

Rollback of Protection Possible for Manatee

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service (USFWS), under pressure from special interests such as big developers, is considering reducing manatee protection from “endangered” under the Endangered Species Act to a much lower level of protection. The fact remains that manatees still face many of the same threats which existed when they were originally listed under the Act. This is why Sierra Club, the Save the Manatee Club, and other groups, are working to preserve the manatee’s endangered status.



Boaters killed more manatees in 2015 than in 2014 even with speed zones and no-entry zones to protect the mammals. Florida’s increases in both human population and tourism further endanger manatees and the down listing could bring relaxed restrictions on waterfront development and higher boat speed limits. Boaters and developers have been seeking a manatee down listing since 1999 in order to gain friendlier regulations.

Concerned citizens can support the current endangered status of the manatee by writing to the USFWS at 7915 Baymeadows Way, Suite 200, Jacksonville 32256 and to the Department of the Interior at 1840 C Street, Washington D.C. 20240

State of Florida Readies for Second Bear Hunt

At its April 13 meeting of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, commission chairman Brian Yablonski told his fellow commissioners to be ready to set a quota for the second annual bear hunt at the next meeting of the commission. This action was taken despite continued opposition to the hunt that was carried out last year which killed 304 bears.



Up until 2011, Florida Black Bears were classified as a threatened species under state law. However the commissioners voted in 2011 to remove bears from the state’s list of protected species with the resulting hunt and killing of bears. In March of this year a coalition of scientists and environmental activists petitioned the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to place the Florida Black Bear on the federal endangered species list. In the petition it was noted that the bears were confronted with serious challenges including the shortage of saw palmetto berries, the loss of habitat to development, and the possibility of a second annual hunt.

The petition noted that: “Without Endangered Species Act protection, the Florida Black Bear could again find itself on the precipice of extinction.” Federal officials have not yet responded to the petition. Concerned citizens can support the petition by writing to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at 7915 Baymeadows Way, Suite 200, Jacksonville 32256 phone (904)731-3336.

Folio Weekly List of Agitators, Truth-Seekers, & Crusaders

Congratulations to our own Tom Larson, who was among the 29 individuals recognized for this outstanding achievement! They say of Tom: "Throughout much of his career, which includes [fifteen] years with the Sierra Club, Tom Larson has beaten the war drum of preserving and conserving environmental resources like the Floridian aquifer, utilizing clever, creative and, sometimes, bull-headed tactics to protect assets such as the headwaters of Julington and Pottsburg creeks. “You might say, ‘Why do I do what I do?’ It’s because of my grandchild ... I want my grandchild to enjoy paradise,” Larson said. Without people like him, Northeast Florida might look like *cringe* Daytona Beach.”

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Connect With Us Online

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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, May 21, 2016, 8:00 am: Hike Downtown Jacksonville

Let's go on a walking tour along the Jacksonville waterfront. Our walk will take us over both the Acosta and Main Street Bridges, past Waterfront Park, The Landing, and on both the Southbank and Northbank walking paths. We will meet at in the parking lot of the brand new Fresh Market in the trendy Brooklyn neighborhood of Jacksonville, located at 150 Riverside Ave, Jacksonville, FL 32202. The walk is approximately 4.5 miles and will take up to 2.5 hours. Once the walk is completed, you are welcome to join a group meal at Corner Bakery Café. Please ensure you are on time and suggest bringing comfortable shoes, sunscreen, insect repellent, and a hat.

RSVP on Meetup.com or with outing leader Ken Fisher at 904-210-7765 / kpf1965@gmail.com.

Saturday-Sunday, May 14-15, 2016: Jekyll Island, GA Hiking, Biking and Kayaking Tri-Sierra-Thon Weekend Getaway

Come on up to Jekyll Island, Georgia for a Tri-Sierra-Thon weekend getaway! We will kayak about four miles on clam creek at 3:00 pm Saturday; hike about five miles, half of which on the beach, including beautiful driftwood beach, at 9:00 am Sunday; and bike about 14 miles of the island's trail system at 12:00 pm Sunday. Saturday night will be a great time for fellowship around a fire pit talking, eating and drinking! Don't delay; make your reservation today at Jekyll Island Campground to ensure you can reserve a camper or tent site! The address for the campground is 1197 Riverview Drive, Jekyll Island, GA 31525.

RSVP on Meetup.com or with outing leader Ken Fisher at 904-210-7765 or kpf1965@gmail.com.

Saturday, May 14, 10:00 a.m.: Kayak Thomas Creek

We'll paddle for a total of about six miles on the beautiful Thomas Creek on the north-side. The creek winds northeast into the Four Creeks State Forest. The Thomas Creek Preserve boat ramp is located at 17198 Ethel Road, Jacksonville, FL 32218. No rentals available nearby. Bring your own kayak or canoe. PFD and whistle are required. You must WEAR your PFD. Bring bug repellent and water. Please be there by 9:30 am to offload.

RSVP on Meetup.com or with outing leader Andrea Conover at andrea_conover@live.com.

Saturday, May 28, 9:00 a.m.: Hike the Trails of UNF

We'll hike the trails of the Sawmill Slough Preserve at the University of North Florida Wildlife Sanctuary and pass through upland pines, turkey-oak woodlands and cypress swamps. We will hike for about 4 miles. Bring repellent and water. Children capable of hiking for 3-4 miles are welcome. No pets. Trail map available at Meetup under More-Files.

RSVP on Meetup or to Outing Leader Bill Armstrong, armsfam@yahoo.com.

Sierra Members Win Sierra Club Florida State Awards

Bill Armstrong wins the Otter Award for outings leadership. For the past several years, Bill has been one of the rocks of our outings program and has been our website administrator. He is an accomplished and experienced outings leader, now chair, who leads hiking and kayaking outings on a regular basis. He has also introduced the Northeast Florida Group to Meetup where we list our outings, meetings and other environmental activities in our area. Bill also serves as the facilitator for Meetup. He is responsible for listing our outings and other activities on this site.

He skillfully enhanced our chapter's website to a new platform. It is a foundation of our "public face" and represents us well. We are very fortunate to have Bill as an outings leader/chair, newsletter editor, and Meetup facilitator. He continues to contribute substantially to the success of our outings program and is truly deserving of this award.

Julianne Mammana wins the Whooping Crane Award which recognizes members who do public communications including group newsletter publication.

Julianne has applied her writing, editing, and formatting skills to publishing our newsletter for going on 3 years. Her enthusiasm for the environment is reflected in the vitality of our newsletter. Julianne is a stay-at-home mom who balances child care with at home writing projects, and our newsletter. The newsletter is a vital link with our members to keep them up to date on our activities and events and helps them to get involved in our activism.

During her tenure, we have transitioned the newsletter to electronic 50% of the time and paper the other 50% of the time. This requires a lot of skill to be able to work in both paper and electronic formats. We are fortunate to have such a talented individual leading our newsletter operation.

Hands Across the Sand

"On May 21st at noon in corresponding time zones, people around the world will join hands on beaches and in cities for the sixth annual Hands Across The Sand to oppose expanded offshore drilling, hydraulic fracking, mountain top clearing, coal plants and tar sands and to call for clean energy solutions for a sustainable planet. Hands Across The Sand is a movement made of people of all walks of life and crosses all borders and political affiliations. It is about supporting the advancement of clean energy sources that will sustain our planet. This movement is not about politics; it is about protecting coastal economies, oceans, marine wildlife and fisheries from the threats of expanded offshore drilling and the accidents associated with that drilling. It is about protecting our ground water from carcinogenic chemicals used in fracking and protecting our lands from oil spills. Hands Across The Sand participants are joining hands on May 21 to say NO to the use of filthy fuels and YES to clean energy. They are joining hands to implore leaders and decision-makers to end the United States' dependence on oil and coal and embrace a clean energy future for a sustainable planet.

Locally, we will be meeting in Jacksonville Beach at the end of Beach Blvd located just beyond the Life Guard Station starting at 11:00 am for sign in. Be there to make a stand and send a message to our state and national legislators that we are united in our message of no more dirty fuels poisoning of our oceans and waterways and YES to clean, sustainable energy.

For more details log on to www.handsacrossthesand.org or e-mail Candice Rue at c.rue@att.net for more information."

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Contributing	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
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

Wednesday, May 4 @ 6pm

PV Program: Climate Change & Paris Agreement

PV Beach Library: PGA Room

Monday, May 9 @ 6:30pm

JAX Program: Doug Eng- Photographer of Special Places

CoRK! , 603 King St. North Bldg Jacksonville.

Wednesday, May 18 @ 6:30pm

Combined ExCom and Conservation Committee Meeting

6850 Belfort Oaks Road, Jacksonville

"The greatest danger to our future is apathy."

-Jane Goodall



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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

May 4th @ 6:00pm

Climate Change & the Paris Agreement

The NE FL Sierra Club in Ponte Vedra will host a presentation by our own Conservation Chairman, Tom Larson, a trained Climate Reality Leader. He will present a view of climate change, plus perspectives and outcomes from the Paris Agreement. Tom will explain why this bold and historic agreement is so critically important for us all and what comes next.

Since 2000, Tom has been active with the Sierra Club, focusing on energy & climate issues. For six years, he worked with the Southern Alliance for Clean Energy on energy policy. In 2007-08, Tom served on the Climate Change Advisory Group of the Florida Energy Commission. For over nine years, Tom has conferred with JEA in its Clean Power Stakeholder Group. He also currently serves as chairman of the board for the North Florida Clean Fuels Coalition.

All are welcome! For further information, contact Larry Lickenbrock at (904) 537-6047. The program will be held in the PGA Room of the Ponte Vedra Beach Public Library 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

May 9th @ 6:30pm

Doug Eng- Photographer of Special Places- at CoRK!

We are on the road with beer and photography at CoRK! Bold City Brewery will graciously donate the beer! Doug Eng will enthrall us with his photography.

Fine art photographer Doug Eng will talk about several local places he considers "special" and why a connection to where we live is an important step in advocating for the environment. His explorations will take you to many favorite places such as Big Talbot Island and the Okefenokee Refuge, and to more obscure areas like Deep Creek, Julington-Durbin Preserve, and Cary State Forest. "Jacksonville offers an incredible natural environment. Get outside and visit these places, find your own connection, be inspired and rejuvenated, and claim it for yourself. Then spread the word, so that we can all become caring stewards of our planet." Doug will have prints to view and will do a slideshow. He will also have his kayak series, Streaming South, on display.

Join us starting at 5:00 for Sierra and Beer at CoRK, 603 King St. North Bldg Jacksonville. Program starts at 6:30. Bring your own chair if you can. Free. All welcome.