

POLK GROUP

Issue: 08-05

FROM THE CHAIR...Paul Anderson

WATER, WATER EVERYWHERE

Coleridge's poem "The Rime of the Ancient Mariner" has 4 lines that read:

Water, water, everywhere,
And all the boards did shrink;
Water, water everywhere,
Nor any drop to drink.

This may be the future for Polk County, Florida, and the world. Right now it seems water is everywhere in Polk County with our 550 lakes, our abundant rainfall, and our splendid underlying Floridan aquifer. But we have taken it for granted, and used and abused the abundance to where we are now in short supply, and it is expected to get worse. This problem is compounded by global warming which is raising sea levels which will increase salt water intrusion into the Floridan aquifer - an event that is already occurring. Florida is not alone in having water problems, the U. S. government estimates at least 36 states are expected to face water shortages within the next five years. Rising temperatures due to global warming have increased evaporation rates across the country and reduced the availability of important water sources such as the Rocky Mountain and Sierra Nevada snowpacks which supply much of the water for the western United States. Droughts, urban sprawl, the population explosion which is largely fueled by illegal immigration, draining and paving of wetlands, and inefficient uses of water resources are contributing factors. Sea levels are rising, and mountain snowpacks, glaciers, the Greenland icecap, and the Arctic and Antarctic ice are all melting. The rise in sea levels is ongoing and certain, but the rate of the rise is uncertain. It is clear that the melt rate now exceeds the experts' expectations. For example, the National Geographic channel reported the Antarctic Larson 1 ice shelf, which was greater than 900 square miles, shockingly broke up and fell into the ocean in 3 days.

There are things we can and must do to slow global warming. But even if we take these actions, it is uncertain if it will be enough, soon enough, to prevent low-lying states like Florida, and whole nations like Bangladesh, from being largely submerged under the oceans. It is urgent that we act now. Please contact your legislators.



SIERRA
CLUB
FOUNDED 1892

MAY 2008 NEWSLETTER

serving DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands and Polk County

PROGRAM FOR MAY 8, 2008

Surface water quality - i.e. **Polk County's lakes** - will be **Curtis Porterfield's** focus in his powerpoint presentation at the May meeting. Curtis is the Lakes Biologist in Polk's Natural Resources Division and will emphasize nutrient loading (phosphorus and nitrogen from fertilizer, etc.) as a prime factor in the aging (eutrophication) of our lakes. See how your favorite lake ranks!

COMING SOON TO A STORE NEAR YOU BRACE UP! CLOROX AND SIERRA!

In the early '90s the National Board of Directors after much discussion decided to carefully engage in cause related marketing. This had a two-fold purpose: one was to encourage corporations to meet Sierra standards and the other was to generate revenue. In the years since Sierra has had agreements with Microsoft, several niche companies, and the mutual fund that bears the Sierra name. Sierra is not the only conservation organization that has agreements with corporations - Greenpeace, I am told, collaborates with Coca-Cola and General Elec-

(Continued on page 2)



Dear Sierra Polk County Voter,

Are you sick and tired of seeing pastures and orange groves bull-dozed to make way for an ocean of rooftops and traffic that rivals major cities? Are you upset over how your tax dollars are being used? If so, this is your opportunity to help make Growth Management history by giving our voters a chance to cap residential growth in Polk County. This cap would apply to both Polk County and its cities.

To do this, we need approximately 20,000 signed petitions to get the issue on the ballot so voters can make this important decision. Here is how you can help:

1. Visit our website to learn about the issues: www.GrowthCapCoalition.com
2. Fill out the enclosed petition. It is also available on our website.
3. Mail your signed petition to the address on the bottom of the petition.
4. Share this information with your family, friends, neighbors and co-workers and encourage them to sign the petition too.

We greatly appreciate your help in bringing this issue to the voters. Please let us know if you have any questions. Our contact information is on the website, on the petition form and listed below.

Marian Ryan, Campaign Manager
Growth Cap Coalition
Home: 863-293-6961
E-mail: GrowthCapCoalition@Gmail.com

tric to influence the move to greener products and processes.

But, you say "A chemical company?" Clorox has current and potential liability with respect to contamination. It transports and handles hazardous materials. Even though the Club would be licensing its logo and name only in connection with the Green Works products, why should Sierra take the chance of tarnishing its name? Robbie Cox, Sierra's President, provides the following rationale.

"This partnership -- our first cause-related marketing venture involving a widely-distributed consumer product -- was announced the week of January 14 as part of the 2008 launch of the Green Works line of five natural household cleaning products. The Green Works cleaning products are made from coconut-based cleaning agent and essential lemon oils; there is no phosphorus or bleach; they are biodegradable and 99% petrochemical-free; there is no animal testing and they are hypo-allergenic.

The Green Works line will make it easier and more affordable for millions of Americans to buy eco-friendly products and this [is] a huge opportunity for the Sierra Club to influence the buying behavior of millions of people and give a giant kick-start to the market for safe, green, affordable household cleaning products. Up until now, a big stumbling block for families who want to live a greener lifestyle has been the high cost of "green" products and the fact that they are not always easy to find. Green Works' natural, environmentally-preferable cleaning products are priced at only 20-25 percent higher than conventional cleaning products, which is much lower than other natural cleaning brands, which can be priced 50-100 percent higher. Green Works products will also be easy to find in 24,000 mainstream stores in the United States and Canada.

To us, the fact that Green Works is the first new product that Clorox has launched in 20 years is a sign that major companies see the green market maturing and recognize it's possible to manufacture and sell products that will be good for business and for the planet. Industry has to be a part of the solution and the Sierra Club has the power to influence corporations to move in the right direction. We believe and hope that this will be a selling proposition that other companies will be quick to adopt.

The bottom line is that these products are environmentally safe, affordable, work well, will be available to millions of people, alter consumer behavior overall and support the good work of the Sierra Club. It is our chance to use the power of our brand to help people who want to do the right thing, to do the right thing. And that is a great opportunity for us. Individuals who want to learn more about the products and the Sierra Club's process for deciding on the partnership can read more at the Sierra Club website at: <http://www.sierraclub.org/greenworks/> "

Many Sierrans around the state (and probably around the nation) feel that this arrangement with Clorox is a deal with the devil. Many others applaud the move as a chance to influence corporations and the great mass of consumers who are brand-name and cost-conscious. Let Sierra know your reaction by writing Sierra Club, 85 Second Street, 2d Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105.*Frances Howell-Coleman*

FLORIDA SIERRA TO BE GOVERNED BY STEERING COMMITTEE

Because of the Florida Sierra Executive Committee leadership crisis, the National Club has suspended the Florida Chapter for four years. Most Sierrans will not notice a difference. All groups will continue to function in the usual manner with the usual allocation of dues. Rebuilding the state organization and coordinating state-wide activities will be placed in the hands of a Steering Committee. In early April a search committee began soliciting applications from members who have state-wide vision and experience. From this pool the 'searchers' will make recommendations to the National Executive Committee which will make the appointments. There is confidence at every level that Florida Sierra will emerge from this crisis a stronger and more effective leader in the conservation movement.

....*Frances Howell-Coleman/Member Search Committee*

ENVIRONMENTAL FUNDING BLUES A MAN-MADE PERFECT STORM

Florida Forever funding, which provides money to purchase environmentally sensitive lands, was in deep trouble at mid session in the Florida Legislature. At the time of this writing the Florida Senate had held the line with its allocation of \$300 million for Florida Forever and continued funding for Everglades restoration at \$100 million. But, the Florida House had dramatically cut off all funding in this year's budget for both popular programs. Happily the conference committee on April 17 agreed to the Senate bill on funding Florida Forever at \$300 million. The House has yet to vote on the conference committee report so we are not out of the woods yet and Everglades funding was NOT included. Our lobbyists are busy trying to correct this. This is all being caused by a \$5 billion short fall in money collected by the State. Environmental issues are not the only areas being hurt by the extreme budget cutting. Draconian measures are being applied everywhere. Social services seem to be the first areas to feel the pinch as is usual in Florida.

There are many causes for these shortages. High gasoline prices and the sub prime debacle are pushing America into a recession; the \$15 billion a month Iraq war expense over the past five years is absorbing much of our Federal tax dollars; former Governor Jeb Bush's tax cutting over the last eight years is crippling the ability of the State to meet the needs of its citizens; and the voters' passage of property tax relief last year all combined to form a perfect storm. While the first three reasons appear beyond our control, the last two are attitudinal problems with the Florida taxpayer. The reverse side of the cutting taxes coin is cutting services. Cut one, you cut the other; it's that simple and few of our voters make the connection. Perhaps now they will think before they vote. We can only hope!

....*Charles Geanangel*

OUTING PAST

Polk Sierrans enjoyed a magnificent day on Lake Hatchineha in mid-April. David Birdsall, Senior Environmental Analysis for the Upper Lakes, SFWMD, arranged for our group to be airboated from Camp Mack to various scenic areas (i.e. oak hammock, marsh, long leaf pine, etc.) ending up at Drasdo, a true early Florida wilderness area where all enjoyed a picnic lunch. Participants were enthralled with close-up sightings of caracara, eagle, turkey, etc. but the vistas of early spring green on the cypress and dappled sunlight in the oak hammocks were the best.



Photo by Frances H. Coleman

EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

For more activities/events, please visit our web site at <http://florida.sierraclub.org/polk/>

May 8,15,22&29	Water School - W.H. Stuart Conference Center in Bartow. Take advantage of a unique opportunity to learn about the water resources of Polk County. This series of tours and panel discussions is sponsored by various governmental entities and organizations highly knowledgeable about water quality and quantity issues. Call 863 519-8677 ext. 112 to ascertain space available.
May 3	Trek Ten Trails Guided Hike - Lake Wales Trailway. Observe birds and other wildlife with the help of experts. Start 9AM -call Marian at 863 293-6961 for more details.
Jun. 7	Trek Ten Trails Guided Hike - Lake Hollingsworth in Lakeland. Identify wading birds and other wildlife as you hike one of Polk's most popular trails. Start 9AM - call Marian at 863 293-6961 for more details.
Nov. 1	Water, Wings & Wild Things - Polk's version of Earth Day. This event has been shifted to the fall to additionally celebrate the completion of the Educational Center at Circle B Bar.

Service - These Saturday events are Ridge Ranger projects.

For more details, call the Volunteer Coordinator at 863 699-3742 or email ridgerangers@myfwc.com or call Gunn at 863 326-5426

May 10	FWC Royce Unit - Lake Placid. Fence Removal. Start 8AM.
May 17	Saddle Blanket Lakes Preserve - Avon Park. Stewardship. Start 8AM.
May 31	Historic Bok Sanctuary - Lake Wales. Stewardship. Start 8AM.
Jun. 7	Highlands Hammock State Park - Sebring. Invasive, Nonnative Plant Removal. Start 8AM.
Jun. 14	FWC Royce Unit - Lake Placid. Fencing Removal. Start 8AM
Jun. 21	Lake McLeod - Lake Wales Ridge National Wildlife Refuge - Eagle Lake. Sign Posting, Fencing. Start 8AM.
Jun. 28	South West Florida Water Management District's J Creek - Lake Placid. Stewardship. Start 8AM.

Winter Haven, with the assistance of a grant from the Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program, has purchased 12 kayaks. Participate in the following events and learn to kayak as you clean up waterbodies in the Peace River watershed. For confirmation of details call the Natural Resource Division at 863 291-5881.

May 17	Peace River - Segment to be Determined. 8AM - 3PM. Reservations required (see above).
Jun. 14	Peace River Clean-up. 8AM until noon - the group will meet and put-in at the Highway 60 bridge. Reservations required (see above).

In order to participate in one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver which will be furnished at the beginning of the outing. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/> or call 415-977-5528. In the interests of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing or anything similar is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel. Please note that some of the above listed activities are events that we think you will find interesting and fun, but they are not official outings. Florida Seller of Travel Ref. No. ST37115



Sierra Club
Polk Group - Florida Chapter
 P.O. Box 7544
 Winter Haven, FL 33883

Non-Profit Org.
 U.S. Postage
 PAID
 Permit No. 1117
 Lakeland, Florida

Published Monthly

Members should send **changes of address** to: Sierra Club, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968
 or address.changes@sierraclub.org

MAY MEETING
 Thursday, May 8, 2008

PROGRAM:

**Polk's Lakes and Nutrient Loading
 Every Resident Can Help!**

By

**Curtis Porterfield, Lakes Biologist
 Polk's Natural Resources Division**

*General Meeting and Executive Committee
 Meeting Run Concurrently*

Join us for our pot-luck suppers at 6:30 p.m. on the second Thursday of every month. Bring a dish to share, a drink and your utensils. Dress is casual. **The meeting will start around 7:15 p.m.**

Meetings are held at the Audubon Nature Center, 115 Lameraux Rd., Winter Haven. From the traffic light at the intersection of Hwy. 540 (Cypress Gardens Blvd.) and Cypress Gardens Road (look for the Shell station and Blockbuster Video) - Turn east onto C.G. Road and follow around sharp right hand turn & then sharp left hand turn. After left hand turn, Lameraux is fourth road on left, two blocks west of Garden Grove Elementary School. Distance from the light to the Nature Center is about 2.3 miles. (Phone 324-7304)

Web Site: <http://florida.sierraclub.org/polk/>

Sierra Membership Application

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional): () _____ **F94Q W3311 1**

Check One **Individual** **Joint**

Introductory \$25

Regular \$39 \$47

Senior \$24 \$32

Student \$24 \$32



Annual dues include subscription to Sierra (\$7.50) and chapter publications (\$1). Dues are not tax-deductible.

Please mail your check and this form to:

Sierra Club, PO Box 52968, Boulder, Colorado, 80322-2968

2008 POLK SIERRA GROUP

Paul Anderson
 Chair - 965-8241

Marian Ryan
 Vice-Chair - 293-6961

Jenny Jacobs
 Secretary - 439-1926

Charles Geanangel
 Treasurer - 326-5748

Members-at-large

Gunn Honican
 Membership - 326-5426

Robert Jackson - 646-1475

Al Greulich - 967-6783

Robert A. Crabbs
 941-424-2976

Newsletter Publisher
Paul Daniel

Outings Coordinator
 Vacant

FL Chapter Issue Chair
Marian Ryan
 293-6961

Email Tree Coordinator
Jenny Jacobs - 439-1926
jennyjacobs1@gmail.com

Newsletter Editor
Frances Howell-Coleman
 956-3771