FRACKING IN FLORIDA? NO THANK YOU!
– By Barbara Ruge, Broward Sierra Excom Vice-Chair

Sierra Club Florida is gearing up for action to fight the dangerous environmental threats coming out of Tallahassee. FRACKING is our immediate target. Fracking in Florida is a direct assault on our fragile water supply. Sierra Club stands firm in its opposition to the bad House and Senate bills that are coming out of committee.

The first step of our opposition plan is to form Legislative Action Committees at the group level. The health of Floridians and our beautiful state are at risk due to the push for fracking. We are seeking members of Broward Sierra to join our Legislative Action Committee and help implement the plan. The next step is getting educated on the issues. Our Tallahassee lobbyist, David Cullen, will be teaching a series of training webinars that interested members can tune in, gain the knowledge, hear the talking points and feel confident to meet with local legislators.

As explained by Dave Cullen, these bad fracking bills, HB 191 and SB 318:

- Impose unnecessary risks to our water resources and climate when better, safer, and cleaner energy is available from renewables and energy efficiency.
- Preempt local governments from regulating or banning fracking in their jurisdictions and retrospectively invalidates zoning ordinances that prevent fracking.
- Use a definition of "high-pressure well stimulation" that does not include acid fracturing or acid matrix stimulation which are the techniques most likely to be used in Florida because of its limestone and dolomite geology. Therefore, the weak regulation proposed in the bills would not apply to these acidization treatments and their associated injections of toxics.
- Eliminate the current law that prohibits DEP from issuing permits for oil or gas drilling inside a municipality unless the governing body of the city has approved it by resolution. This would open all cities to all kinds of oil and gas drilling, not just fracking.
- Call for a study of fracking, but provides that permits can be issued for it as soon as DEP completes the rulemaking process regardless of what the study may discover.
- Require well operators to ‘disclose’ the chemicals used for publication by FracFocus but exempts those covered by the Uniform Trade Secrets Act and doesn’t even require them to be disclosed to DEP until 60 days after they’ve been pumped into the ground, after the damage is done and irreversible!
- Citizens of Florida are deprived of information that could help them protect their families from health problems. This is known as “pre-emption.” The state could override any resolution passed by a municipality or county or other governing board.

So you see what we are up against. We will be meeting with legislators and/or their aids in their Broward district offices when they are back in their districts after December 5th. Our task is to get on their schedules before they go back to Tallahassee for sessions starting January 12th. Our introduction should include the fact that we are their constituents and we represent 2000 Sierra Club members in Broward County alone, who are super voters for the environment. Florida Sierra Club has 35,000 members. We plan to go as a group which is proven more effective and makes an impact.

In our corner to date, there are approximately 50 Florida cities and 12 counties that have passed anti-fracking resolutions or ordinances, and the movement is on-going. Other resolutions of note are those officially passed by chartered Broward Democratic Clubs, Thousand Friends of Florida, and the Florida Federation of Garden Clubs, and partners, such as Florida Audubon, Food and Water Watch, to name a few.

Also on the bright side, Sierra Club is supporting House Bill HS19 by Rep. Jenne, and Senate Bill SB166 by Sen. Bullard, which are bills to ban fracking.

Will you please join us? Stan Pannaman and Barb Ruge can take the lead, but we cannot do it without the support of our members. We know you care.

Continued on next page
Exciting new events are coming up! You can join us for Leader Training and Basic First Aid Certification in Greenacres, FL. Do you love the outdoors? Would you like to share your love of it with others? We can teach you how and provide all the equipment you need to do it! Join us for Leader Training and Basic First Aid certification and become a certified leader for adults or youth and start sharing your passion with others. Class size is limited. To register, contact Sheila Calderon, 561-968-4166, shecal@bellsouth.net or Chas Hunt, 561-739-3171, loxoutings@gmail.com. Suggested donation: $3 members, $5 non-members.

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Please join us for the December Broward Sierra Club meeting and Annual Pot Luck Dinner Holiday Party

Date: Thursday, December 3, 2015
Time: 7:00 pm
Location: Fern Forest Nature Center
201 Lyons Rd. S., Coconut Creek, FL 33068

After announcements and meeting business, join us for fantastic food, friends & fun, and some fabulous raffles!

We’ll also have a slide show of photos from some of this past year’s outings.

We’re looking forward to seeing you at our holiday dinner once again. We had a great turnout last year, with everyone very involved with environmental causes. And the raffle was a great fundraiser for our nature preservation work.

So bring your friends and neighbors, and let them know it’s a time to celebrate with great food, a glass of wine or soda, meet wonderful people, and contribute to an important cause.

And if you’d like to donate any items for the raffle, please bring them with you. For more info, contact Ina at 954-722-9944 or irtopper2000@cs.com.

Bring a pot luck dish to share. Donation $5 if you bring a dish to share, $10 without a dish.

Please also bring your own non-disposable plates, cups and utensils.

Raffle tickets will be available for $2 each or 3 for $5.