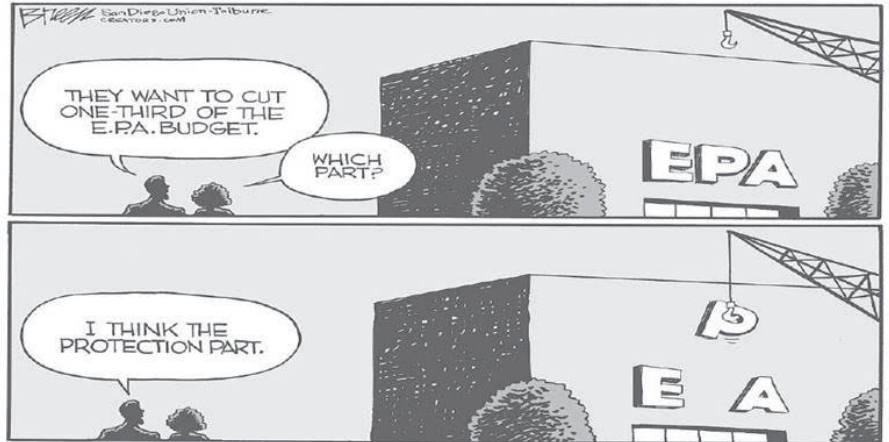


Trump Proposes 25% cut to Environmental Protection Agency Budget

Roughly 20% of the EPA's current staffers would lose their jobs if these proposed cuts go into effect. The cuts would slash funding to dozens of initiatives that support clean air and water which, environmental and public health groups say, would put human health at risk almost immediately. Please ask your Congressman and Senators to oppose these proposed cuts, and support a robust EPA. Contact information can be found at <http://www.sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida/take-action>.



Talking points can include:

- Without the EPA, the cleaning up of Superfund sites that threaten water supplies in Northeast Florida will not be possible.
- The EPA is an essential part of our government that was founded with bipartisan support and remains popular across the country.
- Having states manage environmental issues alone is unsatisfactory as pollutants travel across state and even country lines.
- States do not have the capacity to provide all necessary environmental protections. For example the EPA struggles to analyze the potential effects of chemicals as new chemicals and chemical combinations are produced by industry. Developing standards based on such analyses is an arduous process which is best undertaken centrally.
- The EPA develops regulations for pesticides which not only protects our individual health, but also protects the safety and reputation of our agricultural products.
- The EPA provides financial assistance to environmental programs in Florida.
- Florida does not maintain a strong department of environmental protection and the EPA is needed to protect our citizens and quality of life when stronger environmental protections are necessary to protect the health and safety of our citizens and the protection of our lands and waters.
- Aside from the health and safety of our citizens, and the protection of our lands and waters, a healthy environment is essential to maintain a vigorous tourist economy which is so important to Florida.

Environmental Regulations do not Hurt Employment Overall

In a report entitled "Does Environmental Regulation Kill or Create Jobs", the Institute for Policy Integrity (IPI) examines the employment rate specifically in relation to environmental regulations. While the jobs number is liable to shift in the short term, in the long term the number of jobs wind up as not much different from where the number started. An imposed regulation may cost jobs in a particular areas that is directly affected by that rule, but other sectors will subsequently grow in both demand and jobs to compensate for the loss. For example when coal jobs decline, that decline typically goes hand-in-hand with the expansion of jobs in the solar and wind industries.

Please consider making a donation to our local group to fund new technology that brings you this fabulous newsletter. We are in need of a replacement laptop and are looking for donations to fund this purchase. All contributions are greatly appreciated. You can make a donation via PayPal at www.sierraclub.org/northeast-florida/donate.

Executive Committee

Janet Stanko, Chair	208-1341 janestan@bellsouth.net
Cindy Baker	cindysbaker@gmail.com
Lisa Williams	388-6357 LisaOW@gmail.com
Ed Schlessinger, Treasurer	730-8148 eds.greenmail@gmail.com
Carolyn Cooper	CKCooper51@gmail.com
Ken Wright	ken@jacobsonwright.com
Maria Andal	forevertruth1206@gmail.com
Julianne Mammana	jmm094@bucknell.edu

Committee Chairs

Conservation	Volunteer for this position! Call 990-3191
Environmental Education	Julianne Mammana jmm094@bucknell.edu
Publicity	Volunteer for this position! Call 990-3191
Outings	Bill Armstrong armsfam@yahoo.com
Legislative	Volunteer for this position! Call 990-3191
Legal	Volunteer for this position! Call 990-3191
Membership	Volunteer for this position! Call 990-3191
Newsletter	Julianne Mammana jmm094@bucknell.edu
Programs Ponte Vedra	Brian Paradise bgparadise@comcast.net
Website	Bill Armstrong armsfam@yahoo.com
Programs, Duval	Cindy Baker CindySBaker@gmail.com

Connect With Us Online

E-mail: ne-editor@florida.sierraclub.org
Web: <http://florida.sierraclub.org/northeast>
Meetup: www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group
Facebook: <http://tinyurl.com/29v9hsd>
Twitter: <http://twitter.com/sierranefl>

Sierra Club Outings

No pets allowed on outing except where designated in the outings description. Outing participants are required to sign a waiver and release of liability at the start of the outing. The waiver can be found at: sierraclub.org/outings/national/participantforms/forms/individual_waiver.pdf

JOIN US ON MEETUP: OUTINGS HAVE BEEN FILLING UP FAST!

For the most up to date information and to ensure your spot, join our MeetUp site. Details of all outings can be found there with easy access to programs and interactions, or check our website.

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group

Saturday, April 1, 10:00 a.m.: Kayak Goodby's Creek

We'll kayak this urban creek in the San Jose area. Goodby's Creek, once part of Zapinaih Kingsley's many plantations in the Jax area, has recently been cleaned up by our heroes, the Clean Water Society. It is now navigable after their volunteer efforts. We'll kayak about 1.75 miles from Tomahawk Park to the St. Johns River and then return.

Bring water, bug repellent, and PFD. You must wear your PFD. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Bill Armstrong at armsfam@yahoo.com.

Friday, April 21, 9:30 a.m.: John Muir Birthday Hike in Guana

Celebrate John Muir's birthday on April 21, 1838 by hiking about 5 miles on trails in Guana that John would have loved to hike. Please bring along your favorite quotations or journal entries of John to share with your fellow hikers. Brian will have extra quotations and journal entries if you don't have any.

Please bring lunch, water and insect repellent. Entrance fee of \$3.00 if you don't have a pass. No pets please. Children are welcome if they are capable of hiking 5 miles. Please RSVP on Meetup or to Outings Leader Brian Paradise at bgparadise@comcast.net.

Saturday, April 22, 10:00 a.m.: Hike the La Chua Trail and Devil's Millhopper in Gainesville

First we'll hike the La Chua Trail into famous Payne's Prarie. This trail provides scenic views of wet-prairie and marsh habitat including Alachua Sink and Alachua Lake. We'll see some gigantic Live Oak, plenty of gators and birds, and we might spot some bison. Next, we'll drive 30 minutes to Devil's Millhopper, a bowl-shaped cavity 120 feet deep and 500 feet across. We'll have a picnic lunch there, then we'll hike the half-mile trail around the rim of the sinkhole and climb down the 232 steps to the bottom (Yep, and then back up!). Admission - \$4 per car.

Bring your picnic lunch, sun screen, hat, bug spray, and water. No pets, please. Restrooms available at both locations. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Bill Armstrong at armsfam@yahoo.com.

Sunday, April 23, 1:00 p.m.: Hike Little Talbot Island State Park

Little Talbot State Park has hiking trails, great beach access, and nice facilities with paved parking. We will take an approximately four-mile loop that takes us through wooded areas with changing features to emerge at the beach for our return.

Bring water, bug spray, and sunscreen and snacks. Based on my experience, insect repellent is strongly recommended. Children capable of moderate hiking for four miles are welcome, no pets allowed. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Mike DiAngelo, mfdian-gelo@gmail.com.

Sunday, April 30, 9:30 a.m.: Hike in Dunns Creek Conservation Area near Palatka

Dunns Creek Conservation Area was purchased by the St. Johns River Water Management District in 1992 to protect water resources and provide upland buffering of Dunns Creek, a tributary to the St. Johns River. The majority of the 3,000+ acre area is floodplain swamp and hydric hammock. We'll hike 5.3 miles on the trails; some parts are on boardwalks. This is a fairly long hike, so be sure you can hike for 2-3 hours before signing up.

Bring water, bug spray, sunscreen, and snack. No pets, please. RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader andrea_conover@live.com.

Saving the Florida Black Bear



Florida House Bill 491, sponsored by Representative Amy Mercado, and the companion Senate Bill 1304, sponsored by Senator Linda Stewart, would ban black bear hunts for ten years. It would also call for the state to stop the harvest of saw palmetto berries, the primary food of bears before they go into their winter denning season, on state lands. The bills would also seek to redirect controlled burns so that they do not affect bears' habitats at the wrong times of the year. Furthermore, it would channel some money from the state's Non-Game Wildlife Fund into grants to purchase bear-resistant trash cans for neighborhoods near bear habitats, such as the Wekiva Springs neighborhoods of Orlando plagued by numerous wandering bears in recent years. The bills would have state officials run more bear census studies.

Representative Mercado has said, "The bears, we've encroached on their homes. They were here first. And a slaughter of the bears is unacceptable." The bill is entitled "The Florida Black Bear Habitat Restoration Act". Please ask your legislators to co-sponsor and otherwise support these Bills.

Peoples' Climate March in DC and locally—April 29th Save the Date

Your local Sierra group is trying to organize transportation to DC and/or a local Jacksonville event if we can get volunteers to help in the organizing effort and to attend. If you are willing to help, please contact Janet Stanko at JaneStan@bellsouth.net. Otherwise, please stand by and check our website for specific plans. Or if you plan to go on your own and join Sierrans and other coalition partners in DC, RSVP on our MeetUp website to receive updates.

Say NO to Digital Billboards in Jacksonville

"In November, our County Commissioners proposed a change to our sign laws to allow large, LED advertising digital billboards on our roadways. There are a good number of reasons why this proposed ordinance is seriously flawed.

- First is the obvious issue of safety. The entire purpose of a digital billboard is to get your attention while you are driving, thus taking your attention away from the road ahead of you.
- The second ramification is the seriousness of light pollution resulting in damage to humans and the environment.
- The third issue is the blatant waste of natural resources used to create electrical power.
- Lastly, is the issue of turning our county into a visual disaster.

Since November, we have learned that our stretch of I-95 is the most dangerous in the US, which is where they wish to erect the billboards. News4JAX has done numerous reports and the FDOT is launching a full investigation. The billboard industry pushed that their boards could be used as back up safety messaging for our county, but the FDOT has already installed 11 new messaging boards and do not need additional signage. Sheriff Shoar, since learning of the messaging boards and traffic data, has now expressed his concern, not his support, for these large advertising billboards.

The County Commissioners will hear and decide on this proposed ordinance on April 4th. Please call and/or write and express your opposition for digital billboards. Visit our Facebook page "No Digital Billboards in Jacksonville" or our webpage www.nodigitalbillboards.org to learn how you can help stop these visual blights and dangerous distractions."

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Life	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
Senior	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
Student/Limited Income	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

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 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968
 or visit our website www.sierraclub.org

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Meeting Calendar

Monday, April 17 @ 6:00pm

PV Program- "Communicating with officials on key issues."

Ponte Vedra Beach Public Library

Monday, April 10th @ 6:45 pm

JAX Program: "Protecting Biodiversity in our Oceans."

Lakewood Presbyterian Church,
2001 University Blvd W.

Monday, April 17th @ 6:30pm

Combined EXCOM/ Conservation Committee meeting

The Mossfire Grill 1537 Margaret St,
JAX, FL 32204

"No matter how long the winter, spring is sure to follow." -Proverb



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General Programs

Visit our websites for maps to all meeting locations:

florida.sierraclub.org/northeast

www.meetup.com/Sierra-Club-Northeast-Florida-Group

Ponte Vedra Program Monday, April 17th @ 6:00pm

"Communicating with Officials on Key Issues"

The Northeast Florida Group of the Sierra Club in Ponte Vedra will host a presentation by Jerry Cameron on communicating with legislative and government officials on local key issues

Jerry Cameron, retired Assistant County Manager of the St. Johns County Government, with much experience in St. Johns County politics, will outline how we can effectively communicate with our local legislative and government officials on key issues such as the environment, health and welfare and education. Jerry will discuss key points that need to be covered in our communications and meetings.

All are welcome! For further information contact Brian Paradise at (904) 710-0479. The program will be held in the Friends of the Library meeting room on Library Road at A1A (blinking light south of the intersection of A1A and Solana Road, on A1A about two miles south of Butler Boulevard).

Jacksonville Program Monday, April 10th @ 6:45 pm

"Protecting Biodiversity in our Oceans"

Lisa Blizzard, from the Jacksonville Chapter of Sea Shepherd Conservation Society, will give a presentation to include the current campaigns, a brief history of Sea Shepherds' protection of Marine Mammals and an overview of current vessels on campaign.

Established in 1977, Sea Shepherd Conservation Society (SSCS) is an international non-profit, marine wildlife conservation organization. Our mission is to end the destruction of habitat and slaughter of wildlife in the world's oceans in order to conserve and protect ecosystems and species.

Sea Shepherd uses innovative direct-action tactics to investigate, document, and take action when necessary to expose and confront illegal activities on the high seas. By safeguarding the biodiversity of our delicately balanced ocean ecosystems, Sea Shepherd works to ensure their survival for future generations

Lakewood Presbyterian Church, 2001 University Blvd W, rear of the education building. Social time is from 6:30-7:00 with the program starting at 7:00pm. All are welcome. Free.