Dear Lunz Group Members,

Recent articles in The Post and Courier reported that the Charleston/Myrtle Beach and Beaufort/Hilton Head areas are among the fastest growing urban areas in the US, with growth rates in the 10-15% range. We can all probably point to development in areas near our homes, which many of us find unsavory.

With a substantial growth rate, every parcel of unimproved land has a speculation value. Given projected high growth rates, lenders are willing to finance even questionable projects, such as that on Capt. Sam’s Spit.

But it’s not just places that are in the public eye, such as Capt Sam’s Spit. In fact, near my home there is a large borrow pit/pond. It’s clearly man-made—not a very pretty place by most standards. Nevertheless, this water feature has provided winter refuge for sizable numbers of waterfowl, including redhead and ring-necked ducks and scaup. This past winter I spotted a number of juvenile pied-billed grebes and even located one floating nest. The pond has a depth of maybe 15-20 feet and is slightly over 10 acres in dimension.

In spite of the size, in spite of the use that many birds make of it, the water is being pumped from the impoundment in preparation for filling the pit to “develop” the acreage. There is nothing illegal about this and the owners are free to dispose of and otherwise modify their property as they see fit, but it’s not exactly Aldo Leopold’s Land ethic that is working here. How would an active consideration of Land as within the realm of ethics change the way we build cities and manage the way we accommodate all the people who want to move here to enjoy the place?

Early in March, an old friend passed away. Joe Catlin was one of my outings mentors and sometime travel and adventure buddy. Joe was an avid kayak paddler and collector of boats. He was also a kayak advocate. On top of that, Joe shared his passion and was willing to lend a novice paddler (me) a kayak and provide an adventure. One of my first adventures was a trip to Deveaux Bank that included my first on-the-water experience with ocean swells. Years later we traveled to southeast Alaska and paddled with humpback and killer whales. Joe would say you should always go on the trip because sometimes you had an adventure. Joe sponsored many adventures and helped many people get outside for local and even world adventures. I like the idea that Joe is out there somewhere on a never-ending adventure.

We also mourn the passing of Renate Anderson, another well-loved Lunz group member, on April 1. Renate was an avid and active Sierran and a dedicated Lunz volunteer for decades. Renate was committed to Sierra Club principles as well as a long-time partner of Pete Silveston.

Join us April 7 for NOAA scientist Doug Marcy for a talk about sea level rise in the Lowcountry and the weekend of April 8-9 for an outing to Devils Fork State Park (contact me, Starr Hazard, for details). On April 16, you can take part in an oyster restoration project with the DNR, organized by Jennifer Wilder. And mark April 26 on your calendars—it’s the Sierra Club South Carolina Lobby Day in Columbia, which is hands down the best way to communicate with our politicians. Contact Benton Wislinski for details.

Starr Hazard

Chair, Robert Lunz Group
Quick Calendar

Membership Meetings
First Thursday of the Month (public welcome)
Baruch Auditorium
284 Calhoun Street
MUSC Campus
Charleston

Sierra Club calendars are available for sale.
Wall calendars are $5 and engagement calendars are $6.
See Pat Luck at the membership meeting.

Thurs., April 7, 7 pm
284 Calhoun Street
Douglas C. Marcy
Sea Level Rise in the Lowcountry

April 8-9 weekend
Outing at Devils Fork State Park
Contact Starr Hazard for details.

Sat., April 16
Oyster Restoration Part II
Contact Jennifer Wilder
wilderjenn@gmail.com

Here's a link to all our outings
FUN

Thanks to our 2016 Oyster Roast Donors!

Angela Jones
Audubon Center at Francis Beidler Forest
Ben & Jerry's
Bowen's Island Restaurant
Charleston Battery
Charleston Coffee Roasters

Douglas C. Marcy
Coastal Hazards Specialist,
NOAA Office for Coastal Management
Douglas (Doug) C. Marcy is a Coastal Hazards Specialist at the NOAA Office for Coastal Management in Charleston, SC. He has been with NOAA 14 years working on enhancing flooding forecast products and Geographic Information Systems (GIS) capability, storm surge assessments, and coastal hazards assessment projects contributing to more disaster-resilient communities. Doug's current work includes using geospatial technology combined with meteorological, hydrological, and coastal modeling (including sea level change) to enhance inundation forecasting, mapping, and risk assessment.

In addition to implementing specific initiatives, a top priority for NOAA's Office for Coastal Management is to unify efforts to make communities more resilient. Many organizations are involved, including the private sector, nonprofits, the scientific community, and all levels of government. The Office for Coastal Management works to be a unifying force in these efforts, providing unbiased NOAA data and tools and providing opportunities for the community to come together to define common goals and find ways to work smarter by working together. Issues run the gamut from protecting endangered species to erosion to generating better building codes for storm-resistant buildings.

This election year the Lunz group will host a Candidates Forum at our September membership meeting. Environmental issues, such as solar power and off-shore drilling, are seldom the focus of campaign advertisements or news, but the decisions of our local elected representatives have an enormous impact on the environment. The purpose of the forum, then, is to give a platform to candidates to address these issues. We need people to help arrange the event; contact candidates; coordinate with other conservation organizations; write news releases; research conservation issues and draft questions; and compile and evaluate the results. If you would be interested in working on this project, please contact group secretary Julia-Hall@att.net.
2016 Sierra Club South Carolina Lobby Day
April 26, 9am-3pm
Columbia

Please join the SC Sierra Club for our annual Lobby Day at the SC State House. Let our representatives know where we stand on issues!

Details to follow.

Outings

*Watch the events page on the Lunz facebook page and the Lunz meetup site for more trips currently in planning.*
April 8-9
Devils Fork State Park

Join us for camping at Devils Fork State Park. Contact Starr Hazard at hazardes@bellsouth.net for details.

Saturday, April 16
Oyster Restoration Project with the DNR, Part II

We are partnering up with the DNR's South Carolina Oyster Restoration and Enhancement (SCORE) Program again. SCORE is a community-based habitat restoration and monitoring program that works to help restore oyster populations.

For Part I, we helped to bag oyster shells. This time we'll be using the bagged shells to build reefs for recruitment of oyster larvae. Once in place, the reefs will recruit new oysters and attract other critters of the estuary. They are also being used as living classrooms and research platforms.

For this event, be sure to wear closed toed shoes and clothes that can get dirty. We'll meet at the DNR Campus on James Island. The address is 217 Fort Johnson Road, 29412. Once you come through the front gates, follow the road until you see a boat yard on the right side. Volunteers can park anywhere in that general area. We will meet in the field near the boats. The DNR will provide water, gloves, sunscreen and bug spray. They will have cups for water but encourage volunteers to bring eco-friendly, refillable bottles.

Contact Jennifer Wilder at wilderjenn@gmail.com for more details.

URBAN OUTINGS

Contra dancing every first and third Friday nights
Dance to live bands and with wonderful people. Admission $8 for all dancers. Fees go to Charleston Folk to pay the bands and rent the hall. For all of you new to Contra Dancing, please see our website for information about Contra Dancing and a bit about its history:

http://charlestonfolk.weebly.com/

Contacts
Robert Lunz Group
P.O Box 31502
Charleston, SC 29417

MISSION OF THE SIERRA CLUB:
To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the Earth.