic 135-acre park in Hernando County, located at [6300 Shoal Line Blvd](#), in Weeki Wachee, just across from Jenkins Creek Preserve. It's a popular destination for families, nature lovers, and water sports enthusiasts. One of the key features was a 40-foot observation tower that offered panoramic views of upland hammocks, Weeki Wachee Preserve, and Jenkins Creek flowing into the Gulf of Mexico. The tower was destroyed during past storms and efforts are underway to replace it.

On July 17th, Hernando County planners unveiled three options to replace the now dismantled viewing tower. The project will be funded with county tourism dollars and is envisioned as a destination for visitors and residents. Representatives of Sierra Club, Hernando Audubon and the Hernando Native Plant Society as well as others attended and commented on the proposed options. Support for the project was evident from the attendants and we offered many recommendations including replacing lawn with native plants, solar panels to power lights, educational signage and more. Tammy Heon of the

Hernando Tourism Board attended and joined others who preferred the third option made of galvanized aluminum with a roof that was higher than the other options. Sierra Club and others submitted written letters of support to the county.

The plans will be presented to the Hernando County Commission at the August 11th meeting that begins at 9am at the Hernando County Courthouse in Brooksville. Plan to attend to learn more and comment.

Sierra Club Magazine



Offshore Wind Shines During Summer Heat

Wind power helps keep millions cool as temperatures soar

By Maria Gallucci

July 19, 2026

<https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/offshore-wind-shines-during-summer-heat>



The Sierra Club is America's largest and most influential grassroots environmental organization, with more than 3.5 million members and supporters. In addition to protecting every person's right to get outdoors and access the healing power of nature, the Sierra Club works to promote clean energy, safeguard the health of our communities, protect wildlife, and preserve our remaining wild places through grassroots activism, public education, lobbying, and legal action. For more information, visit [sierraclub.org](https://www.sierraclub.org).

For more information about Sierra Club Adventure
Coast Group, visit our website:
www.sierraclub.org/florida/adventure-coast, send an
email to sierraclubadventurecoastcc@gmail.com, or
call 352 277-3330.

