2014 Year End Report For Our Delta Chapter
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Sierra Club Delta Chapter 2015 

Delta Chapter Retreat 2015
The Delta Chapter Retreat for 2015 will be held on March 13, 14 and 15 at Chicot State Park.
We usually get together for potluck dinner around 6 pm on Friday. We conduct outdoors oriented workshops on Saturday and eat dinner together on a campfire Saturday night. We paddle canoes and kayaks during the day and in general have a good time.

A limited number of beds will be available in our reservable cabins at the State Park. Primitive camp and Rv camping will also be available. If you want to reserve a bed in one of our cabins you can send an email to Woody Martin at hrmartin2sc@gmail.com. If you want your own cabin, or if you want to reserve an RV spot or primitive camp you can go to www.reserveamerica.com or contact Chicot State Park at (337) 363-2403. We will have more details in the next newsletter and/or our facebook pages by searching for Sierra Club Delta Chapter on facebook. Our effectiveness as a member based organization depends on your response to our calls for action such as calling your legislators or public service commission directors when needed.

Please note that your Delta Chapter Excom annual election candidates and ballot are on the back pages of this newsletter. Please fill out the ballot and send it back to us in the enclosed envelope.

For the most up to date information about our efforts on your behalf please visit our website at www.lasierra.org and/or our facebook pages by searching for Sierra Club Delta Chapter on facebook. Our effectiveness as a member based organization depends on your response to our calls for action such as calling your legislators or public service commission commissioners when needed.

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Will Our Forests Be Razed To Keep the Lights Burning in Europe

Traveling on highway 1-10 east over the Mississippi River at Baton Rouge, you may have noticed two huge white golf ball looking structures at Port Allen, just to the north of the river crossing. These structures were built to store up to 80,000 metric tons of wood pellets manufactured by Drax Biomass that will come from Louisiana and Mississippi harvested forests. The wood pellets are destined to be shipped to Europe to be burned to generate electricity.

Policies encouraging the development of forest biomass energy have generally adopted a view of biomass as a carbon neutral energy source. The rationale being that growing forests would over time re-capture the carbon emitted by wood-burning energy facilities. Recent studies have shown that this assumption is much too simplistic. Given that the supposed intention of burning biomass as a carbon neutral energy source is to reduce CO2 emissions relative to fossil fuels, that assumption is much too simplistic.

Policy makers in Louisana have been faced with a dilemma. The world needs reductions in carbon emissions. For more information and how you can help with this issue go to our website at www.ksierraclub.org.

1. BECOME A SIERRA CLUB MEMBER or give a gift membership. Use the form on this page or go to www.lasierra.org.

Two pellet mills are planned for Bastrop LA and Gloster MS. Each will take in 1.1 million green tons per year. The map of six wood pellet manufacturing facilities being constructed in Louisiana and Mississippi tells a scary story of overlapping 100 mile diameter circles around each pellet manufacturing plant, from which huge amounts of forest material would be extracted to feed the pellet mills.

Our concerns are that since only a very small percent of the biomass energy have generally adopted a view of biomass as a carbon neutral energy source.

There are generous tax incentives for wood biomass industry growth are based on unrealistic assumptions of long term carbon reductions.

Two principal problems have emerged:

1) In most cases the initial release of carbon into the atmosphere from burning biomass is higher than that of fossil fuels as biomass is less energy dense than fossil fuels. This means that more than that of fossil fuels as biomass is less energy dense than fossil fuels.

2) It takes time to re-sequester the carbon released from the atmosphere. The year 20 to 50 years from now. On a practical level the burning of forest biomass for electricity in Europe makes no sense.

The Delta Chapter in coalition with LEAN and the Dogwood Alliance is following this issue closely. We think that the public needs to call for re-evaluation of the dollar and carbon economics that have been used to support this destructive scheme. We need to protect our forest biodiversity, protecting Louisiana against the dangers of fracking and moving towards a future of clean energy. Checks payable to The Sierra Club Foundation should be mailed to the Delta Chapter Office.

3. SUPPORT US WITH A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT to the Sierra Club Foundation. This supports our educational and administrative policy work including litigation, protecting our forest biodiversity, protecting Louisiana against the dangers of fracking and moving towards a future of clean energy.

Givers to The Sierra Club are very special. They support our work, citizen Lobby Days and work with the Green Army are not tax-deductible but vital to our success. Just send a check in the envelope provided for your ballot or to the Delta Chapter Office.

4. CONSIDER COMMEMORATIVE AND MEMORIAL GIFTS. Celebrate important events or remember a loved one with a donation that supports protection of Louisiana’s environment. Contact Haywood Martin at 337-298-8380, www.lasierra.org.

Five things you can do today...

Lend us a Hand

Sierra Club engages in a variety of roles from public education to citizen lobbying to electoral engagement. Here’s how you can assist us with our work!

1. BECOME A SIERRA CLUB MEMBER or give a gift membership.

2. MAKE A FINANCIAL CONTRIBUTION to Delta Chapter’s effective, citizen-based advocacy efforts.

3. SUPPORT US WITH A TAX-DEDUCTIBLE GIFT to the Sierra Club Foundation.

4. CONSIDER COMMEMORATIVE AND MEMORIAL GIFTS.

Givers to The Sierra Club Foundation. This supports our educational and administrative policy work including litigation, protecting our forest biodiversity, protecting Louisiana against the dangers of fracking and moving towards a future of clean energy.

Checks payable to The Sierra Club Foundation should be mailed to the Delta Chapter Office.

5. SEND A MESSAGE. Take time this Holiday season to write one of your elected officials and tell them that the environment is important to you.

www.lasierra.org
In 1970, the Louisiana Legislature created the Louisiana Natural and Scenic Rivers System. The System was developed for the purpose of preserving and enhancing the wilderness qualities, scenic beauties, and ecological regimes of certain free-flowing Louisiana streams. Today, there are approximately 3000 miles of Louisiana designated Natural and Scenic Rivers. These rivers, streams and bayous, are located throughout the state and offer unique opportunities for individuals and communities to become involved in their protection.

Sierra Club filed comments on permit applications for withdrawal of water from Louisiana Scenic Rivers pointing to numbers in which insufficient or contradictory information has been provided. We demanded that public hearings be held regarding the permit applications. A public hearing had been set for Oct 29, 2014 for five recent applications to withdraw water. Four out of the five applications to be considered at that hearing have been withdrawn. Recently withdrawn permits include requests from oil and gas companies to extract water from the Tickfaw River in St. Helena Parish, and the Amite River in East Feliciana Parish. The withdrawal of these permit applications means that we have saved a total of 75 million gallons of scenic river water from being taken from our scenic rivers and turned into toxic waste.

You can go to the Delta Chapter website at http://lasierraclub.org/taxonomy/term/28 for updates on Delta Chapter’s efforts to protect our Louisiana Scenic Rivers.

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The Louisiana Scenic Rivers Program is administered by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Sierra Club Delta Chapter was active in creating the Scenic Rivers System and continues to be active in monitoring LDWF administration of the program.

Why Louisiana Should Get On Board with the Clean Power Plan

The link between elevated levels of CO2 in the Earth’s atmosphere and rising temperatures is well established (IPCC 2007). According to the US Energy Information Administration, forty percent of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions, and one-third of greenhouse gases overall, come from electric power plants.

The U.S. needs a plan to reduce carbon emissions and electrify power generation. The USEPA Clean Power Plan, currently being proposed, fits that plan.

The State of Louisiana should support implementation of the Clean Power Plan for the following reasons:

1. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, 42.96 Metric tons of CO2 emissions puts Louisiana in the top twenty of dirty states.
2. Not producing a state plan is irresponsible. Louisiana can develop a plan more tailored to fit Louisiana than one developed by EPA.
3. Compliance with the Clean Power Plan is not too expensive. Renewable energy and energy efficiency brings more power for the dollar.
4. Local jobs will be created instead of dollars being sent out of state to buy coal.
5. Protect our waters and our children. Coal from power plants is the major source of mercury emissions to the air in Louisiana. 48 streams and lakes in Louisiana have mercury advisories already.
6. By holding back on making changes to stop climate change, it is already costing the average person $300 per year to pay for federal disaster programs that are responding to disasters tied to climate change.

Living here on the Gulf coast, we know that we are more vulnerable to extreme weather events and sea level rise. Our State government has a responsibility to protect our health and safety. It is time for Louisiana to get on board with the Clean Power Plan.

We can be investing in our future by creating jobs and solutions instead of sending our money out of state to buy coal. This means Louisiana jobs in design, construction, retrofitting and maintaining high efficiency natural gas, wind and solar installations.

What can you do? Contact your local representatives and senators and let them know that you support the Clean Power Plan.

Every phone call or letter can make a difference. For more information go to www.lasierra.org.

Haywood Martin
On a muggy Thursday evening this past September, 55 Louisianaans huddled onto a charter bus and settled in for a 24-hour ride. We were heading to New York for the People’s Climate March and our group represented Tulane, Dillard, Loyola, Xavier, and Grambling State students, along with members of the greater gulf south community. We used our time on the bus to meet each other, share stories of our work, and of course catch up on sleep before long nights of planning the trip.

When the New York skyline finally became visible on the horizon the bus was surging with energy and excitement. Saturday morning, September 20th, we were at Central Park West and joined the small crowd that was already forming. The marching bands’ music was danceable (though a brass quintet from New Orleans wouldn’t have hurt). And the air was electric. The chants were clear: we demanded real action on climate change, restoring honor to the democratic process, and protecting coastal cities. The Delta Chapter gathered one day to organize a fund-raiser. This being Louisiana, the idea of a food theme came up immediately. However, Sierrans are known to be finicky when it comes to food. There are vegans and vegetarians among us, not to mention the animal protectors. Thus the first suggestions of a pig roast (cochon de lait) or a crawfish boil were discarded. Other ideas gained no traction, and the honchos settled on having a bake sale, just like grade schools used to do before such events were deemed evil and injurious to young children. People and the bake sale arose right away. There was a general opposition to the use of refined sugar and bleached white flour in the cupcakes and muffins. Here’s some of the discussion:

> "Yes! Quinoa. Gluten-free and as healthy a food as you can buy."

> "Uhuh, blueberries, strawberries? How about quinoa?"

> "Hmmm. No sugar, no flour, no butter, no milk, no eggs – what can with bake without them?"

> "That footprint will be as big as Bigfoot’s."

> "If you drive to Bogalus to get the flour, won’t that leave a carbon footprint from all the gas burned?"

> "Does anyone have an outdoor oven? We don’t want to bake our goodies with fossil fuel."

> "So true. And the label will need to say ‘Gluten-free, no high-fructose corn syrup, organically grown, fair-trade certified, pesticide-free, low cholesterol, no artificial color, no refined sugar, high fiber, low fat, and no animals were harmed in the preparation of this product.’"

> "What about rye flour. There’s a farm in Bogalusa where you can get some whole-grain rye flour."

> "Can’t use butter or milk. No eggs. They’re just an exploitation of innocent animals."

> "That’s a farm in Bogalusa where you can get some whole-grain rye flour."

> "But it is gluten-free? Is it organically grown?"

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> "Uhuh, blueberries, strawberries? How about quinoa?"

> "Yes! Quinoa. Gluten-free and as healthy a food as you can buy."

> "But it’s really expensive and it comes from South America. We have to use local ingredients."

> "I’ve got it! Rice flour from Louisiana rice. That’ll work"

> "Is it whole-grain and organically grown? I don’t think you can find any, even in Crowley."

> "Sweet potatoes. They grow here, organically and pesticide-free. We could grind them into a powder."

> "We’ll need to label the muffins; lots of people won’t buy unless they know the ingredients."

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> "Does anyone have an outdoor oven? We don’t want to bake our goodies with fossil fuel."

The Great Leaders then went to work, concocted a noble and wholesome batter, baked it in a backyard oven using dead tree limbs as fuel. They tasted the finished product, gagged, spit it out. "Hey, it’s pretty good; too bad it tastes bad and is inedible." Then they canceled the bake sale. Any other ideas? Earl Higgins

Earls Higgins

Louisiana Goes to the People’s Climate March

Bigs, Oil, Big, Coal, Big Pharma are all called “big” because they are fat with money. The Sierra Club exalts the power of money, and it wouldn’t be big anyway because it can’t raise the big funds that the “Bigs” can. The club nevertheless needs money to do what it can to counter Big Money.

Leaders of the Delta Chapter gathered one day to organize a fund-raiser. This being Louisiana, the idea of a food theme came up immediately. However, Sierrans are known to be finicky when it comes to food. There are vegans and vegetarians among us, not to mention the animal protectors. Thus the first suggestions of a pig roast (cochon de lait) or a crawfish boil were discarded. Other ideas gained no traction, and the honchos settled on having a bake sale, just like grade schools used to do before such events were deemed evil and injurious to young children. People and the bake sale arose right away. There was a general opposition to the use of refined sugar and bleached white flour in the cupcakes and muffins. Here’s some of the discussion:

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Candidates for the Delta Chapter Excom

Charles Fryling
As a member of the Club since 1968 I have seen the importance of the Sierra Club and Delta Chapter to Louisiana. The Club has been the lead organization shaping public opinion and working on such issues as coastal and wetlands protection, urban sprawl, clean air and water, wildlife protection, and environmental justice. We have made a difference but there is much more that needs to be accomplished.

I teach landscape architecture at LSU so my vocation and avocation fit nicely together with many of the issues that challenge the Club. Through the years the Atchafalaya Basin has been of special interest to me. At present I am the East Baton Rouge Parish representative to the Atchafalaya Trace Commission. We have recently made the area surrounding the Atchafalaya a National Heritage Area. It was Delta Chapter that got the Commission established.

The Club has always been enjoyable to me and it should be fun for all its members. Outings are an important aspect of the Club. They provide both environmental education and pleasure that leads to strong membership. Delta Chapter Ex Com is responsible for all aspects of the Club within the State and we should be working to provide our members with as many opportunities as possible to appreciate the good qualities of Louisiana and to make environment better when needed.

Jonathan Scott
Jonathan Scott. A private-sector Environmental Engineer and lifelong urban waterway explorer, Jonathan formed a community discussion board for Bayou Manchac in 1998 that quickly organized into a successful grassroots movement challenging a Corps proposal to clearcut the bayou and set the stage for its designation as a State Historic and Scenic Waterway. After several years of providing comments on proposed projects and initiatives, he helped lead the Bayou Manchac Group to take action against the continuous flow of litter flowing into Bayou Manchac by both organizing cleanup events and seeking to list trash as a Louisiana waterway pollutant subject to TMDLs. He volunteers his time to several non-profits and government committees in order to promote development best practices to improve water quality and increased public involvement via new recreational opportunities within and along small waterways.

Harvey Stern
Greetings—I have been a member of the Delta Chapter since 1981, and have served previously on both the Delta and New Orleans Group ex Coms. I was honored to receive the Delta Chapter's Atchafalaya award this year. In 2003 I began the Louisiana Purchase Cypress Legacy campaign, an independent effort to identify, landmark, and promote the stewardship of cypress over 200 years old—alive at the time of the Louisiana Purchase. Our remaining old growth cypress is a national treasure which deserves recognition and protection.

I have been active on land use and wetland issues for many years—we need to redouble our efforts to hold the Corps of Engineers accountable for its inexcusable leniency in issuing wetland development permits. I am concerned that the post Katrina/Rita mantra of "rebuilding smarter, safer, and greener" in coastal Louisiana is being subordinated to the unregulated repopulation of our most vulnerable floodplains. I think the Delta Chapter needs to revive its anti-sprawl/smart growth campaign and speak forcefully for truly rebuilding smarter and greener in coastal Louisiana. The Ponchartrain Basin is also a coastal ecosystem, and all growth around the misnamed "Lake" will continue to be vulnerable to storm surge, regardless of levee improvements.

The Delta Chapter and its regional groups have always been at the forefront of protection and enjoyment of our precious natural environment in Louisiana—as Chapter delegate I will promote efforts to keep our membership engaged and active.

Nick Stracco
I am a recent graduate of Tulane University with a degree in Environmental Science. I founded Divest Tulane, lead Tulane Green Club for two years, interned with the Sierra Club in New Orleans, and co-directed SPRING, the Sierra Student Coalition's week-long crash course in grassroots organizing for and by youth. It is my belief that the Club should be working more towards involving youth and standing in solidarity with marginalized communities in our work. The Sierra Student Coalition is moving in this direction but if the Club does not also prioritize anti-oppression principles and youth outreach into our work, we stand to lose a new generation of strong, well-trained environmental organizers. I hope to work with the Delta Chapter to focus on youth outreach and standing in solidarity with impacted communities who must live with degraded environments every day.

Protecting People and the Environment in Louisiana for over 40 Years

www.lasierra.org
Sierra Club Delta Chapter Excom Election Ballot (Two year term 2015 - 2016)

Please mark one of the following:

______ Single membership, ________ Joint membership.

(Check your mailing label to see if two persons are listed.) Joint membership allows two people to vote so if you have joint membership please use both columns.

The following four candidates in alphabetical order have been nominated to fill three Chapter At Large Positions for a two year term 2015 to 2017 on the Executive Committee. You may vote for three candidates out of the four candidates presented. Please refer to the enclosed candidate statements. Thanks for your votes.

Please return this ballot by US Mail to Sierra Club Delta Chapter Nominating Committee, P.O. Box 52503, Lafayette, LA 70505. You may use the enclosed return envelope.

This Ballot must be received by the Delta Chapter no later than 5:00 pm on Monday, January 5, 2015. The Ballots will be counted the same day at 7:00 pm. Location of ballot counting will be 400 Glynndale Ave. Lafayette, La. 70506

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<th>Candidate</th>
<th>Single Membership</th>
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<td>Charlie Fryling</td>
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