



Nassau Sierra News

Nassau County Sierra Group

SIERRA CLUB

FOUNDED 1892

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VICE CHAIR

Grier Newlin

SECRETARY

Julie Ferreira

TREASURER

John Baker

CONSERVATION

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POLITICAL CHAIR

Jim Mady

LEGISLATIVE

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FUNDRAISING

Chris Occhuzzo

NEWSLETTER

Faith Ross

MEDIA

OUTREACH

Jonna Wood

Wonder what's happening?

Be sure to check out our events calendar on our website.



Ways to contact Nassau Sierra:

Via Facebook:

Sierra Club Nassau County Group

Email:

nassau.sierra.membership@gmail.com

Phone:

(678) 362-7707

A Message *from Julie Ferreira, Chairperson*

Though it seems that we're standing on a precipice, and no one knows exactly what is going to happen in the future, the non-violent prayerful direct actions against the Dakota Access Pipeline in Standing Rock, North Dakota are serving as a beacon of hope and capturing the world's attention.

The struggles of the Water Protectors at the Standing Rock Reservation have been a game changer for the environmental movement and for social movements across the spectrum. Getting little media coverage doesn't change the fact that this is one of the most important movements that has happened in modern history. It has shown the world that with peaceful prayerful resistance battles can be mounted and have a ripple effect across the globe.

CONGRATULATIONS!

Results were tallied from ballots counted. Re-elected to the Executive Committee of the Nassau Sierra Group were Julie Ferreira, Grier Newlin, John Baker and Faith Ross.

Many thanks go out to our Nominating Committee and to our members for their participation in this important event! Thank you! (See the left hand panel of this page for Executive Committee assignments for 2017.)

<http://www.sierraclub.org/florida/nassau>

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LAND PRESERVATION IN NASSAU COUNTY

In the conservation world, time is the enemy and resources are limited. Nassau Sierra Group wants to work closely with local citizens to find methods for protecting valued land. We need to set priorities to ensure that we can protect properties and land that have the highest conservation value for our community as quickly as possible.

Our local priority for conservation areas include: the preservation and protection of natural areas that provide scenic beauty for the county, properties that function as wildlife corridors, and wetland areas. This is becoming a necessary and vital component for our community as development continues to change the face of our area.

One of Nassau Sierra's goals is to help preserve connected, preserved corridors, which are beneficial to people as well as animals. Birds, butterflies, deer, rabbits, fish...all benefit from our land protection efforts. In the past, our area has been one of the most important stopovers for birds making their way from Canada to the South and back again; many species have been identified on their annual visits but the bird community is getting more and more displaced.

On the island there's an abundance of mature hardwoods. We all appreciate our trees that provide a wealth of benefits for humans and wildlife — among them are shelter, shade and improved air quality and flood control.

Across our region we have diverse and rich wetland areas. Our wetlands are the sponges of our natural areas, controlling, buffering and cleaning water. These swamps and lowlands are extremely important to the health of our aquifer as recharge areas.

Connected areas of protected land give us the greatest potential for wildlife corridors, groundwater recharge, the filtering of nutrients and pollutants and scenic beauty. These connections are important for the movement of wildlife as well as the establishment of territories and nesting habitats. So property adjacent to an already-preserved tract is viewed as an excellent candidate for protection.

We all know that Nassau County and Amelia Island are blessed with varied landscapes. This is what enriches our lives here and there is still a rich and diverse wildlife population even though the effects of development have taken their toll.

We believe that land conservation will provide a transforming effect for the beauty, economic development, and natural resources of our region forever. . Help us brainstorm ways to protect our natural resources.

Join a Sierra Book Club!

Enjoy a good book, a glass of wine, and a **serious environmental discussion.**

Contact: nassausierra@gmail.com



Invitation!

You are cordially invited to join the Nassau Group Sierra Club on a Kayak Eco Tour on Saturday, March 12th at 10 AM at Kayak Amelia, located at 13030 Heckscher Dr., Jacksonville, FL 32226.

This fundraiser is a “guided” tour suitable for beginners. We provide lunch. The cost is \$65. You can book by calling OR going to

<https://www.bookeo.com/kayakamelia>

As a “fun”draiser, **all** proceeds go to our local Sierra Group. So please come join us in supporting the causes that make Sierra Club your choice in supporting environmental issues.



A special thank you goes to Kayak Amelia for their generous donation of time, staff and equipment! Thank you!

The Details?

What should you expect on your Eco Tour? Be prepared to laugh a lot and be mesmerized by your surroundings. If you have never been in a kayak before, this is your opportunity to try it out! All equipment is supplied along with a boatload of encouragement.

This trip is suitable for beginners. There is a short introduction to paddling on land at the start of the trip. And it is planned so that you will paddle with the current so you will enjoy your amazing surroundings and be able to practice your new skills.

What should you bring? Other than a smile, your excitement, and a bit of courage, you will need footwear that can get wet. If you want to get wet, wear a bathing suit! If the weather is cool, a windbreaker style jacket will prove useful. Of course the usual sunscreen, hat, sunglasses, and water to drink are always good things to have on hand in our Florida sun. Also, it might be a good idea to have a dry set of clothes waiting for you when you return. Wet car seats can be something we don’t laugh about on the return trip home!

R.S.V.P with RESERVATIONS!

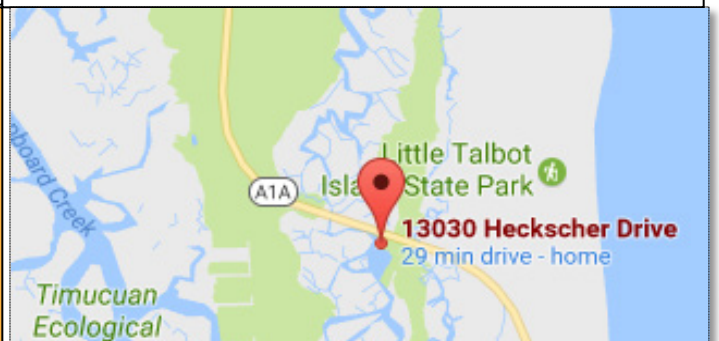
(This event has limited capacity.)

Tickets can be purchased online

<https://www.bookeo.com/kayakamelia>

CALL: (904) 251-0016 noon to 5 pm

*Sierra Club Membership not required, **but fun is!**



State of Our Air Address

HOPES AND DREAMS

Many hope that in 2017 the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) will finally remove Nassau from its list of county "Nonattainment Areas" for clean air quality. Hopefully in the future our air monitors will one day have little to read. However, the additional air pollution from the truck, train, and car traffic anticipated on Amelia Island in 2017 will likely not let that happen.

The 2015 numbers are now on the Florida Department of the Environment's website telling us how many pollutants were put into our air in the previous year. (The 2016 numbers will not arrive until later this year.) There was some good news and some bad. Here are the results.

HOW TO READ THE RESULTS

If you do not know the abbreviation for a "pollutant" in the left column, **simply type the "abbreviation" and the words "pollutant" or "gas"** in your browser.

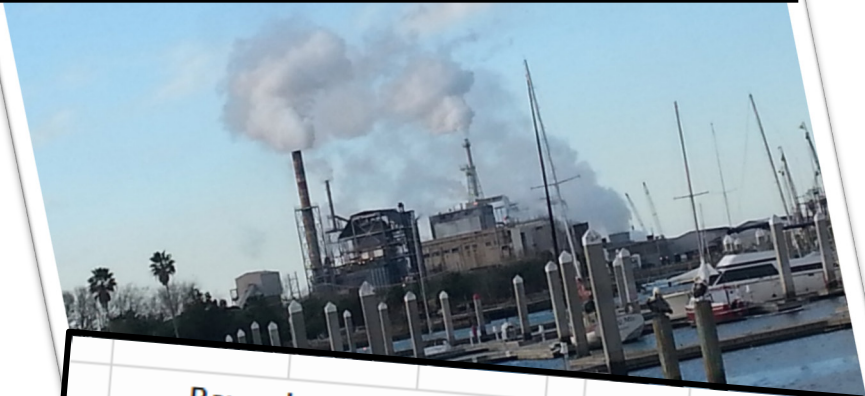
If you would like to know how a **specific pollutant** emitted into our air **may physically affect you**, please go to the EPA's website. <https://www.epa.gov/title-v-operating-permits> and **enter the pollutant in the search box**. If you would like **further clinical information**, the National Institute of Health (NIH) is extremely helpful. Again, you may put a specific pollutant in the search box. <http://www.niehs.nih.gov/health/topics/agents/air-pollution/>

*Pollutant "TH" is thorium which is radioactive.

<http://www.lenntech.com/periodic/elements/th.htm>

*TRS" is a sulfur compound that produces the "rotten egg" smell.

<http://www.airqualityontario.com/science/pollutants/trs.php>



Pollutants	Tons Per Year		Tons Per Day	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
CO	876.11	923.62	2.40	2.53
CPM	36.44	37.08	0.10	0.10
HAPS	170.3713	203.617	0.47	0.56
NOX	2266.335	2237.956	6.21	6.13
PB	0.106512	0.110133	0.00	0.00
PM	105.7981	99.27371	0.29	0.27
PM10	89.77318	84.12919	0.25	0.23
PM2.5	74.49447	69.58601	0.20	0.19
SO2	230.182	354.8175	0.63	0.97
TH	29.7902	27.8862	0.08	0.08
VOC	115.7796	151.9474	0.32	0.42

Pollutants	Tons Per Year		Tons Per Day	
	2015	2014	2015	2014
CO	1021.428	1023.045	2.80	2.80
CPM	68.94	64.13	0.19	0.18
HAPS	888.12	905.7081	2.43	2.48
NOX	2539.68	2984.122	6.96	8.18
PB	0.00	0.00	0.00	0.00
PM	580.71	586.03	1.59	1.61
PM10	397.57	469.33	1.09	1.29
PM2.5	193.92	176.11	0.53	0.48
SO2	3097.79	3477.17	8.49	9.53
TRS	81.1979	80.4809	0.22	0.22
VOC	615.3974	590.0546	1.69	1.62



St. Marys Riverkeeper, Rick Frey
 Credit Golden Isles News

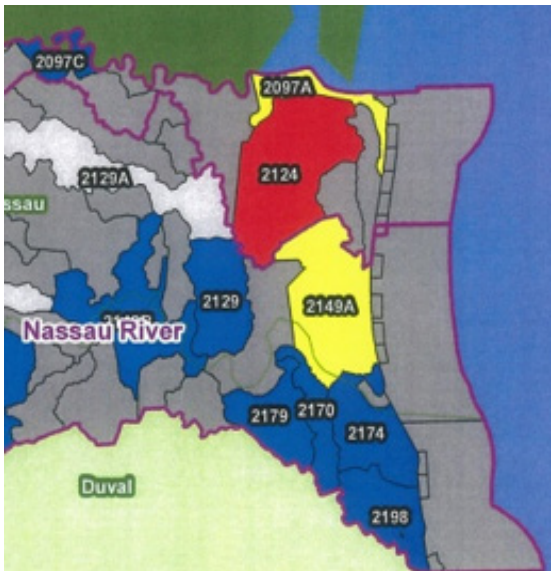
Want to Test Our Waters?

On Friday, February 3rd, at 6 PM at the Fernandina Beach Library, Sierra Club members and guests met our new **St. Marys Riverkeeper, Rick Frey**. Mr. Frey explained the role of a riverkeeper, and spoke on the subject of water pollution in the St. Marys River and its tributaries (the Amelia River). The entire watershed of the St. Marys River (including the Amelia River) is **EPA-designated as “impaired” waters** except for a segment called the Crooked River. He also explained how **we can learn to test the river’s waters**.

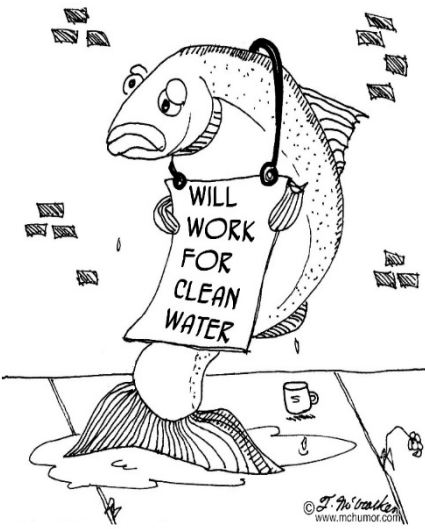
Cleaning up the waters of the Amelia River and the adjacent St. Marys River is **critical for the survival of our marine life** and the future of our fisheries. Making our water swimmable again is also a goal we can all strive to achieve.

If you would like to know more, or become involved in the volunteer water sampling program please contact Rick Frey at stmarysriverkeeper@gmail.com.

What’s Wrong with Our River?



On November 3rd, 2016 the Florida Department of Environmental Protection presented an informational program on the condition of the watersheds of Nassau County, FL. The red area of #2124 is the location of the Amelia River. According to the FDEP graphic to the left, two pollutants (**mercury and iron**) are exceeding safe limits set by the Florida Department of Health. Potentially there may be others. Some areas have not been tested. Other graphics were shown in many Nassau watersheds which indicated unsafe limits of other pollutants.



Can We Eat the Fish?

Due to pollution, MANY fish in Florida’s waterways should **only** be eaten in limited amounts. And some should not be eaten at all. ALL species of fish are listed in **“Your Guide To Eating Fish Caught In Florida”** at (http://www.floridahealth.gov/programs-and-services/prevention/healthy-weight/nutrition/seafood-consumption/_documents/advisory-brochure.pdf)

See **TABLE 1: St. Marys River and Tributaries** and See **TABLE 2: All Coastal Waters of Florida** when fishing at the beach.

Table 1: Sample of St. Marys River & Tributaries

SPECIES	Women of childbearing age, young children NUMBER OF MEALS*	All other individuals NUMBER OF MEALS*
Bluegill, Redear sunfish, Redbreast sunfish, Spotted sunfish	One per month	One per week
White catfish	One per month	One per month
Largemouth bass	DO NOT EAT	One per month

The Water Protector

Movement that began in the Great Sioux Nation in North Dakota has pointed the way and challenged us all to pledge to protect our communities from poisoned and contaminated drinking water, to protect our communities from having land taken by private companies by eminent domain, and to protect ourselves from corporations that choose to destroy the water we drink and air that we breathe so they can make a profit. Our lives are important, the lives of those who come after us are important, and it's important that we all look out for the future of those who will come after us. The focus can no longer just be on the profits that can be made today.



Standing Rock is located on the Sioux Nation's sacred land where over 300 tribes have come together to stand in prayer and solidarity in defiance of the Dakota Access Pipeline. This is the first gathering of the Oceti Sakowin (Sioux tribes) since the Battle of the Greasy Grass (Battle of Little Bighorn) 140 years ago.

When the Sacred Stone Camp was first established on April 1st to stop the pipeline no one knew what would happen, but native prayers were sent out and those prayers were answered. Tribal members and everyday people from the four corners began to answer the call until upwards of 15,000 people have now been in camps standing in unarmed prayer to protect 15 million peoples' right to clean drinking water, and to prevent the privatization of our water supplies. The result is a revival of Native American determination and spirituality, and the revival of the environmental movement and non-violent protest.

From the Standing Rock Oceti Sakowin camp to the north lies the DAP'L construction site where they plan to drill under the Missouri River, but in that area also lie many sacred sites. There are the historic trading grounds of the Arikara, Mandan, Northern Cheyenne, and Sioux Nations.

There are burial grounds, village sites, and the old sacred Sundance grounds that the pipeline activity is destroying. Below the cliffs of the drill-site are the remnants of the place in the river that made the sacred stones. Just at the site of the Oceti Sakowin camp where the Cannonball River joins the Missouri River there used to be a whirlpool that created large, spherical sandstone formations. The river's true name is Inyan Wakangapi Wakpa, River that Makes the Sacred Stones, however the stones are not created anymore. The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers dredged the mouth of the Cannonball River and flooded the area in the late 1950s to create the Oahe dam. Their actions killed and diverted that portion of the sacred river.

I think we all remember when on Dec 4th there was an announcement of a temporary victory through a temporary halt called by the Army Corps of Engineers to potentially resolve the Tribe's concerns that the earlier permitting decision had not fully considered their interests and route alternatives. This was just after 4,000 veterans had arrived in Standing Rock. There were celebrations in the Water Protectors' camps, yet it seemed to people on the ground to be an orchestrated de-escalation. Those 4,000 vets added to an existing 10,000 people already in camp for Thanksgiving and this attracted big media coverage. (continued pg. 7)



Continued from pg. 6 ---

The eyes of the world were focused on Standing Rock where riot ready law enforcement were facing the unarmed military personnel that had come with the mission to protect the right of the Water Protectors to peaceful protest. At the time, it seemed that the powers that be could not afford the visual of armed military riot police and DAP'L mercenaries going up against unarmed military and civilians standing in prayer. After the decision of the Army Corps to do an Environmental Impact study (EIS) it seemed that the movement dissipated, yet in reality it had not.

There are about 600-800 hard-core Water Protectors that have been living in camps in Cannonball, ND being blanketed by successive blizzards and braving the hardships of the worst winter to be seen in years. They are living cooperatively in a Neo-traditional native manner and supporting one another through all manner of adversity. These people are a part of the resurgence of native people wanting to be self-determining for their lives and not be the sacrifice zones for America's unlimited quest for fossil fuels.

As you know, things regarding the Dakota Access Pipeline have been changing rapidly since the Presidential Inauguration. This newsletter has gone through many incarnations to keep current with the changing news. On his 2nd day in office, the President created an Executive Memorandum which threatened to undo all the work people had done around the DAPL and Keystone XL pipeline issues. The executive action encouraged the Army Corps of Engineers to override the environmental review process and speed up construction of the DAPL pipeline just one mile above the Standing Rock Sioux Indian Reservation. From a native viewpoint this trampled on treaty rights and on well-established federal laws and policy on the sovereign nation to nation relationship.

The Army Corps could have reacted in many ways. Unfortunately on February 7th, they choose to give into the new administration's pressure and they granted the easement to drill under the Missouri River without attempting to do the previously required Environmental Impact Study. This action now puts close to 15 million people's water supply in jeopardy. You can rest assured that National Sierra Club will be fighting back.

With the **Keystone XL Pipeline** we think it's a bit more complicated- the pipeline doesn't have a legal route through Nebraska so the pipeline must go through the entire process of getting a permit. Also, in Nebraska there is current ongoing litigation to stop XL pipeline builder TransCanada from using eminent domain to obtain land from property owners unwilling to sell easements to the company. Pipeline fighters in South Dakota are also in litigation to revoke the state permit for the Keystone XL. There are native peoples gearing up to take proactive pipeline actions on the Rosebud and Cheyenne River Reservations and in the community of Bridger, which is the closest community to the XL pipeline, just as TransCanada has submitted a new permit application to the U.S. State Department to transport the crude oil coming from the Bakkan oil sands in rural Alberta to Steele City, So what are the next steps? One direct action they are asking for is for people across the world to divest their financial interests in the banks that fund the pipelines and to put their monies in small local credit unions. Act local, think global. The wish is not only to disrupt business as usual, but this also allows us to build one other up locally and each in our small way can do something major to participate in this movement of movements.

SABAL TRAIL PIPELINE

Closer to home, the construction of the Sabal Trail Pipeline has not been highly publicized, but there have been ongoing protests to the 515 mile fracked natural gas transmission line that passes through Alabama, Georgia, and Florida.



Since Florida has one of the largest concentrations of freshwater springs, and this pipeline is being located in the heartland of Florida's springs, concerns are that if the pipeline were to leak, it could put more than 60% of FL's drinking water at risk of contamination. On January 15th, hundreds of Florida Water Protectors gathered in peaceful protest singing and praying in Suwannee County because the Floridan Aquifer and hundreds of lakes, rivers and wetlands, including Central Florida's Green Swamp, are under threat by the pipeline. Water trucks that were needed to drill under the Suwannee River were blocked for hours and, for first time in history, the Suwannee River State Park was closed due to over-flowing capacity. Suwannee County Sheriffs, Florida Highway Patrol, Fish & Wildlife Commission and State Park Rangers arrived in large numbers but no arrests were made. We can be proud that Florida communities are mobilizing and on the move.

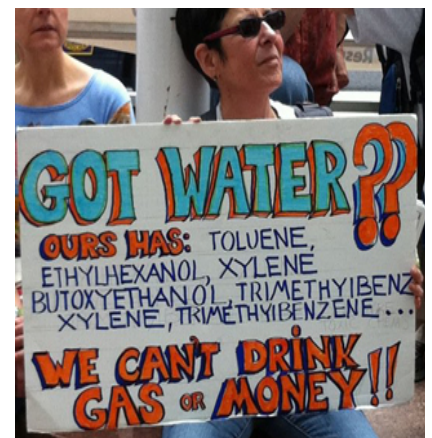
The National Sierra Club, Flint Riverkeeper and Chattahoochee Riverkeeper have filed a lawsuit against the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission in the U.S. District Court of Appeals in D.C. The lawsuit challenges FERC's approval of the Southeast Market Pipeline of which Sabal Trail is a part. The suit says that FERC did not analyze the climate impacts of the project, and did not research less environmentally destructive routes, and that it impacts low income communities making this pipeline an environmental justice issue. It will be interesting now that the Federal Energy Regulatory Commission has been thrown into confusion recently by Norman Bay's abrupt resignation. This puts the fate of high-profile pipeline approvals and rate disputes as an unknown since there will not be a quorum which would allow forward action on big-ticket items.

So we all need to stay tuned on pipeline issues. One thing we know is that we are dealing with an administration that is unpredictable. This means that the war on the environment isn't over, in fact it is just starting. The good news is that on Saturday January 21st the Women's March on Washington sparked the largest single day of protest in US history. This shows that a momentum of resistance is building and every one of us has a part to play. Standing Rock has shown that we can elevate these issues both on a local level and a national level where we can effect great change. The cards have been dealt and the good news is that they aren't completely stacked against us. We must continue to preserve Mother Earth no matter where we are; we know it's never over and now is the time to get off the couch and as they say in Standing Rock- Stand Up Like A Mountain (and let's add-Make America Great Again).

Julie Ferreira, Chairperson of Nassau Sierra

JOIN THE PEOPLE'S CLIMATE MOVEMENT IN WASHINGTON, D.C. APRIL 29th

In 2014 for the People's Climate Mobilization March in NYC we said that it takes everyone to change everything. Now, with everything at stake, everyone has a part to play. So, get ready to join the resistance and to make your voice heard. Nassau County Sierra is working with the Florida Sierra Club to organize transportation to Washington. Stay tuned for more information. We will be marching for our air, our water, and our land. We will march for clean jobs and climate justice. We will march for our communities and the people we love.



The Sierra Club is calling for people to immediately send a message to the Army Corps demanding that the Environmental Impact Statement must be completed. Also we can continue to submit comments on the EIS that identify potential issues of the pipe passing under the Missouri River, desecration of indigenous burial grounds and sacred sites, and any other reasonable concerns that should be considered in the Standing Rock EIS. Submit your comments via email to Mr. Gib Owen at gib.a.owen@mail.mil. Use "NOI Comments", Dakota Access Pipeline as the header.

Sierra Club's
Upcoming
Calendar!



February 17, Friday, 7 pm- Tales of the Florida Sabal Trail Pipeline at the Fernandina Library

Join Merrilee Malwitz-Jipson, an organizer with the Florida Sierra Club, who will speak and bring us an update on the Florida Sabal Trail Pipeline. This will include updates on the EPA about-face on its environmental impacts, info on Sierra's lawsuit against the pipeline and the conflicting arguments about Florida's current and long-term need for the natural gas which the pipeline would bring to the state at great risk to our springs and water resources.

February 18, Sat., 10:30am

Cedar Point Hike - 10:30 to 12:30 Email nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com or contact Grier Newlin at (770) 668-6161 for directions and information.

February 25, Sat., 8:30 am to whenever

Paddle the Santa Fe River. Paddle a unique type of destination through a wildness area with alligators, wildlife, and if very lucky-manatees. Limit 15 people. Canoes and kayaks will be provided.

Email: nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com or contact Grier Newlin at (770) 668-6161.

Additional Outings Information

Go to the **Calendar** section
at the bottom of our website page

<http://www.sierraclub.org/florida/nassau>

Or also find more events and outings at our
Facebook Page: "sierra club nassau county group"

March 4, Sat., 10:30 am

Little Talbot Island Wander thru pine scrub and live oaks and then down to the beach. We will hike from 10:30 to 12:30. Email nassau.sierra.outings@gmail.com Or call (770) 668- 6161.

**March 10, Fri., 7:00 pm Movie
The Secret Life of Your Clothes**

The revealing story of what happens to the mountain of clothes--castoffs in today's world of fast fashion--that are donated to charity. Few make it to your local charity thrift store.



March 12, Sunday, 10am - 1 pm ★

"Fun"draiser for our local Nassau Group Sierra Club! This "guided" kayak Eco Tour is suitable for beginners. All kayak equipment is supplied, and paddling is easy with the trip scheduled to run WITH the current.

Expect to laugh a lot and be amazed at the wildlife you will see. Instruction is provided along with lunch! Cost is \$65 which goes entirely to our local Sierra Group. Please support your local group!

- **See separate page for details!** -

April 22nd Earth Day

Celebrate Earth Day with a beach cleanup and birthday party! Nassau Sierra Club will join the America Beach Beautification Committee for a beach cleanup at 3:00 pm. As a follow up, we will celebrate John Muir's birthday at the American Beach Community Center. Let's eat cake! Check our website for details and times.

April 29th People's Climate March

March for jobs, justice, and the climate in Washington, D.C. Stay tuned for details.



BIRDS on the BEACH!

Black Skimmers

Some of these fascinating birds stay on our beaches year round. However, when **thousands** of them arrive at **Main Beach**, they are migrating to warmer waters to our south (as far as South America or Mexico) or heading north to nest in NY, NJ, or the **Arctic**. The orange bills and orange legs of the Black Skimmers are distinctive. And if you look closely, you will see their strangely shaped bills. The bottom bill is extended far beyond the top bill. **These birds do not dive for their food.** Typically in the early morning they fly just above the water and dip their bottom beak like a scoop to catch their meal of fish. Chicks are born with evenly sized bills to aid with parental feeding. When old enough, the growth spurt of a longer, lower bill takes place. Parents are then off the hook!

GO WATCH THE BIRDS!

Amelia Island's beaches are presently alive with migratory birds! Take a cup of coffee, a bird guide (or use your phone) and a chair. Some of these beach birds are resting from their flights from Canada & Arctic, and to South America. They are tired, so let them conserve energy and don't chase them. They have a LONG flight ahead of them! (Google "Sanderling")

For ALL special event details see the Nassau Sierra Club's CALENDAR Page 2 Inside!

February 17, Fri., 7 pm

Fernandina Beach Library

MerrileeMalwitz-Jipson,

Sierra Club's lead organizer against the Sabal Trail Pipeline, will give us updates on the pipeline that cuts right through the heart of Florida's treasured springs and rivers.



KAYAK for a **CAUSE!**

March 12, Sat, 10 am

INVITATION

"Fun"draiser

for Nassau Sierra Club

All proceeds to benefit

our local group!

See PAGE 3

Reservations Required



Nassau County Sierra Group

P. O. Box 38

Fernandina Beach, FL 32035

Go Green! Send us your Email address for your next digital "COLOR" newsletter at nassausierra@gmail.com.