

GEORGIA



SIERRAN

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB GEORGIA CHAPTER • JUL / AUG / SEP 2019



PRESERVING THE OKEFENOKEE • PAGES 5-9

**PLUS • MORE MARTA IN THE WORKS • COAL ASH CONTINUES TO BE A THREAT IN GA
PROTECTING OUR NATIONAL FORESTS • LOCAL GROUP REPORTS • AND MORE**

FROM THE CHAPTER DIRECTOR

My story starts with a thirteen-day, whirlwind trip to the desert and a life changing hike down into the Grand Canyon. A fire was lit, and I started a relentless pursuit of exploring our Public Lands, followed by a search for how I could turn my future life's work into protecting them. A couple years later, in the spring of 2016, I found myself in a new job with the Georgia Chapter of the Sierra Club.



Jessica Morehead
Interim Chapter Director

A look back on social media and I find the words I wrote as I walked into our office, my first day on the job – **I am so excited to be working with such a great group of people, on work I genuinely care about.** That statement stands true today. Since then, I've had the opportunity to work alongside you and see how passionate and dedicated you truly are. I've learned what makes you keep going in this fight to curb climate change and protect our environment, and I've been blown away when I see just how much you're willing to give.

You've shown up at countless events to help out where needed; you've spent your nights and weekends working on campaigns, leading and attending meetings, and managing volunteers; you've led people into the forest to share your passion with others; and you've pitched in your

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

.....

IN THIS ISSUE

- From the Director • Pages 2 - 3
- Chapter News • Page 4
- Protecting the Okefenokee • Pages 5 - 9

- More MARTA • Page 10
- Legislative Report • Pages 10 - 11
- Conservation News • Pages 11 - 13
- Group News • Pages 16 - 20
- Chapter Directory • Pages 22 - 23

GEORGIA SIERRAN

Volume 44 • Number 3
July / August / September 2019

The Georgia Sierran (ISSN 1044-836) is published quarterly by the Sierra Club, Georgia Chapter, 743 East College Ave., Suite B, Decatur, GA 30030. Periodicals Postage Paid at Oakland, CA, and other mailing addresses.

Editorial Team
Ricky Leroux, Zack Loehle, Wanda Arthur, Faith Khalik, Bettye Harris, Jessica Morehead, David Emory

Submissions & Volunteering
Articles: Send materials to gasierran@gmail.com. Maximum word length: 750 words with one high-resolution digital photo (200 dpi). For more information, or to join the committee, email gasierran@gmail.com.

Address Changes
Send address changes to Sierra Club, Georgia Chapter, 743 East College Ave., Suite B, Decatur, GA 30030 or by email to: address.changes@sierraclub.org

Subscriptions
Subscription fees: \$1.00 annually for Chapter members (included with membership dues) or \$12.00 annually for nonmembers.

Visit the Georgia Chapter Office
Our office is a two-minute walk from the MARTA Avondale station (E7). We encourage you to take MARTA when possible. Exit the MARTA station towards the South Parking Lot, located on the E. College Avenue side (currently under construction). Once outside, proceed down the temporary stairway and turn left toward Sams Street. Cross over Sams Street and the office is behind the bakery. Look for the playground behind the building. Enter the fenced gate. The office is the second door from Sams Street on the right.

On the Cover
Photo: Okefenokee Swamp at sunset from Pixabay.com

FROM OUR EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

To our members and supporters,

Earlier this month our Chapter Director, Ted Terry, announced his resignation in order to pursue political office. Ted has been a great asset to the Club and we are sorry to see him go. But we want you to know that Ted's departure is not going to hamper the work of our Chapter. The Sierra Club is not only the biggest grassroots advocacy organization in Georgia, we are a group of people who are committed to remain the most effective champions for the environment in our state.

It is not in our character to accept a loss. Every bit of bad environmental news looks to us like an for opportunity to make improvements. We are treating this loss in exactly the same way. During the next few months, we will be relying on Jessica Morehead, our talented Deputy Director, to step up as Interim Chapter Director. During this time, the Executive Committee will be engaging in a comprehensive strategic review of our

.....

own dime to support our collective work. You are Sierra Club.

Three years ago, I came on board in a time of transition, just as we sit here today. I am still excited to be working with a great group of people – our current team of talented staff, engaged Executive Committee members, and you! We will continue our work protecting wild places, expanding clean

transit options across the state, picking up political and legislative wins, and transitioning Georgia to a clean energy future for all! Whether you've been helping us for years or are just now looking for ways to get involved, we sure could use your support! Check out the calendar on our website (sierraclub.org/georgia/calendar) often to find out about events, meetings,

staffing and structure. Rather than simply seek to replace Ted, we have decided to use this moment to assess what we do well, what we can improve, and how we can focus our energies into making our Chapter even more effective.

Sierra Club is unusual in that it runs on volunteer leadership and volunteer activism. It is our membership who are meant to drive our actions. Your Executive Committee would love to hear from you now. If you are active at the Chapter or Group level and have thoughts on how we could better organize ourselves to facilitate your work, this is a great time to share your thoughts. This is your Club, and we value your insights as much as your engagement. We set up a form to take your ideas: Please fill it out at bit.ly/ImproveGASC.

Thank you for your dedication to the Georgia Sierra Club and to working for a better, more sustainable world. We're glad you're in the fight with us. We'll see you on the trail soon!

and outings; follow us on social media for all the latest updates and how to get involved; donate your time, talent, or money; or give us a call and tell us what you care about most and let us help plug you into our work.

Hope to see you or hear from you soon!

Jessica Morehead
INTERIM CHAPTER DIRECTOR

Welcome new staff, thanks to summer interns/fellows

The Sierra Club Georgia Chapter is growing! Since our last issue, we've welcomed Ricky Leroux as the new communications coordinator for the chapter.

After graduating UGA with a journalism degree, Ricky spent most of his career in the newspaper industry. He joined the staff at the Sierra Club to apply his skill set toward his passion for the outdoors.

As communications coordinator, Ricky works on the the Georgia Sierran, handles the chapter's social media feeds, manages its website and more.

The Georgia Chapter is very thankful for the help provided by our outgoing interns and fellows and wishes them well in the next phases of their careers.

Tori Mister served as the Beyond Coal Campaign intern, spearheading outreach and engagement with communities affected by coal-fired power plants.

Eliza Stevenson has been our Quaker Volunteer Service Fellow for the last year, working on student outreach and the Ready for 100 Campaign.

Kayla Chen and Maria Russo spent the summer as Urban Leadership Fellows, helping the chapter organize Sierra Club & Beer events and a rally to protest changes to the National Environmental Policy Act.

Thanks again to all four! We're excited to see what you do next.



Ricky Leroux



Tori Mister



Eliza Stevenson



Kayla Chen



Maria Russo

Your IRA was always designed to be used in the future.



Now, you can use it to help ensure the future.

YOU CAN PUT YOUR IRA TO WORK FOR THE PLANET AND SAVE ON YOUR TAXES THIS YEAR

An IRA Charitable Rollover provides an opportunity to make a charitable gift to count toward your required minimum distribution and potentially reduce your taxes - even if you are taking the standard deduction for 2018.

If you are at least 70 ½ years old, you can now transfer up to \$100,000 directly to the Sierra Club Foundation from your IRA without paying income tax on the withdrawal.

Questions? Contact Jessica Morehead at jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org

Please note the Sierra Club Foundation does not offer legal, tax, or financial planning advice. You are encouraged to consult your own legal counsel, tax advisor, and/or financial planner.

The Foundation for a Healthy Planet.
SierraClubFoundation.org



PROTECTING THE OKEFENOKEE GA Chapter marks 20 years since defeating DuPont mine

The Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge is one of America's natural treasures, and we Georgians are its hosts and protectors. Spread across hundreds of thousands of acres, the refuge is home to a variety of threatened and endangered animals and more than 600 species of plants.

This year, the Sierra Club Georgia Chapter celebrates the 20-year anniversary of one of the club's biggest environmental victories in the state: stopping DuPont from setting up a titanium mine along the refuge's eastern border.

More than 20 years ago, a group of activists banded together for a common cause and prevented DuPont from establishing a titanium mine that would have potentially damaged the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

DuPont planned to mine in an area known as Trail Ridge on the east side of the Okefenokee. The topography of the swamp is similar to a saucer with Trail Ridge serving as the saucer's lip. A mine in that area had the potential to cause significant damage by disrupting the swamp's natural boundary.

Club officials mounted an opposition to the mine, which culminated in February 1999 when DuPont signed the "No Mine Agreement," officially ending their pursuit. A few years later in 2003, DuPont donated 5,000 acres to the Okefenokee Refuge, retiring mineral rights on these lands with the Georgia Wildlife Federation, and 11,000 acres to The Conservation Fund, which holds mineral rights to these lands as well.

How did the Sierra Club convince one of the largest companies in the world to abandon its plans? It required a multi-pronged approach that included a broad public



Photo credit: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

A pair of paddlers take a canoe down the Canal Run Trail in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

awareness campaign, engaging DuPont shareholders, and the coordination of a multitude of environmental groups, activists, stakeholders, and politicians.

In early 1997, news of the proposed titanium mine was gaining traction and drawing headlines, with outlets in Atlanta, Savannah, and Jacksonville writing pieces about DuPont's plans and the activists opposed

to them.

"Judy Jennings was the Chapter's Paul Revere, sounding the alarm to newspapers, TV stations, and organizations around the region," said Sam Collier, who served as the Sierra Club's Southeast regional representative at the time.

The issue got national attention when then-Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt toured the Okefenokee and the proposed

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE



Photo credit: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

An alligator rests on the bank of the Canal Run Trail in the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

site of the mine in April 1997.

"He, in no uncertain terms, said this project does not belong next to a wildlife refuge like this," recalled Collier.

Babbitt had brought national media with him, so the story took off. CNN, the Wall Street Journal, and other national outlets started covering it once Babbitt denounced the mine.

Within eight days of Babbitt's declaration, DuPont held a press conference in Atlanta to announce that it was halting its work on the mine to allow for a group of stakeholders to work together to try to balance the company's aims with the activists' concerns.

"DuPont came out with a very strong statement. They said, 'We will not go forward unless and until we can convince all parties, and ourselves, that we will do no harm to the refuge.' So, no harm to the refuge is a pretty high bar, and they set that themselves with this dialogue," Collier said.

At first, the activists were skeptical, believing the stakeholder collaborative was just a way to wear them down or an attempt to calm the public relations storm until people

stopped paying attention, Collier says. But the Club decided to attend the meetings in good faith and talk, he added.

The meetings began in August 1997 and were held monthly in Folkston, Georgia, for the next year and a half. The gatherings were large, Collier said, drawing staff and volunteers from the national Sierra Club, the Georgia and Florida chapters, and local Sierra Club groups as well as close allies like the Georgia Wildlife Federation, the Audubon Society, and The Wilderness Society.

The meetings also included representatives from three Native American tribes, local nature-based tourism businesses, developers, city and county governments, and more.

Josh Marks, an organizer with the Sierra Club Georgia Chapter, even got a group of dentists to band together to fight against the project. Based in Savannah, Dentists Defending the Swamp, or DDS, had petitions opposing the mine in dental offices across southeast Georgia.

Collier said it was important to bring together as broad a coalition as possible for the meetings.

"I think it really brought home to DuPont how special the resource was, for one thing, and how important it was. We couldn't be pigeonholed because the profile of the person who was against the mine was pretty broad," he said.

Meanwhile, another theater of opposition was taking shape in Delaware.

In April 1997, then-Sierra Club Georgia Chapter Chair Sam Booher traveled with his wife and other activists to DuPont's annual shareholder meeting in Wilmington, Delaware, to voice his concern about the mine.

Booher, a DuPont shareholder, knew the company would end the meeting by giving attendees a chance to speak. He prepared a short speech, and when the time came, he went to the microphone.

"I stood up and said, 'My name is Sam Booher, and I would like to comment on DuPont's plans to drill Trail Ridge in front of the Okefenokee Swamp,'" Booher said. "And the chairman of the board said, 'I'd like to respond to that.' And I said, 'Yessir, go right ahead.'

And so he said, 'We'll look into that. Next?'"

The meeting moved on to other speakers, and Booher never got the chance to deliver his speech.

"On the way home, I turned to my wife. I said, 'This pisses me off. And you can piss off a normal shareholder, but you really don't go around pissing off activists.' And I said I'm going to do something about this," Booher said.

He decided to write a shareholder resolution that included everything he wanted to say. If approved by the Securities & Exchange Commission (SEC), DuPont would have to publish it and put it up for a vote at the next shareholder meeting.

"And she said, 'How are you going to do that?' And I said, 'I haven't got the slightest idea, but I'm going to figure it out,'" he recalled with a laugh.

Booher knew that at the shareholder meetings for many Fortune 500 companies across the country, Catholic nuns frequently presented resolutions. So he started calling nunneries to find out how they did it.

"I asked the nuns, I said, 'Who handles your resolutions?' And they always came back with the same answer: Bruce Herbert," he said.

So Booher looked Herbert up, called him, and told him he needed a resolution. Herbert said he'd be glad to do it, but his plate was full and he couldn't take on another resolution project.

"I said, 'Well, I'll tell you what I'm going to do. I'm going to send you \$1,000. I'm going to send it today, you'll get the check in the mail. I want you to go as far as you can with that \$1,000, and let's see what we

History repeats itself: New mine proposed outside Okefenokee

Twenty years after activists with the Sierra Club and its allies stopped DuPont from setting up a mine outside the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, a new company is seeking to do the same.

Twin Pines LLC out of Birmingham, Alabama, has filed permits with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to mine titanium dioxide less than four miles from the refuge, the Associated Press reports.

The company says its mining operation would permanently affect 65 acres of wetlands and more than 4,500 feet of tributaries, the AP reports. The permit application also predicts impacts to the gopher tortoise and gopher frog, two species that are protected by Georgia state law, but not the federal Endangered Species Act.

In an interview with the Associated Press, Twin Pines Minerals President Steve Ingle said his company's mining techniques are "much more environmentally friendly and efficient than what was being proposed in the 1990s" by DuPont.

But the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which manages the wildlife refuge, said the mine could pose "substantial risks" to the environment and some of the damage might be irreversible.

The federal agency made those comments to the Corps of Engineers and provided them to the Associated Press.

"We have concerns that the proposed project poses substantial risks for significant effect to the environment," the Fish and Wildlife Service wrote in a five-page response to the Army Corps dated Feb. 20. "Should impacts occur, they may not be able to be reversed, repaired, or mitigated..."

The agency's memo said even though the mine is outside the borders of the refuge, it could still impact the entire swamp. The AP reports that the memo also quotes former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt, who opposed DuPont's efforts in the 1990s, as having said "Titanium is a common mineral, while the Okefenokee is a very uncommon swamp."

While the company is initially asking to mine on about four square miles, it eventually wants to expand the mine to 19 square miles, the AP reports.

The Sierra Club Georgia Chapter is mobilizing to stop the mine, just as it did 20 years ago. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers has extended the public comment period to September 12.

Submit a comment to the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers asking them to deny the mining permit at bit.ly/ProtectTheOkefenokee.

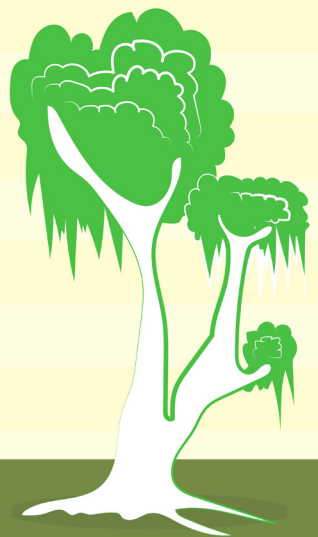
Contact Sierra Club volunteer Sam Collier at sam.collier3@gmail.com if you want to help defend the swamp.

— Ricky Leroux

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

OKEFENOKEE SWAMP

BY THE NUMBERS



438,000 ACRES
Size of the swamp across Georgia and Florida

1937
Year the Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge was created by an executive order from President Franklin Roosevelt

68 DEGREES
Average annual temperature at the Okefenokee

7,000 YEARS
Estimated age of the swamp. Once a part of the ocean floor, the swamp is a peat-filled bog inside a saucer-shaped depression

400,000 VISITORS
Number of people who visit the Okefenokee Swamp each year

233/49/64/37/39/621
Number of species of birds, mammals, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and plants, respectively, that have been found in the Okefenokee

Sources: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, National Archives

can do.’ He said, ‘Alright, send me the check,’” Booher said

Booher sent the check, and about two months later, Herbert called and told Booher that the resolution was not only done, but it was approved by the SEC and will be on the ballot at the next shareholder meeting.

“I would have been satisfied just to go up there and speak for two minutes or three minutes,” Booher said. “That would have been the end of the issue. But by them cutting me off and not letting me speak, we’ve now passed a resolution that’s going to be voted on by everybody that’s a shareholder in DuPont. And that resolution is exactly what I was going to say when I stood up.”

Booher travelled back to Delaware for the 1998 shareholder meeting knowing his resolution would be getting a vote. The Delaware chapter helped organize a rally outside the meeting, and they had thousands of post-cards with signatures opposing the mine taped together.

“That’s the nice thing about Sierra Club,” Collier said. “You’ve got colleagues all over the country. So we’re in Delaware protesting and we have Delaware activists standing with us. ... So we were outside and inside. We were outside with the petition and got on the local news. And then inside, every shareholder on the globe who had DuPont shares read about this proposal to not mine.”

The resolution failed to pass, but it got enough votes to ensure it would be on the ballot again next year. Booher said DuPont did not want it to receive another vote, fearing it would continue to gain support.

But by the time shareholders gathered for their annual meeting in 1999, activists had successfully stopped the mine.

Back at the stakeholder meetings in Folkston, Collier said the earliest discussions were mainly about how to mitigate the impact of the mine. But in December 1997, the meeting attendees first discussed the possibility of a “no mine scenario.”

“At one point, we just said, ‘Look, if we’re going to look at all options and explore them together, one option has to be how can we benefit most with no mine at all, how can we optimize that outcome. And to our surprise, DuPont agreed,” Collier said, adding, “That

told me that they had already planned [for it]. They just needed someone to ask the question. So once I posed the question, they said, ‘We have no problem with that.’”

So a smaller sub-group was formed to look at the no mine scenario, and all parties agreed to confidentiality. That small group began meeting in early 1998, brainstorming about what each side could agree to under the no-mine scenario.

Booher presented his no-mine resolution at the April 1998 DuPont stakeholder meeting with protesters outside surrounding the building, putting more pressure on the company.

At the small no-mine group meetings, DuPont representatives said they didn’t need the ore from the mine, but they

wanted the value of that ore, Collier said. Then they came back and said they didn’t need the full value of the ore, just the profit.

Collier said the group could live with letting DuPont get some money for their trouble.

“Not to say that we would give it to them, or that anybody would give it. In fact, nobody did. But we said we could live with that outcome if you can find a way to get donations or tax breaks or something. ... And eventually they lost interest. They realized nobody was going to hand them money for doing nothing,” Collier said.

In February 1999, the official “No-Mine Agreement” was signed, putting an end to DuPont’s efforts.

“We were just so thrilled,” Collier said. “We were ecstatic

and feel very lucky to this day that we had so many good partners and we were able to raise our voices so loud. Some people work that hard or harder for a lot longer and by all rights should win something and don’t. It just felt – personally, I still get excited thinking about the victory.”

Thanks to the work of activists, environmental groups, dentists, nuns, government officials, business owners, and more, the Okefenokee was spared a potential ecological disaster and 16,000 acres of wilderness was donated and preserved.

Booher said the big lesson from the DuPont fight is a simple one: “If you care and are willing to do something, you can make a difference.”



2019 FALL GATHERING AT THE OKEFENOKEE!

SAVE THE DATE

NOVEMBER 15 - 17 | Suwannee River Eco-Lodge & Stephen C. Foster State Park

sierraclub.org/georgia/FallGathering2019



GET TOGETHER: FALL GATHERING 2019

The Sierra Club Georgia Chapter will be having its 2019 Fall Gathering on the weekend of November 15 at the Okefenokee.

We will have a slate of activities planned for the weekend, including a chili cook-off, a paddle trip, and more. We’ll also be talking about our future

efforts to protect the Okefenokee from new threats as well as our other priority campaigns.

For lodging, we’ll have cabin and camping options available. Visit sierraclub.org/georgia/FallGathering2019 for more info as it becomes available.

More MARTA and state transit in the works

TEJAS KOTAK

MARTA is poised for its largest expansion since its creation. The More MARTA program within the city of Atlanta will create 22 miles of new light rail in the city, four new bus rapid transit routes (BRT), and many more arterial rapid transit and local bus lines.

Two important points to touch on here are buses and the project timeline. Buses move hundreds of thousands of people a day in the metro area, and Atlanta should be proud of the work being done to expand its bus services as well as its rail expansions. While many transit advocates and planners enjoy seeing rail lines throughout a city, BRT lines can provide the same frequency and quality of service as most light rail lines. They must be done properly with dedicated lanes and signal prioritization, which are opportunities for us to stay involved with the process as MARTA and the city begin building these new projects to make sure they are done properly.

Regarding the More MARTA project timeline: Very few of these will be ready within the next five years, and most of the light rail will not be in operation for at least a decade. This is largely due to the long timeline engineering projects of their size require as well as the funding constraints MARTA still faces. MARTA is the only major transit provider in the United States that does not receive dedicated funding from the state it serves. There has historically been strong opposition to funding mass transit at the Georgia Capitol from a mix of car-centric and racially motivated mindsets, but those viewpoints are changing as traffic worsens in the metro area and the market sees proximity to transit as a necessary factor for homes and businesses. Lobbying state representatives and senators for dedicated transit funding could help MARTA expand faster and more ambitiously.

We often focus on metro Atlanta when it comes to transit, but the RAIL Committee has a statewide mandate and endeavours to improve and expand bus and rail service. Half of Georgia's population lives outside the metro area in smaller cities or rural areas, and there are more than 100 rural and small urban transit systems that serve them. These systems are largely limited bus routes with headways

of more than an hour or on-demand systems with shuttle buses. There are some situations where these are sufficient for the local population's needs, but by and large, areas need improved transit options so locals can travel to and from work, hospitals, and any variety of entertainment spots.

The Georgia Department of Transportation (GDOT) does offer limited funding to these entities, but it is a far cry from what is needed in order to have robust, connected systems throughout the state. Right now, GDOT is conducting a Statewide Transit Survey (gdottransitsurvey.org) to understand the current needs and desires of the public for their transit systems. The survey will be open for the next few months, and the results could lead to the agency more aggressively planning and funding transit projects. Shifting some of GDOT's massive financial resources for transit would be a big victory for the entire state. Please take the survey and express support for improved service, connected systems, and electric buses, which are more sustainable and output zero carbon emissions.

LEGISLATIVE

Toxic coal ash continues to be a threat in Georgia

MARK WOODALL

Burning coal to make electricity is a danger to the planet because of its massive contribution to climate change. Burning coal in Georgia has also left a toxic legacy of some 90 million tons of toxic coal ash in leaking ponds all across Georgia.

Coal ash contains a lethal list of heavy metals and other contaminants, including arsenic, lead, cadmium, chromium, selenium, boron, and radium. Political pressure from utilities such as Georgia Power kept the EPA from regulating coal ash for decades. Finally, after the TVA coal ash spill disaster of December 2008, the EPA released coal ash regulations in 2015.

The worst part of the 2015 EPA rule was the classification of coal ash as a non-hazardous waste that could be put in municipal solid waste landfills along with household garbage. This loophole has led to millions of tons of out-of-state coal ash being dumped in Georgia. A continuous stream of trucks brings coal ash from Asheville, NC, down Interstate 85 to Banks County. Meanwhile, a bitter fight in Wayne County has so far prevented waste giant Republic from taking 10,000 tons of coal ash a day

by CSX rail at its Broadhurst facility.

Georgia Power is currently working to close all its wet coal ash ponds. Unfortunately, their current plan is to leave over 40 million tons of coal ash in unlined pits at Plant Hammond near Rome, Plant McDonough in Cobb County, Plant Scherer near Macon, and at Plants Wansley and Yates near Newnan. Georgia Power plans to ask the Public Service Commission (PSC) to allow it to charge its customers as much as **\$7.6 BILLION** for an incomplete clean up.

In April, the North Carolina Department of Environmental Quality ordered Duke Energy to do a full excavation of all remaining coal ash ponds with disposal in lined landfills. Virginia and South Carolina are also requiring lined storage. Georgia residents and groundwater deserve the same level of protection as those states are getting.

The Trump EPA is trying to weaken the already too weak 2015 EPA rule. The EPA has proposed giving Georgia EPD the coal ash program under what is called delegation. Georgia would be the second state after Oklahoma to get delegation. The EPA will conduct a hearing on the proposal to delegate coal ash regulation to the Georgia EPD on August 6 at the EPD Tradeport office.

Submit a comment to the EPA about the proposal at bit.ly/Write2EPASStopGACoalAsh.

Georgia Power just filed a request for a \$2.2 billion rate increase over the next three years. The first hearing on the rate increase and associated coal ash costs will be September 30.

The Georgia Water Coalition is working on several pieces of coal ash legislation which may be acted upon when the legislature returns in January 2020.

For more info, go to gawater.org/coal-ash. To get involved with the phase out of dirty coal burning in Georgia and its replacement with clean energy, contact Beyond Coal Campaign organizer Neil Sardana at neil.sardana@sierraclub.org. To read more about the fight in Wayne County, go to NoAshAtAll.org. As Georgia author Janisse Ray writes in *The Bitter Southerner*: "From ashes such as these, what can rise?"

BEYOND COAL

Chapter makes big impact on state's future power plan

STEPHEN STETSON

The Sierra Club Georgia Chapter made its

power felt in an unprecedented way as it coordinated advocacy around Georgia Power's long-term energy plan.

In a process that began in January, volunteers and national Beyond Coal staff focused on both the utility and the Public Service Commission, pushing for coal retirements, energy efficiency programs, and large quantities of new clean solar energy in Georgia. In early July, the results came back in the form of a finalized Integrated Resource Plan (IRP)

Although we didn't get everything we wanted, the plan is nonetheless a milestone for clean energy, and there was a consensus that there was a nearly unprecedented level of public interest and involvement in the process. Sierra Club's expert testimony called for as much as 13,000 MW of solar, and the utility (and state regulators) heard throughout the spring from a number of our allies pushing for large volumes of carbon-free energy.

One primary objective was the retirement of dirty fossil-fired electricity, and to that end, there were some important victories. The most significant was the announced retirements of Plant Hammond (840 MW) near Rome and Plant McIntosh (142.5 MW) near Rincon. Clean energy advocates are also optimistic about the potential (eventual) retirement of two massive coal boilers at Plant Bowen near Cartersville. Georgia Power has admitted that the units are uneconomic and placed binding spending limits on these two units (805 and 788 MW, respectively). Sierra Club expects that solar (with battery storage) will eventually replace these mammoth carbon emitters at Plant Bowen, and ideally, we will see retirement of all of the Bowen units before the next three-year planning period.

There were also some extremely significant clean energy wins in the IRP. Georgia Power will increase its renewables portfolio by 72% over the next three years, equaling 2,260 MW of new renewables. This means that the utility will have nearly 5,400 MW of renewable energy by 2024, and will increase the company's total renewable capacity to 22% of its portfolio, powering 200,000 homes of the company's 2.6 million customers.

Not all of the new solar will be the massive utility-scale solar that spreads across beautiful Georgia fields: 1,000 MW will be devoted to large commercial and industrial customers and another 1,000 MW will be similarly-sized through competitive solicitations. But around 210 MW will be for rooftop solar folks in what is known as "distributed generation." We are also excited about

CONTINUES ON NEXT PAGE

80 MW of battery storage, which is widely considered to be critical to the future of the utility industry and vital for additional adoption of solar resources since boosting storage resources is one way to resolve solar skeptics' concerns about reliability.

This plan also includes energy efficiency targets that are 15% above their last plan in 2016. Sierra Club was active in the ongoing "Demand Side Management working group," and pushed successfully to increase the reach of an experimental pilot program to boost energy efficiency programs for low-income Georgians.

We were also pleased that the plan did not call for additional building of fracked-gas power plants, which might accelerate the retirement of coal, but is a major contributor to climate change. We are confident that burning gas is not the path forward in Georgia, and appreciate the company refraining from proposing such resources.

Finally, although we were not happy about a small 50 MW biomass project that was approved, but we were happy that it wasn't larger. Countless studies have shown that burning trees is not an economic way to make electricity.

We appreciated working with our many allies, all of whom made the case to the PSC for



Photo credit: Ricky Leroux

Clean energy activists made their voices heard during several rallies outside the Georgia Public Service Commission's offices.

additional solar energy to come online in Georgia. We were also encouraged by the leadership shown by the Georgia Public Service Commission in pushing Georgia Power to propose additional renewable energy. The commission also urged cities across Georgia to highlight their clean energy demands so that future long-term plans can incorporate the growing appetite for 100 percent renewable energy.

WILDLANDS & WILDLIFE

Public's right to have a say in future of National Forests at risk!

MARIA RUSSO, UBRAN LEADERS FELLOW

On July 18, activists from all over Georgia, Tennessee, and North Carolina met for a rally outside of the Region 8 Forest Service office. The purpose of the rally was to protest federally proposed changes to the implementation of the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), which are yet another example of federal attacks on citizen rights and public participation.

The proposed changes would cut the public out of the decision making process for a variety of projects:

- Commercial logging up to 4,200 acres (6.6 square miles!) at a time;
- Building up to five new miles of roads at a time;
- Adding illegally created roads and trails to the official roads and trails systems;
- Closing roads used by the public to access hunting areas, streams for fishing, and trails; and
- Bulldozing new pipeline or utility rights-of-way up to 20 acres (e.g., 4 miles at 40 feet across)

At the July 18 rally, we protested for more than an hour to gain attention and recognition from the Forest Service's office.

Many people passing by in cars and on bikes honked and shouted to show their support for our presence. While we were met with some security outside of the building, we were generally welcomed to share our perspective on the issue.

After about two hours of standing and chanting outside of the building, we were invited, two people at a time, into the building. We spoke with the Forest Service for about twenty minutes and discussed our perspectives regarding the changes.

Many of the issues that we worked to highlight are regional in nature, adversely affecting the entire Southern U.S. For example, given the smaller size of National Forests in the region, the creation of roads and large-scale logging could essentially wipe out wide swaths of our forests, whereas they would be less significant to forests in the West.

The rally was just the beginning of our work.



Photo credit: Ricky Leroux

Protesters braved the summer heat to tell the U.S. Forest Service that the public should not be cut out of the process of making decisions about our National Forests.

Thanks to everyone else in the region who are collectively combating these proposed changes. We are encouraging people to learn more about what these proposed changes mean for your forests and asking readers to submit their opposition through the public comment portal, which is open until August 12th.

To fill out a public comment to share your opposition to the Forest Service's proposed changes before August 12th, please visit: bit.ly/NEPAComments.



SOLAR ENERGY - SUSTAINABILITY BEGINS AT HOME

Benefits:

- Most Reliable and Affordable Clean Energy Source in GA
- Save on Electricity Bills for 30+ Years
- Increase the Value of Your Home
- Optional Batteries for Power Outages and Daily Use
- Reduce Your Carbon Footprint

Why Now?:


- 30% Federal Tax Credit Fades After 2019
- Improved Financing Options Now Available
- Avoid Utility Rate Increases
- The Sooner You Start, the Greater Your Overall Return

Why Creative Solar?:

- Most Residential Installations in GA
- 25 Year Warranty for Equipment
- Best in Industry 5 Year Warranty on Workmanship
- Specializing in Residential and Commercial Installations

CONTACT US AT 770-485-7438
OR VISIT CREATIVESOLARUSA.COM
TO SCHEDULE A FREE CONSULTATION.





Working for the day when our Air, Land and Water are clean, abundant and healthy.

Start an EarthShare of Georgia employee giving campaign today!

404.873.3173 www.earthsharega.org

Outings Leader training a huge success!

LORNETT VESTAL, SOUTHEASTERN CAMPAIGN REPRESENTATIVE, MILITARY OUTDOORS

On Thursday, May 30, the Sierra Club Military Outdoors and Georgia Chapter gathered at Mulberry Gap Mountain Bike Get-a-way for our 2019 Outings Leader Training. It was the first SCMO leadership training course in the Southeast since 2017 and the first time we partnered with the Georgia Chapter to bring Local Outings' collective knowledge into the fold.

Several guests joined me, Georgia Chapter Interim Director Jessica Morehead, and Outings Leaders Max Brown and Laura Ochs for a week-end of outdoor leadership training.

The host venue, Mulberry Gap, was rustic yet modern. We were served some tasty down-home meals for our three days at the campground. We even had a bluegrass band named Opossum and the Bear, and folks got to play a washtub bass and washboard as the local musicians serenaded us on our final evening.

Guests learned about the Military Outdoors and Local Outings programs offered through the Sierra Club. We also discussed the Georgia Chapter's conservation campaigns. During our equity training, we had a deep dive discussion on Sierra Club history and why outdoors for all is a human right. We also talked about how outing leaders can be the vanguard of the conservation movement and fight against climate change as well as ways to ensure all people are welcomed in the outdoors no matter race, age or ability.

We applied lessons learned during the leader workshops on the Emery Creek Trail, which included many water crossings and a pit stop at a beautiful waterfall. So folks got a chance to bear witness to some of Georgia's natural scenery. The group shared best practices during trail training scenarios and offered trainers great insight with their wisdom on how to handle emergencies and conflict on the trail. Everyone brought their expertise to the trail that day. We even had a daughter of a veteran and his wife join us on the trail. The teenager challenged herself to a tough



water crossing with a smile on her face.

We want to give a special thanks to the Sierra Club Georgia Chapter and our two volunteer Outings Leaders, Max Brown and Laura Ochs. Without them, this training couldn't have been successful.

Many veteran and outside groups, such as Team Red, White, and Blue; Minority Veterans of America; and GirlTrek, were all represented. Folks found great value in practical exercises on the trail and building community with each other, veterans and civilians alike. On Sunday, June 2, when people departed for home, it was no longer a group of strangers who left the trail, but friends who would be back on the trail leading and learning from each other for years to come.

Five questions with an outings leader

RICKY LEROUX

Getting outside and experiencing nature is good for the soul. The Sierra Club regularly organizes outings across the state, which are led by our fantastic group of Outings Leaders.

In this issue, Outings Leader Pete Johnson tells us about joining the Sierra Club in the wake of the BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico and how his military experience made him a natural outings leader.

Q: Tell us about yourself.

A: Professionally, I work in IT. I am a former Army officer. I spent several years on active duty and in the reserves. I joined the Sierra Club formally in 2014 and quickly went through outings leader training. I was motivated by the big BP oil spill in the Gulf of Mexico, I felt it was finally time for me to act. ... In my outings leader training, I discovered the military outdoors program, so I asked more about that and became involved. And that's kind of a niche that I settled into.

Q: What is your connection to the outdoors?

A: I have always been an avid outdoorsman. I read Rachel Carson's "Silent Spring" when I was in the fourth grade, so I was kind of a precocious ecological kid. I come from a long line of hunters and fishermen, and a lot of my family's roots are very rural. The men and the women in my family were very adept at hunting and fishing and woodcraft and I guess what we would call fieldcraft today. I have always had a comfort in the outdoors, and I really like the opportunity of introducing that to other people.

Q: When and why did you become an outings leader?

A: In 2014, I was so shaken by the BP gulf oil spill that I looked at the Sierra Club website with an idea of getting involved. And there was a question on there: "Would you like to become an outings leader?" And it was a response form and I filled it out. I said, "Yes, I really would." I've got military experience leading groups of people in



Photo credit: Pete Johnson

Outings leader Pete Johnson is an avid outdoorsman and greatly enjoys spending time paddling. In this photo, Johnson is seen kayaking in the tidal creeks near James Island, South Carolina.

the woods, sometimes under some very trying circumstances, so I thought that that might be a nice starting point.

Q: What's the best part of being an outings leader?

A: Meeting a whole assortment of people that I wouldn't have met otherwise who come to the outings.

Q: What's your favorite outdoor space in Georgia?

A: I have discovered more about my home state as an outings leader, though both talking as well as going and doing, than I ever thought I would have. I'm a watercraft guy, and my next challenges are the big rivers in the south, the Altamaha and the Flint rivers as they head toward the coast. But I spent a lot of my high school years in north Georgia, and I still have a real fondness for the mountains up there.

Know an outings leader who should be featured in this space? Want to become an outings leader? Email Communications Coordinator Ricky Leroux at ricky.leroux@sierraclub.org!

SUMMER 2019 GROUP NEWS

CENTENNIAL GROUP

SERVING COBB, CHEROKEE & NORTH FULTON

Swinging Into Summer

LYNN WALSTON, BETTYE HARRIS &
BOB SPRINGFIELD

So far, our “lazy, hazy days of summer” have been busy and rewarding. At the end of May, we were happy to co-host one in a series of “Clean Energy Community Conversations” in Cartersville along with the Georgia Chapter, several community partners, and many helping hands.

We had excellent turnout, discussion, and engagement. We invite you to join us and to also give us your feedback by responding to our Centennial membership survey that we will distribute later this spring.

Please visit our Centennial webpage, Facebook page, and the Georgia Chapter Outings page at sierraclub.org/georgia/outingscalendar.

On June 4th, our annual Centennial Group Potluck Picnic at East Cobb Park featured awesome weather, food, turnout, a short optional walk, and several newcomers and returning members. Thanks to everyone who joined us for a fun evening and one of our sure bet summer traditions.



The Centennial Group participated in the Cobb Branch of the NAACP's annual Juneteenth Festival in June.

Kudos to our friends at the Cobb Branch NAACP for sponsoring another successful and impressive Juneteenth Festival the weekend of June 14 on the Marietta Square. This was the 16th year for this local celebration and commemoration and the fifth year that our Centennial Group has participated as a nonprofit vendor (we were set up on Saturday). We were happy that Cobb4Transit.org volunteers also hosted a booth for the first time, collecting signatures and helping promote expanded transit initiatives for Cobb County.



The Centennial Group celebrated its members at its recent Potluck Picnic at East Cobb Park.

FEATURED: LULA LAKE LAND TRUST OUTING- JUNE 22

Centennial Group Outings Leaders led a hike at the private Lula Lake Land Trust for 19 hikers on June 22. The Lula Lake Land Trust is nestled in northwest Georgia near Lookout Mountain and is open to the public only two weekends a month. Groups like the Sierra Club are allowed access for private events on closed days.

The five-mile hike included views from a ridge top and treks to the top and bottom of Lula Falls. Hikers generously made donations to the Lula Trust and the Sierra Club. Thanks to leaders Lee Graham, Connie Dassinger, Christene Van Roosen, and Bob Springfield.

Please check the Georgia Chapter outing calendar, sierraclub.org/georgia/outingscalendar, for upcoming dates.



Outings Leaders from the Centennial Group took 19 hikers for a trip in the Lula Lake Land Trust in northwest Georgia in June.



.....

GROUP INFORMATION

Monthly meetings: 1st Thursday, welcome and refreshments at 7 p.m., program at 7:30 p.m.; Life College, 1269 Barclay Cir. SE, Marietta. For directions please contact Lynn Walston, lynnwalston22@yahoo.com.

Short Summer Break: We will NOT have a regular meeting in July or August, but hope to announce a mini “pop-up” event during that time. Our regular meetings will resume on Thursday, September 5th, at 7 p.m. at Life University.

Special September Reminder: We are making plans to again participate in the annual East Cobber Parade & Festival on Saturday, September 14th. Lots of creative hands needed to help us plan for this fun event. We need folks to march, help make a float, and staff our table. Please contact lynnwalston22@yahoo.com if you're interested.

Visit our webpage at sierraclub.org/georgia/centennial

Join us on Facebook at facebook.com/Centennial.Sierra.Club

GREATER GWINNETT GROUP

SERVING GWINNETT COUNTY

DAN FRIEDMAN

As we move past the midpoint of the year – and approach the end of school vacation (tic-toc, tic-toc) – it is the perfect time to look back at what we have done and look forward to where we are going. This year, the Gwinnett Group worked to bring public transportation to Gwinnett and talked about the effect that Plant Vogel will have on our household budgets, as well as the proposed Green New Deal's potential effects on Gwinnett and its citizens. We have monitored water quality in Gwinnett streams, taken hikes (or outings, in Sierran jargon), and attended festivals.

At our June meeting, Sarah Barlow, Gwinnett County's deputy director of natural and cultural resources, discussed Gwinnett's park system, one of the best in Georgia, and the resources

available in the parks. This is particularly timely as a recent published study said that two hours a week should be spent outdoors to reduce stress, increase exercise, and get away from our daily routine, enabling us to relax.

In the second half of the year, our programs will continue to concentrate on Gwinnett in areas of smart energy, politics, transportation, and the global climate crisis. There is something here for everyone and more than likely several topics that will interest you.

GROUP INFORMATION

Our meetings are held the third Thursday of each month. We meet at Berkmar High School (405 Pleasant Hill Road, Lilburn) with a social at 7 p.m. and a program beginning at 7:30 p.m. Enter the high school from Pleasant Hill and enter the school via the covered walkway at the top of the hill.

Visit our webpage at sierraclub.org/georgia/Gwinnett.

METRO ATLANTA GROUP

SERVING ATLANTA, DEKALB & SOUTH FULTON

Recent meetings and actions

NINA DUTTON

At our April 9 meeting, we discussed how to save our home with better stories – that is, how to be more effective at communicating the messages of the environmental movement. Hobie Stocking, our featured speaker in April, is the lead strategist with SkyWaterEarth and a volunteer with the Sierra Club Georgia Chapter's Clean Energy for All Committee.

Here are 3 short takeaways from Stocking's presentation:

- 1. Facts and truth matter, but at the right time.
- 2. Environmentalists often work closely with scientists, so we're used to thinking and hearing about concepts with uncertainty. But while scientists are rewarded for expressing uncertainty, doing so is not helpful to change anyone's mind.
- 3. If you're speaking with someone you disagree with and you would like to get them to understand your perspective, find out what that person values. Then tell a story about the issue/topic that connects to that value (ideally, some value that



Photo credit: Erik Voss

Georgia residents call for clean, affordable energy and climate justice at the June 11, 2019 Statewide #SpeakTruth2GAPower rally.

you can find in common, e.g., family).

At our May 14 meeting, we heard from interpretive rangers Don Scarbrough and Andy Wooten about Sweetwater Creek State Park, the park's natural and human history, and their work to educate the public about it. We recommend checking out the calendar of events on the park's website for interesting ways to experience the park, from

kayak paddles at twilight to Ranger Wooten's guided tour of the indigenous peoples' history in what is now the park. At this meeting, we also heard from Michael Greenberg – who was then the southeast organizer with Mighty Earth – about that organization's campaign to end deforestation by the rubber industry by putting public pressure on tire companies.

In lieu of a typical meeting in June, we took part in the June 11 Statewide Speak Truth to Georgia Power rally outside the Georgia Public Service Commission. Georgia residents mobilized from across the state for this rally to call for clean affordable energy during one of the PSC's final public hearings on Georgia's 2019 Energy Plan. June 11 and 12 were the last public hearings in which intervening parties (including Sierra Club) could participate regarding the 2019 Integrated Resource Plan, a process by which Georgia Power updates its plan for how it will provide electricity. Since this process occurs only once every three years, getting involved in it this year has been our best chance in the near term to win clean affordable energy and climate justice in Georgia.

Call for volunteers:

Adopt-A-Stream and more

Do you like getting a little muddy? Feel most alive exploring creeks and forests? Want to serve as a sentinel for the health of a stream? Metro Atlanta Group Adopt-a-Stream needs volunteers!

SAVANNAH RIVER GROUP

SERVING AUGUSTA & SURROUNDING AREAS

LINDA MCBURNEY

Since our Outings Chair Cathy Black and Co-Chair and retired Army veteran Sam Booher joined forces to plan for a Savannah River Group Military Outdoors Program, two veterans – Bridget Brown and Joshua Mastel – have become certified Sierra Club outings leaders with a few outings already completed. Bridget has taken a lead role with Military Outdoors Program, and both she and Joshua are planning more outings to include some that are slower paced, some aimed for families, and some for those who like high-octane challenges.

Bridget and her husband are veterans and have two children. Josh is a veteran and his wife is on

Want to find out more about stepping up? Please read about the existing program at sierraclub.org/georgia/atlanta/adopt-stream-program and email our chair, Nina Dutton, at nddutton@gmail.com.

Want to pitch in in other ways, such as by helping out at meetings, planning events or actions, or keeping on top of local news, policy, politics, events, and opportunities? Please email our chair, Nina Dutton, at nddutton@gmail.com.

GROUP INFORMATION

The Metro Atlanta Group generally meets on the second Tuesday of each month. Typically our meetings feature a speaker on a timely topic. Then, we present info on how to take action on important issues. Recently, we have been meeting at the Georgia Chapter office (743 E. College Ave., Suite B, Decatur, GA, 30030), but the location is subject to change. Please join us at 7 p.m. to socialize and 7:30 p.m. for the program! Some months we do not hold a regular meeting, so please check the Chapter calendar, our webpage, and our Facebook page for updates.

Our executive committee meetings are open and generally held the evening of the first Tuesday of the month. Contact Nina Dutton (nddutton@gmail.com) to confirm details.

Web page: <http://sierraclub.org/georgia/atlanta>
Facebook: <http://facebook.com/sierraclubatl>

If you don't get our monthly meeting announcements, sign up for email updates through the Georgia Chapter website (<http://sierraclub.org/georgia>) and be sure to include your Atlanta-area zip code.

active duty, and they have two children.

This was truly a community effort to get this program going. In addition to Lornett Vestal, Sierra Club's Southeast Military Veterans & Outdoors Coordinator, providing guidance, Augusta University's Military and Veterans Services helped to spread the word about MOP using their listserv, Veterans Affairs marketed at both the VA hospital and Augusta University, and the Ft. Gordon Retiree Council helped us get approval to advertise in Ft. Gordon's newspaper, Ft. Gordon Globe.

GROUP INFORMATION

Monthly meetings: 3rd Tuesday, 6:30 p.m., Unitarian Church on Walton Way, Augusta.

Visit our webpage at sierraclub.org/georgia/Savannah-River.

LAGRANGE GROUP

SERVING THE LAGRANGE AREA

PAULA DARDEN

The LaGrange Group was very active in education outreach this spring. In April, the group joined the Coweta County Democrats to co-host a citywide town hall meeting to educate citizens on climate change and the Green New Deal. The town hall, held at the LaGrange Memorial Library, was well attended. Speakers discussed global warming and climate change and the ways the Green New Deal addressed those issues. LaGrange Group also hosted two public programs on conservation and energy. A family-friendly program featuring live birds of prey was held at the LaGrange Memorial Library to educate children and families on the crucial role raptors play in nature. The second program was on The Ray, an 18-mile stretch of I-85 in west Georgia that became one of the first sections of highway in the nation to research and put into

action sustainable, regenerative, and carbon-neutral features. The group also participated in Sweep the Hooch in April, the LaGrange portion of which concentrates on cleaning the shoreline of West Point Lake. The group collected more than 80 bags of trash over four hours. One of our most interesting activities was a trip to Fort Benning in Columbus to learn about conservation efforts on the base to protect the red cockaded woodpeckers and the longleaf pine forests they inhabit. LaGrange Group will not hold any public meetings in June, July or August. Our next public meeting will be on Tuesday, September 17 at 7 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church in LaGrange.

GROUP INFORMATION

The LaGrange Group will not hold any public meetings in August. Its next meeting will be on Tuesday, September 17 at 7 p.m. at St. Mark's Episcopal Church's Parish Hall, 207 N. Greenwood Street, LaGrange.

Visit our webpage at sierraclub.org/georgia/Gwinnett.

COASTAL GROUP

SERVING SAVANNAH & SURROUNDING AREAS

The Coastal Group works to protect Georgia's coastal marshland with legislative, legal, scientific, technical, communications, and advocacy techniques.

GROUP INFORMATION

Visit our webpage at sierraclub.org/georgia/coastal.

Join us on Facebook at bit.ly/CoastalSCFB.

Give Your Vehicle a New Purpose.

Donate Your Vehicle Today!

SIERRA CLUB FOUNDATION
VEHICLE DONATION PROGRAM



We make donating your vehicle easy!
1-844-6-SIERRA | scfch.careasy.org

GET INVOLVED!

JOIN THE GEORGIA CHAPTER'S EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

The Sierra Club Georgia Chapter Nominating Committee is seeking candidates for the Executive Committee (ExCom). The Chapter ExCom has oversight responsibility for the Georgia Chapter to ensure that it is carrying out our mission productively. If you know someone who would be a good ExCom member, or if you are interested in serving yourself, contact Yeou-rong Jih at yeourong@gmail.com or Jessica

Morehead at jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org. Chapter and Group candidate statements and any nomination petitions for candidates must be submitted by September 15, 2019. You may refer to the Chapter website (sierraclub.org/georgia) to review the responsibilities of ExCom. Complete rules for the election are posted on the Sierra Club website. Ballots with candidate statements will be distributed by mail and electronically by October 14. Ballots must be received by 5 p.m., November 14. Details for returning ballots and ballot counting will be published on the Chapter website and in the next Sierran.

URGENT: RAISE YOUR VOICE! PROTECT YOUR LAND AND WATER!

The Sierra Club Georgia Chapter is asking our members and supporters to take these three urgent actions to protect our state's natural resources.

1 We are asking the U.S. Forest Service to abandon its proposal to cut the public out of many of the decisions it makes regarding our National Forests (see page 13 for more).

Here's how you can help:

- Submit a comment asking the Forest Service not to cut the public out of its decision making process.
- Learn more and submit your comment at bit.ly/NEPAComments.
- The deadline is August 12, so act now!

2 The Georgia Chapter remains concerned about the EPA's proposal to give the state control over how it manages coal ash (see page 10).

Here's how you can help:

- Tell the EPA that Georgia should not be given control of this program unless it makes significant changes to its proposal.
- Learn more and submit a comment at bit.ly/Write2EPASStopGACoalAsh
- The deadline is August 27!

3 We are mobilizing to stop a mine proposed for an area outside the Okefenokee Swamp (see page 7), which could have significant environmental impacts.

Here's how you can help:

- Send an email urging the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers to deny the mining permit at bit.ly/ProtectTheOkefenokee.
- The deadline for comments is September 12!

The Sierra Club runs on volunteers, and we need your help!



Let us know how you can pitch in: bit.ly/VolunteerForGASC

SIERRA CLUB
GEORGIA CHAPTER

CHAPTER DIRECTORY

LOCAL GROUP CONTACTS

CENTENNIAL GROUP

Chair, Lynn Walston
lynnwalston22@yahoo.com

Conservation Chair, Andrea Searles
andreasearles@gmail.com

Outings Chair, Lee Graham
leegrah3@gmail.com

COASTAL GROUP

Chair, Karen Graine
karengraine@bellsouth.net

Outings Chair, Steve Wagner
sjwgnr@hotmail.com

Events Coordinator, Lilli Hutto
medi8@mindspring.com

GWINNETT GROUP

Chair, Dan Friedman
dan3688@aol.com

Conservation Chair, Art Sheldon
asheldon.cp81@gtalumni.org

Outings Chair, Jake Hardison
jake.hardison@ssa.gov

LAGRANGE GROUP

Co-Chair, Mary Lou Dabbs
mldabbs05@gmail.com

Co-Chair, Eric Simpson
elamar109@yahoo.com

Outings Chair, Laura Breyfogle
breyfoglel@gmail.com

METRO ATLANTA GROUP (MAG)

Chair, Nina Dutton
niddutton@gmail.com

Conservation and Outings Chair,
Max Brown
maxhbrown@bellsouth.net

SAVANNAH RIVER GROUP (SRG)

Co-Chair, Sam Booher
sbooher@aol.com

Co-Chair, Linda McBurney
msmcb@outlook.com

Conservation Chair, Frank Carl
frankcarl@knology.net

Outings Chair, Cathy Black
sonnyandcathyblack@gmail.com

REGIONAL CONTACTS

Forsyth County

Jim Callison
callisonjim@bellsouth.net

Macon

Fletcher Winston
winston_f@mercer.edu

North Georgia

Larry Winslett
winfog@windstream.net

Valdosta

Brian Day
bjday@valdosta.edu

ISSUE CAMPAIGNS & COMMITTEES

Legislative

Mark Woodall
woodallmark8@gmail.com

Political

Eddie Ehlert
edehkert@bellsouth.net

Regional Action to Improve Livability (RAIL)

Tejas Kotak
tkotak013@gmail.com

Wildlands and Wildlife

Larry Winslett
winfog@windstream.net

For a complete listing of conservation committee chairs and issue leaders, please visit: sierraclub.org/georgia/directory.

Water Sentinels/Adopt-a-Stream

Ina Allison
(Centennial)
iallison@hotmail.com

Larry Kloet
(MAG Adopt-a-Stream Chemical Monitoring)
(404) 636-7226

Nancy Wylie
(MAG Biological Monitoring)
(404) 256-1172

Frank Carl (SRG)
frank.carl@knology.org

Michael Reardon (SRG)
reardonmp@hotmail.com

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Chair

Jeff Schoenberg
schoenbergjhe@gmail.com
(770) 394-0639
At-Large Elected Member

Vice Chair - Administration

David Emory
david.emory@gmail.com
(404) 433-4914
At-Large Elected Member

Vice Chair - Conservation

Mark Woodall
woodallmark8@gmail.com
(706) 601-1118
At-Large Elected Member

Secretary

Seth Gunning
srgunnin@gmail.com
(404) 434-9745
At-Large Elected Member

Treasurer

Tom Neff
tsneff2003@yahoo.com

At-Large Elected Member

Shelby Buso
shelbybuso@gmail.com

At-Large Elected Member

Nancy Daves
nancydaves0711@gmail.com
(270) 461-1738

At-Large Elected Member

Yeou-Rong Jih
yeourong@gmail.com
(678) 640-3270

Centennial Group Delegate

Mary Miller
bikingmiller@gmail.com
(757) 513-7335

Coastal Group Delegate

Karen Graine
karengraine@bellsouth.net
(912) 961-6190

Gwinnett Group Delegate

Dan Friedman
dan3688@gmail.com
(404) 610-5770

LaGrange Group Delegate

Travis Towns
ftravist@aol.com
(404) 797-6523

Metro Atlanta Group Delegate

Norman Slawsky
nslawsky@gmail.com
(404) 664-6259

Savannah River Group Delegate

Linda McBurney
msmcb@outlook.com
(706) 631-1489

CHAPTER LEADERS & CHAIRS

Finance Chair: Vacant

Fundraising Chair

Norman Slawsky
nslawsky@gmail.com

Human Resources Chair

Dan Friedman
dan3688@aol.com

Legal Chair

William Tomlin
wmltom@gmail.com

Legislative Chair

Mark Woodall
woodallmark8@gmail.com

Membership Chair: Vacant

ExCom Contact - Yeou-Rong Jih
yeourong@gmail.com

Outings Chair: Vacant

Staff Contact - Jessica Morehead
jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org

Political Chair

Eddie Ehlert
edehkert@bellsouth.net

CHAPTER STAFF

Interim Director

Jessica Morehead
(404) 607-1262 x 232
jessica.morehead@sierraclub.org

Development Associate

Gina Webber
(404) 607-1262 x 224
gina.webber@sierraclub.org

Communications Coordinator

Ricky Leroux
(404) 607-1262 x 234
ricky.leroux@sierraclub.org

NATIONAL STAFF

Southeastern Campaign Representative, Military Outdoors

Lornett Vestal
(404) 607-1262 x 222
lornett.vestal@sierraclub.org

Beyond Coal Organizer

Neil Sardana
(404) 607-1262 x 233
neil.sardana@sierraclub.org

NATIONAL PROGRAM CONTACTS

Inspiring Connections Outdoors

Terri Lyde
lydeterri@bellsouth.net



PERIODICAL POSTAGE PAID

743 E. College Ave., Suite B
Decatur, GA 30030

Change service requested

Get Involved!

Volunteer
sierraclub.org/georgia/volunteer

Join a Local Group
sierraclub.org/georgia/localgroups

Get Outside
sierraclub.org/georgia/outings

SIERRACLUB.ORG/GEORGIA

Head to our website for all sorts of great resources and opportunities, including a complete listing of all conservation committee chairs, issue leaders, and group leaders at **sierraclub.org/georgia/directory**.

VOLUNTEER

Be a part of the legacy! Sign up today to help us protect Georgia's environment: bit.ly/GASCVolunteer

FOLLOW US ON SOCIAL MEDIA!

Facebook: @GASierraClub

Twitter: @gasierraclub

Instagram: @gasierraclub

Meetup: Georgia Sierra Club

YouTube: Georgia Sierra Club

LinkedIn: Georgia Sierra Club

SmugMug: gasierraclub.smugmug.com