

Voting: now is the time for protecting our planet

There's never been a more important election, and the counties the Northeast Florida Group serves—Duval, St. Johns, and Clay—offer an easy voting process.

Mail ballots started going out to voters who requested them beginning in late September. Early voting starts in all three counties on Oct. 19. The general election is Nov. 3.

National Sierra is well into its Battleground Campaign to elect Joe Biden and defeat the environmentally destructive Donald Trump.

Florida Sierra (go here for details: sierraclub.org/florida/florida-sierra-club-political-endorsements-list) endorsed U.S. House candidates, state house and state candidates. It also has list of positions on the state constitutional amendments that will be on the ballot.

In Northeast Florida, (go here to see the details: sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida/political-endorsements) our club endorsed pro-environmental candidates and asks members to work for them.

Donna Deegan, U.S. House District 4

Deegan is a strong and viable challenger to long-time incumbent

(See *Endorsements*, page 3)



Waterfalls in Jacksonville? Listen to them splashing and gurgling

There's a place on the westside of the city called Bulls Bay. It's a good-sized park with walking trails some good views and two waterfalls for you to see. Our report and a map are on page 3.

(Photo by Barbara Gubbin.)

Trail Ridge Preserve gains final piece

The North Florida Land Trust acquired the final piece of privately owned property within the Trail Ridge Preserve in Clay County, the group announced. It's the final piece of property the preserve needs.

The nonprofit land conservation organization purchased 40 acres located near Camp Blanding and within the critical Ocala to Osceola, or O2O, wildlife corridor. The purchase means the entire Trail Ridge Preserve will remain undeveloped forever.

“Acquiring this final piece of property will allow us to better manage Trail Ridge Preserve using management techniques like prescribed burning,” said Jim McCarthy, president of NFLT. “The preserve is habitat for some endangered wildlife and preserving it is crucial to their survival. This purchase will guarantee this land is free from development in perpetuity.”

Who we are

Executive Committee

(Our online meetings are open to all. Write for the Zoom login code.)

Chair

Janet Stanko
janestan@bellsouth.net

Treasurer

Lucille Pendleton
LucillePen@yahoo.com

Members

Robert Blade
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Logan Cross
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Basil Smith
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Lisa Williams
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Committee chairs

Conservation

Volunteer! Call 904.990-3191

Environmental Education

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Outings

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Legislative

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Robert Blade
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Website

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Beaches Programs

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Jacksonville Programs

Lisa Williams
Lisaow@gmail.com

Executive Committee Election Ballot

Two positions on our group's nine-member Executive Committee are open this year. Members serve two-year terms and may be re-elected.

To vote, you must be a Sierra Club member.

Households with a single membership, use box 1.

Households with a joint membership, use box 1 and box 2.

Susan Creek	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>
Bill Snow	1 <input type="checkbox"/>	2 <input type="checkbox"/>

Cut out the ballot and mail it to Excom Election, c/o Brian Paradise, 13 Arbor Club Drive #315, Ponte Vedra Beach, FL 32082.

The deadline for ballots is December 19.

Candidate biographies

Susan Creek is originally from California, but moved often during her childhood because of her father's career. This meant they met and worked with new people. She went to high school in the Florida Panhandle where she developed a love for the state's beaches, forests and springs from that time. During her full-time career in behavior analysis, she spent 16 years living overseas—in Australia and the U.K. She has been a member of Sierra Club since 2004. At this moment in time, protecting the planet is more important than ever, she says. "With two adult sons and two beautiful grandchildren who will need to breathe clean air and drink clean water, I'm highly motivated to put back into place all the environmental protections removed over the past three-and-a-half years."

Bill Snow has been active in the Sierra Club since 2017, when he retired from a career in IT management in the manufacturing sector. He has been an Outings Leader in the Northeast Florida Group since January 2018 and has worked with the political committee since January 2020. Bill is a Florida Master Naturalist and serves as vice president of the Northeast Florida Master Naturalists. He is a member of the Florida Trail Association, has hiked over 600 miles of the 1,200-mile-length of the trail, and performs annual maintenance of the trail with FTA work crews. Bill and his wife, Sandy, have lived in St. Augustine since 2007. They have a son living in Jacksonville and a son and two grandsons living in Massachusetts.

Executive Committee: The nine-member ExCom functions as the Northeast Florida Group governing board. It approves budgets and spending, it endorses candidates, and it serves as the group's policy and planning authority. It currently meets online at 6:30 p.m. on the third Monday of the month. Meetings are open to all. Write to the Group Chair for the Zoom login code.

General structure: Each level of the Sierra Club—national, Florida Chapter, Northeast Florida Group—is governed by an elected Excom, all serving the same purpose.

Car wash near St. Augustine's Fish Island spurs protests

It's been a little over a year since the state bought part of historic Fish Island for a park. Now, some residents are gathering against a new plan that they say could negatively impact the area. Preliminary

plans have been submitted to the city of St. Augustine to build a Gate Express Carwash next to the state land. The 1.99-acre lot is at Plantation Island Drive South and SR 312.

Our endorsements in this vital election

(Continued from page 1)

representative John Rutherford. She is a strong supporter of the environment with an additional emphasis on affordable healthcare, green energy programs, and help for small businesses.

Al Lawson, U.S. House District 5

Lawson, the incumbent, garnered national attention as chairman of the House Natural Resources Committee, where he authored one of the most important environmental laws in the country, a state-funded land acquisition program in the United States.

Joshua Hicks, State Rep., District 11

Hicks is running against Cord Byrd for the seat. He will act to protect our community and the state from the devastating effects of climate change and sea level rise.

Dave Rogers, State Rep, District 17

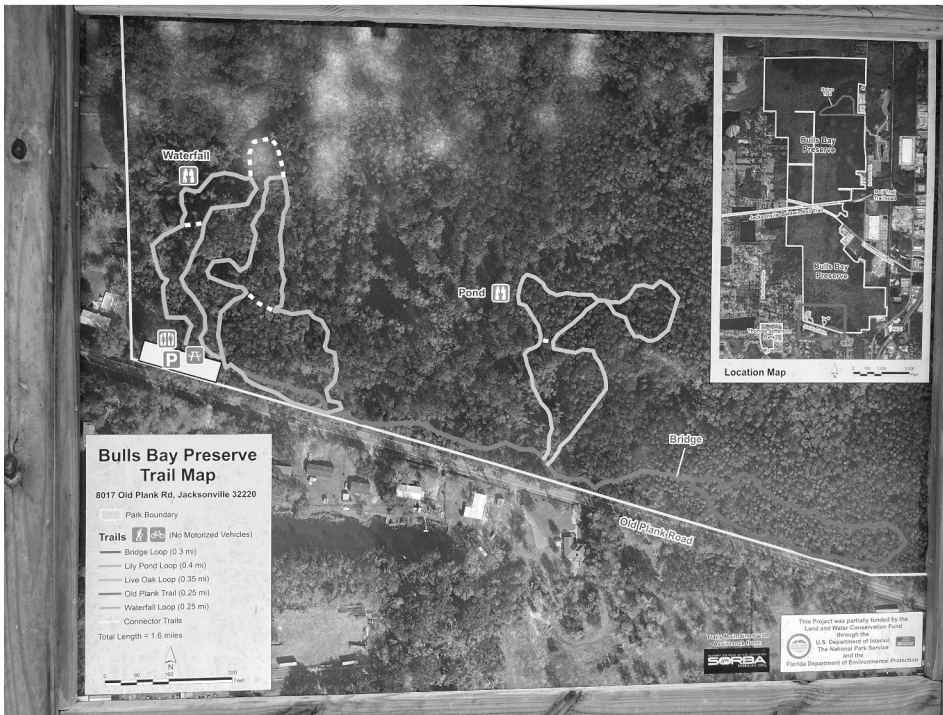
Rogers is running against incumbent, Cyndi Stevenson, who has a very poor environmental voting record. His campaign is concentrated on confronting the challenges of climate change.

Joe McAnarney, St. Johns County Commission, District 1

McAnarney is a retired architect with over 40 years of experience in working with land development codes and zoning standards. He seeks to balance development with quality of life and the environment.

Barbara Blonder, St. Augustine City Commission, Seat 2

Blonder is an associate professor of natural sciences at Flagler College. Her goal is to push St. Augustine to become a sustainable city.



Bulls Bay Preserve entrance is at 8017 Old Plank Road

Waterfalls, beauty, and easy hiking

By BARBARA GUBBIN

Looking for a new place to walk? And discover waterfalls in Duval County?

The Bulls Bay Preserve, on the west side of Jacksonville, covers 1,200 acres of the Bulls Bay Swamp, a wetlands area that serves as the headwaters of two tributaries to the St Johns River, the Cedar River and Sixmile Creek.

One of the smaller tributaries flows into the Cedar River and forms two waterfalls, one of which falls 4 feet.

One warning: this is a wetlands area, so expect some muddy trails.

There is much history to this area: from the 1820's to the Civil War it was known as the Paradise Plantation, owned by Jacksonville's founder Isaiah D. Hart, who operated it with up to 50 enslaved people.

It is thought likely that the waterfall at that time was used for a gristmill to grind

grains. The original meaning of Bulls Bay is not known, though it might have referred to the cattle operations in this area. In the 1970's the area became part of the St. John's River Water Management District and in the 1990's the then owners initiated a request which made it into a nature preserve.



Jacksonville acquired it under former Mayor John Delaney's Preservation Project.

On the east side of the preserve off Imeson Road is the terminus of the Jacksonville-Baldwin Rail Trail and to the west is Camp Milton Historic Park,

both under development at this time.

Bulls Bay plans stalled until 2019 when the trails were developed, one off Imeson Road and five short, interlinked trails with a parking area off Old Plank Road on the preserve's south side.

Sierra Club, Northeast Florida Group



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Note: To change your mailing address or to change from paper to email, write to sierrasentry@gmail.com. Please include your membership number found on the mailing label.

Your essays, opinions, poetry, and photos are welcome as long as they relate to our mantra of enjoy, explore, and protect the environment. Send submissions, queries, and questions to rmlblade@gmail.com.



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___ Supporting \$75	___ \$100
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Mail this form to: Sierra Club
Member Services, 2101 Webster
St., Suite 1300, Oakland, CA
94612 or go to www.sierraclub.org

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our advocacy and lobbying efforts. Contributions to The Sierra Club Foundation and Environmental Law Program are tax-deductible.

Inspiration inside, outside at October events

October's meetings and outings are, of course, all online. But you can find some inspiration, both outside and inside, from these events. Register and get the Zoom code at sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida/get-outdoors

Oct. 1, Thursday, 7 p.m. On Zoom:

Three great trails you've never heard of, part 1. (Spoiler alert: one of them is Bulls Bay, on pages 1 and 3 of this month's Sentry.)

Oct. 12, Monday, 7 p.m. on Zoom.

Human Rights and the Environment. Dr. Josh Gellers, an associate professor of

political science at UNF, will explore different human rights approaches to environmental protection and discuss new frontiers at the intersection of rights and the environment—including the rights of nature initiatives in Florida.

And whenever you're in the mood, go on a virtual hike with our knowledgeable guides and experience North Florida's wonderful parks and preserves, our national park systems, scenic trails, and overseas treks as well. Go to sierraclub.org/florida/northeast-florida/virtual-tours-and-programs.

Our group needs your help

Sierra Club of Northeast Florida relies on volunteers to help with our vital work, and our biggest need right now is someone with email expertise.

We designed a process for sending emails to new members, providing them with Sierra Club orientation information and options for how to get involved. We need someone to coordinate this.

As our volunteer point person, you will join with others on our Communications Group.

Here's what we need from you:

- You must be a Sierra member (you can join for \$15 for the first year),
- Knowledge of Excel spreadsheets
- Email platform experience is helpful.

Or team with another member who has the experience on emailing.

- Live in the Northeast Florida area (Duval, St. Johns, or Clay counties).

Interested: write to Janet Stanko, the Northeast Florida Group chair, at janestan@bellsouth.net.