

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

Check out all that's going on!

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Adventure Coast MeetUp Wed. Nov. 18th
Doug Alderson: Florida's Rivers & Restoration of the Kissimmee

Florida Springs Council Reaches Historic Settlement to Protect Suwannee & Wekiva Springs

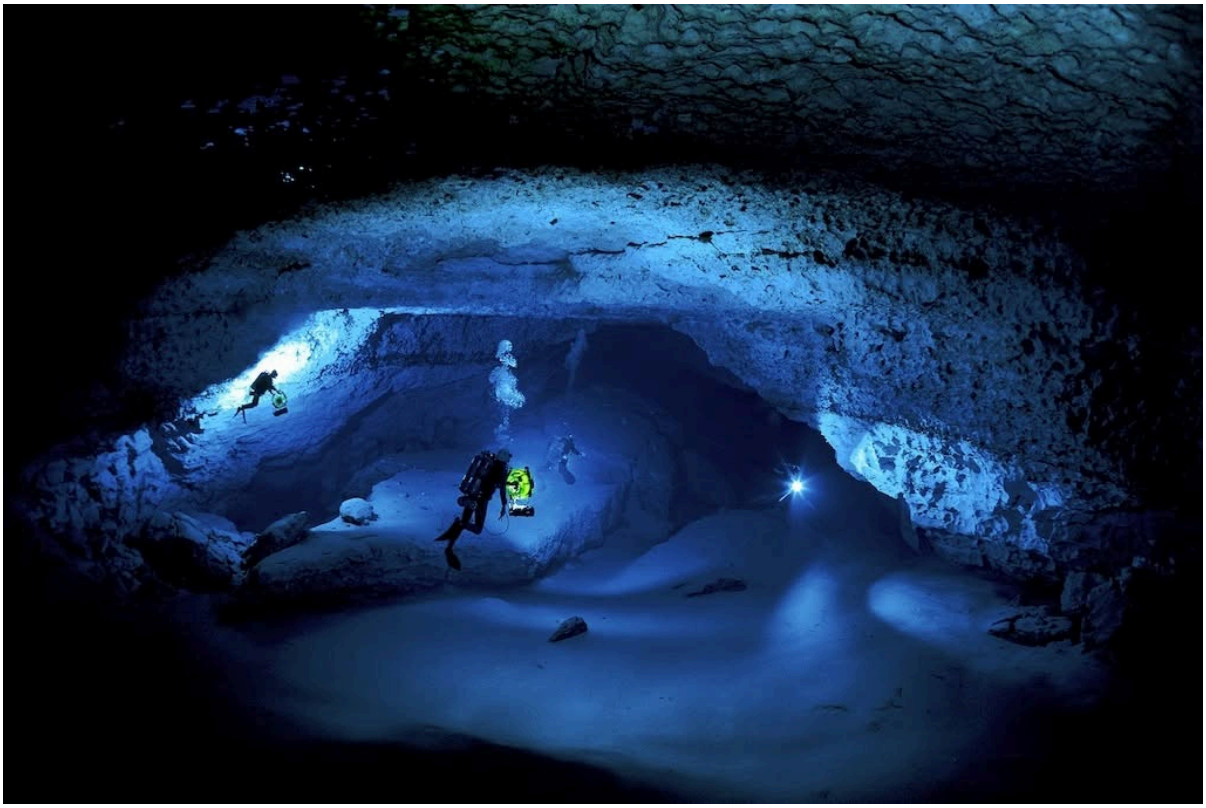
Florida Sierra's Spare a Bear, Bag a Tag Campaign to Stop the Florida Black Bear Hunt

Citrus County Data Center Ordinance

Comment Period Now Open

Sierra Club Magazine
The Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle
Is Making a Comeback

Action Alert: Oct. 6th Public Workshop on Development of Sand Hill Boy Scout Reservation lands



Wesley Skiles image of cave divers in Florida Aquifer

Plan to attend and speak out at a Public Information Workshop Tuesday, October 6th, at 5:30 pm at Nativity Lutheran Church, Winemiller Hall, 6363 Commercial Way, Weeki Wachee, FL 34613.

The workshop will discuss the Greater Tampa Bay Area Council-Scouting America application for a Large-Scale Comprehensive Plan Amendment application for the Sand Hill Boy Scout Reservation on the south side of Cortez Boulevard (SR 50), Spring Hill. They seek to change The Future Land Use Map from Recreational to Planned Development District (PDD) to create the Scouting America PDD, a specialized land use category to guide development of the area. Attend the hearing, learn about the proposed Comprehensive Plan Amendment, ask questions and speak out.

Options under consideration are a centralized complex, school campuses, a recreation park and public safety complex. Non-public uses would include commercial development of the SR 50 frontage and mixed use (office, professional, multifamily, etc.) south of that. The remaining property remains in the Recreation Land Use Category as the primary location for Scouting functions.
Sierra Club Adventure Coast joins others at Save Sand Hill who agree that this property with its well-known access to caves that divers have explored for years, and habitat with springs and gopher tortoise populations, should remain undeveloped.

If you agree, please attend and speak out or submit comments to: Planning@hernandocounty.us, odepablo@co.hernando.fl.us, **Subject: Opposition to Scouting America PDD.**

Suggested comment: *As a concerned resident and citizen, I OPPOSE any change in the zoning or any*

development to the Scouting America Property, now hereunto forever. This parcel needs to be kept zoned as Recreational. Please make this request a part of the Application Packet and the Official Record for Hernando County.

Learn more, check out the Save Sand Hill Reserve Facebook page at: https://www.facebook.com/SaveSandHill.



Wednesday, October 7th Zoom: Join our ZOOM meeting the first Wednesday of each month at 8:00PM 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.

Stroll thru the Serenova Sat. Oct. 17th



Join the Pasco Conservation Committee for an educational and family-friendly hike through the forest at the Serenova Preserve. The image above was taken at the James E. Grey Preserve in New Port Richey where the river is wide. Have you ever seen the river at its beginning? Here's your chance.

Our destination is the Main Stem of the Pithlachascotee River. Be there Saturday, October 17 by 8:45 am. The hike begins at 9:00 am. The Preserve entrance is on State Road 52 at 14900 State Road 52, Land O' Lakes, Fl 34638. Bring bug spray, sunscreen, sturdy walking shoes and a smile 😊. Meet in the parking lot; we will have signs. Heavy rain cancels event.

For more information, contact organizer Linda Blake via email at lindablake58@yahoo.com or call her at (727) 845-7119.

Betz Property for Sale at Oct. 13th Citrus County Commission Meeting Be there! Speak Out!



Betz Farm property is along North Turkey Oak Drive, in Crystal River.
Image: Citrus Chronicle, Matthew Beck/Chronicle photo editor

Betz Farm is a 348-acre legacy undeveloped parcel in Crystal River owned by Citrus County. It was expected to remain as conservation land but is currently under contract for purchase by a developer, contingent on state agency permitting being obtained. The Citrus County Planning & Development Board unanimously recommended denial of the application, but the deciding Citrus County Commission hearing will take place October 13th at 1:00 PM at the Citrus County Courthouse, 110 N. Apopka Ave., Room 100, Inverness, FL. The agenda will be published prior to the meeting at Citrus County CivicClerk Agendas & Minutes.

This land is worth defending for its conservation value. It includes 68 acres of wetlands and is within a 5-mile radius of the Crystal River/ Kings Bay springs group, in an area identified as both a springs priority and spring protection zone, with assumed direct recharge to Kings Bay—an area targeted for restoration in the 2025 FDEP Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) and previous FDEP assessments.

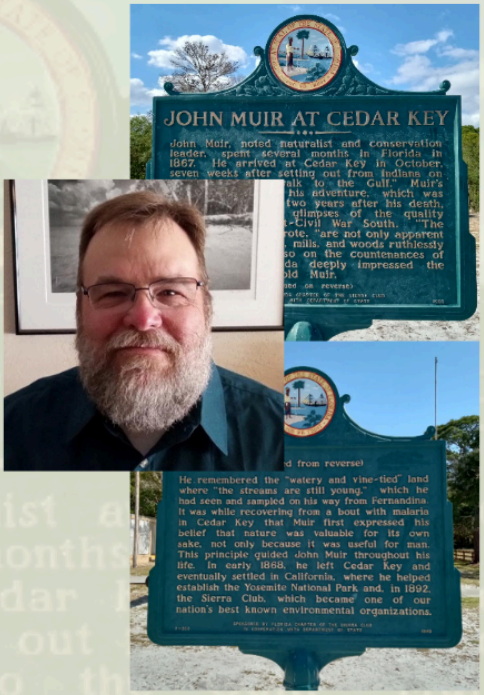
Please show up, speak out and help us save the sole conservation property owned by Citrus County. You can also submit a written comment to the Citrus County Board of County Commissioners with an online public comment https://apps.citrusbocc.com/comments/ or by emailing the County Clerk at comments@citruscounty.gov before 12:00 p.m. Oct. 13th to be provided to Commissioners and included in the meeting minutes.

October 21st 2026

SIERRA CLUB ADVENTURE COAST MEET UP

with Joe Murphy on the History of Conservation In Hernando County & the Nature Coast

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



Joe Murphy is a lifelong and native Floridian. He is a conservation advocate, educator, nature writer, a voice for Florida's environment and has worked with the National Wildlife Federation, Sierra Club, and Healthy Gulf. A former elementary science teacher, he writes about nature and place and lives in Brooksville with his wife and has two children and two grandchildren. And two very good dogs.

He notes that "In the late 1860's famed naturalist John Muir ended his Thousand Mile Walk to the Gulf in Cedar Key, Florida. His experiences on that journey along the Nature Coast shaped his perspective and played a role in his founding of the Sierra Club. We can learn lessons for today by looking to Muir's vision and leadership. In Hernando County we have a long legacy of conservation leaders from Col. Raymond Robbins, Lisa Von Browsky, and Steve Fickett to modern advocates. By knowing where we came from, we can seek inspiration for where we need to go."

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/1IyC2D5iT16SS_hs4Ly2_w

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Nominations for Election to Adventure Coast Group Executive Committee open till Oct. 23rd

SIERRA CLUB FLORIDA CHAPTER | Adventure Coast Group



The Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group is led by an Executive Committee (ExCom) of seven members in our group territory of Hernando and Citrus Counties. They are elected by our members.

This year's election is seeking nominees for 3 positions for a two-year term of office in 2027-2029.

Candidates should promote Sierra Club's mission to enjoy, explore and protect the planet, support protecting our local environment, and attend monthly ExCom meetings.
Bring your ideas, thoughts, and energy to Adventure Coast Group. To qualify, you must be a member of the Sierra Club Adventure Coast Group and at least 18 years of age.

To submit your nomination, send us your:

- Name, Address, Email, Telephone
- Bio/resume
- Image of you for the ballot
- A 3-paragraph narrative of your qualifications for the ballot

Submit your nomination to the Election Committee at AdventureCoastElections@gmail.com by October 23rd, 2026.

Make a difference! Get involved in saving our springs, forests and wildlife!

November 18th 2026

SIERRA CLUB ADVENTURE COAST MEET UP

with Doug Alderson on Florida's Rivers & Restoration of the Kissimmee

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





Doug's presentation will be on Florida's rivers and the restoration of the Kissimmee River, which involved the support of Florida Sierra Club. He prefers a kayak to a desk, hugs trees and friends, and loves observing alligators, manatees and other wildlife. Doug retired from coordinating FDEP's Office of Greenways & Trails designated kayak and canoe trails, among other duties. He was awarded the Florida Sierra Club 1979 Environmental Award for helping stop clearcut timber practices in St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge.

Doug's 18 books focus on Florida's dynamic and quirky, such as America's Alligator, Wild Florida Waters, Waters Less Traveled, New Dawn for the Kissimmee River, Encounters with Florida's Endangered Wildlife, and A New Guide to Old Florida Attractions. He recently published a memoir, A Florida Dance: Life Stories from the Sunshine State. Among his many awards are six first place Royal Palm Literary awards for nonfiction books and four Florida Authors and Publishers Association gold medals.

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/wngxqHeGROqEX70akjVwcg

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Florida Springs Council Reaches Historic Settlement to Protect Suwannee & Wekiva Springs



After intense litigation, on September 3rd, the Florida Springs Council (FSC) and Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP), reached a significant settlement agreement to protect and restore seven outstanding springs on the Suwannee River, as well as Wekiwa & Rock Springs. The settlement addresses agricultural and septic tank pollution, the largest pollution sources in Florida, and, respectively, the largest pollution source in each basin. It also improves the current BMAPs, provides for at least 16 new water quality monitoring stations, and requires FDEP to initiate compliance assistance and enforcement actions.

The Florida Springs Council, of which Sierra Club is a board member, is the only non-profit winning battles for Florida's springs in the Capitol and Courthouse. This is not by chance, it is what FSC was designed to do. "This is an excellent outcome," says FSC Board Member Bob Palmer, "but FSC will not sleep on it. We are the only organization with the ability to verify that the agreement will be carried out in full and on schedule." "The challenge to DEP's 2025 Suwannee and Wekiwa BMAPs has resulted in a successful settlement," says lead attorney Doug MacLaughlin. "The Florida Springs Council and the Friends of the Wekiva River were seeking commitments from DEP for actions that would achieve the ultimate goal of the BMAPs - to meet water quality standards in the springs by 2038. By initiating this challenge, FSC and Friends now have those commitments from DEP.

This victory for Florida's springs is thanks to our co-litigants, Friends of the Wekiva River; our incredible legal team of Doug MacLaughlin and Matt Farmer; the attorneys and law students at the Jacobs Law Clinic at Stetson College of Law; agricultural expert Dr. George Hochmuth; and FSC Board Members Bob Palmer and Mike Cliburn. We also want to express our appreciation to the FDEP attorneys and staff who worked with us to make this win-win outcome possible.

If you value having a Florida environmental non-profit that wins battles in the legislature and courtrooms - where most orgs. won't even engage - please consider supporting the Florida Springs Council. The legal team is already discussing our next campaign, but we can't do this work without your support. Learn more at https:www.FloridaSpringsCouncil.org.

Florida Sierra's Spare a Bear, Bag a Tag Campaign to Stop the Florida Black Bear Hunt



For the second year in a row, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) offered a bear hunt this December with 215 bear hunting permits issued through a lottery system. And, for the second year in a row, Sierra Club Florida launched a campaign to buy up all the tags to keep them out of hunters' hands. Sierra Members again went online to buy up the tags. This peaceful protest to save our bears ran from September 11 through 21st.

Next a random drawing of the winners are planned during three rounds from 9/25/26—11/2/26. Winners will have the option to purchase a permit with drawing results posted on customer accounts at GoOutdoorsFlorida.com. Selected applicants will be eligible to purchase their permit by the claim deadlines set forth by FWC. Permit costs for Florida residents are $100 and for Non-residents: $300. By purchasing licenses and buying up tags, citizens can peacefully undermine an unpopular hunt while sending a message that Florida's bears—and the ecosystems they support—are worth protecting. For more information, contact FWC at 855-779-5907 or go to https://myfwc.com/license/limited-entry/bear-permits/
For our bears!

Citrus County Data Center Ordinance Comment Period Now Open



Citrus County is currently under a temporary moratorium that prohibits the development of data centers. The moratorium was enacted to give the county time to develop land development code standards specific to data centers. The county has now drafted data center regulations with initial community input.

These regulations can now be viewed at https://www.citruscounty.gov/

departments/growth_management/data_center_regulations.php. To share your feedback, please email comments@citruscounty.gov and identify the section(s) of the draft you are referring to. After approximately 30 days of community feedback, the draft ordinance will be scheduled for public hearings, where additional public input will also be allowed. Please take the time to review the ordinance and share your comments.

The Florida Sierra Club Data Center Toolkit is available to help inform your comments. At this time we feel that the ordinance needs significant additional work to address water, energy use, and climate impacts to provide strong guardrails to ensure that damaging data center projects not be developed in Citrus County. We are also asking that the 30-day cutoff for comments be extended. This is a complex issue, and the existing moratorium remains in effect until May 2027; instead of rushing to complete the ordinance, we need to focus on doing the work to get it right.

Sierra Club Magazine

Sierra Club Magazine: The Hawaiian Green Sea Turtle Is Making a Comeback
How locals and conservationists are helping the honu resurgence.
Text and photographs by Joe Spring, September 10, 2026
https://www.sierraclub.org/sierra/2026-3-fall/feature/hawaiian-green-sea-turtle-making-comeback

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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.

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.

This email was sent by the Sierra Club Florida Chapter
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