



Ancient Islands

DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands, Sumter and Polk Counties of Florida

Issue: 11-08, 09

AUGUST—SEPTEMBER 2011

DOLPHIN AWARD

On behalf of Florida Sierra Marian Ryan presents the Dolphin Award to Chuck Geanangel. This award honors a member with an outstanding record of consistent, long-term, invaluable service in sustaining or rescuing a vital Chapter function. Chuck stepped up to the plate three years ago, during a time of great stress for the Sierra Club Florida, to help with a vital function, group health. He joined the Group Advisory Council, and continues to serve while taking on even more responsibility with his own group, Ancient Islands. He reached out to groups to see where they needed help, and from that information, the Group Advisory Council set up a series of conference calls to address those issues, and put groups together to share experiences. The State of Florida was experiencing a lot of disconnects with their leaders and morale was down, as we had just begun the process of rebuilding. In the middle of all this, Chuck had a serious health issue that nearly cost him his life, yet he continued on, helping the club as much as he could during his recovery, and we are all happy to see him back to nearly 100 percent at present time. His leadership skills have really been useful in helping keep the Group Advisory Council moving forward as they bring Group Chairs and leaders together for training and forming our first nominating committee to elect our Executive Committee for the first time in three years. Chuck deserves recognition for all his hard work.



Photo by Frances H. Coleman

FROM THE CHAIR...Chuck Geanangel

Summer is here, it's hot, and time to stay indoors. WRONG! Now is the very best time to join a local Sierra paddling trip on one of the many rivers, streams, creeks, and lakes of Central Florida. When I first joined the then Polk Sierra Group the big draw was being able to enjoy the monthly canoe trips that were offered. With the Club I have explored virtually every navigable waterway within 50 miles of Winter Haven. All you needed was a canoe or kayak, a paddle, an ice chest for cold drinks and a sandwich and a sense of adventure.

Drifting downstream took little effort to silently propel

(Continued on page 2)

FLORIDA HAS AN UGLY PROBLEM

What feeds lawns and sugar cane also fuels the scum that clogs waterways and Floridians are collectively overfeeding the scum. There are too many examples: blue-green algae smothering rivers, lakes and canals, high piles of putrid-smelling algae drifting along beaches; dead fish stinking on shorelines, turtles and manatees dying from red tides; sea grass and coral beds diminishing, fisheries and waterfowl populations in every part of the state suffering.

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) concluded in 2008 that over 1,000 miles of rivers and streams, 350,000 acres of lakes, and 900 square miles of estuaries here are impaired by nutrients - half of our rivers and more than half of our lakes are sick from high levels of nitrogen and phosphorous. And Floridians living along those water bodies are suffering too. Water-front economies, property values, drinking water supplies, human health and quality of life are negatively impacted.

(Continued on page 2)

GOING E

The Times They Are Changing!



Saving trees and resources to better fight the good fight - now that sounds like a worthy goal for Sierra. Ancient Islands has been slow to reach the electronic newsletter decision because we feared changing a system that was working well - and we feared the change would displease members who don't have computers. Conservatively in 2010, when many Florida groups switched to e-newsletters, we just went to bi-monthly mailings.

Now we think we have a plan that will serve all constituents - but it will require your input. If you have email, PLEASE send a message to fhcoleman@gmail.com with Ancient Islands E-Newsletter in the subject line. Please type your name, exactly the way it appears on your label, your zip code, and your email address. This will serve as instruction to add you to our newsletter listserv.

This listserv will be managed by the newsletter editor; We will NOT share your address with any other entity and will only send e-newsletters, alerts and im-

(Continued from page 1) *From the Chair*

the canoe, and around each bend in the river was a new and wondrous vista. Every trip was different; rarely did I wind up in the water unless I meant to cool off.

Andy Quinn, our certified outings trip leader, along with a small committee, has organized numerous fantastic trips of all types, but, this summer he has put together some outstanding adventures which are listed in this Ancient Island Newsletter. Andy handles all the organizational details, all you have to do is show up. My own experience growing up in Ohio after WW2 helped shape the person I became. My family owned a cabin on a lake in eastern Ohio where I spent almost every summer weekend swimming, boating, and enjoying the outdoors. A more idyllic setting I cannot imagine. So we are offering a similar scenario for you, your kids, and grandkids. But you have to take the first step. Call Andy at 863-683-9600 and reserve a space on the next trip. We have a few kayaks for rent and can sometime match-up people with canoes and partners. I guarantee that if you go once you will be hooked. I was.

(Continued from page 1) *Florida's Ugly Problem*

Over time, our ways of life have released enough nitrogen and phosphorous into the environment to overload our water bodies. Our lakes, rivers and estuaries can no longer digest the extent of our nutrient pollution; drop by drop they have reached the tipping point and the result is the overgrowth of harmful and nuisance algae.

Unfortunately, the blame game won't work here - we all contribute to the problem; it runs off over-fertilized and untimely-fertilized urban landscapes; it is discharged from wastewater treatment plants; it is a by-product of agriculture. To help solve this problem more than fifty local governments have passed local fertilizer laws. Polk County is required to develop and pass one soon. As headwaters to the Peace River, as a major contributor to the Kissimmee and home to hundreds of lakes, let's make certain that Polk's ordinance is well-researched and strong enough to make a difference.

....adapted from *Cris Costello's blog by FHC*

(Continued from page 1) *Going E*

portant announcements to this list (probably no more than three per month). The newsletter will be a pdf attachment. If you wish to be dropped from the list, send a message to the above address with opt-out in the subject line.

A mailed newsletter will be an opt-in choice. If you need a printed newsletter mailed, you must take the label off your newsletter and mail it to Frances Howell-Coleman, P.O. Box 7544, Winter Haven, FL 33883. If we don't hear from you, we can only assume you will go to our website for information. Our newsletters will be available on our website but you will receive them in a more timely fashion through the listserv.

The December newsletter will continue to be a printed and mailed newsletter because National requires that we annually send a ballot to each member. Members will continue to receive state and national mailings as usual. Help make our group more efficient and effective - let me hear from you!

....*Frances Howell-Coleman*

OUTING PAST



Photo by Frances H. Coleman

Thirteen (kids and adults) learned kayaking skills, listened to nature talks, and frolicked in the cool waters of Wekiva Springs and Rock Springs Run on July 11th. This was perfect testimony to the principle of "catch'em early, have fun, and they will grow up caring and protecting."

PRELIMINARY INJUNCTION ISSUED for South Ft. Meade Phosphate Mine Extension

In mid-July Judge Henry Adams of the U.S. District Court in Jacksonville issued a preliminary injunction against all phosphate mining at the Mosaic Company's South Fort Meade Extension site in Hardee County. Judge Adams held that the plaintiffs had shown a likelihood of success on the merits of their claims that U.S. Corps of Engineers' permit for the mining violated the Clean Water Act, the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) and the Administrative Procedure Act. The permit would allow the destruction of 537 acres of wetlands and more than 10 miles of streams in the headwaters of the Peace River, a federally designated Aquatic Resource of National Importance that has been decimated by phosphate mining over the past few decades. In the latest round of this long-running litigation, Mosaic sought to mine 700 acres of what it called "uplands" within its more than 10,000 acre site, while waiting on the judge's ruling. However, the judge stopped that because he found that these areas were covered by the permit and, based on Mosaic's own evidence, that mining those areas would cause harm to wetlands in and around the uplands site. The judge also noted that although Mosaic has had approximately a year to do so since this lawsuit began, it had chosen not to fix its permit with the Corps of Engineers to comply with the law.

Commenting on the result, Bev Griffiths, chair of the Sierra Club Florida phosphate committee said, "The court has recognized that the Corps of Engineers review of this project was deeply flawed and needs to be re-done in order to protect these wetlands, streams and water flows that are crucial to wildlife and human populations.

....*Beverly Griffiths*

OUTINGS/EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

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

Circle B Bar Reserve

Each month Circle B Bar Reserve offers a variety of guided hikes, nature oriented presentations, nature photography tutorials, and tram rides. Because space is limited (especially on the tram rides) and additional events are added, call Tabitha Biehl-Gabbard, Environmental Lands Stewardship Coordinator at 863 668-4673 to find out what is available and to reserve a space. Experience dictates that to get a tram seat it is best to call during the first week of the month.

Summertime Nature Fun for Kids!

Aug. 8 Rock Springs Run. This trip, on a Monday, includes a short kayak paddle (instruction provided), nature education and a swim in one of Florida's pristine spring runs. Typical costs will be \$25 which will include the use of a Winter Haven UPKEEP kayak, launch fees, and a donation to Sierra. Kids will bring a bag lunch, water bottles, sunscreen, bug spray, and snacks. Parents are welcome and needed. Contact Andy Quinn, Ancient Islands Outings Leader at 863 683-9600 or abquinn2010@gmail.com for more information and to reserve your spot - space is limited.

Reserve the Dates!

Sept. 23 Awards Celebration in CA! Marian Ryan will receive the Susan E. Miller Award for her administrative contributions at all levels of Sierra. Lift a glass to Marian on that date!

Sept. 24 Outdoor Expo, Polk County Parks & Recreation - Saddle Creek Park, Lakeland. Explore new outdoor activities and recreational possibilities. Call Frances 863-956-3771 to volunteer for tabling.

Oct. 1-2 Fisheating Creek Fundraiser & Paddle. This paddling event will raise funds for conservation efforts around the headwaters of the creek which is a relatively undamaged creek, abundant with wildlife, that runs from Highlands County to Lake Okeechobee. The protection of this watershed is essential for the health of the Everglades and the drinking water of south Florida. Three campsites have been reserved. Contact Andy at 863 683-9600 to claim your spot.

TBA Dedication of Coleman Landing at Shady Oaks - southwest shore of Lake Kissimmee. The construction issue between the contractor and SFWMD has been resolved; modifications and repairs are scheduled to be completed by the end of July and the county plans to inspect and accept the park in August. There will probably be a 'soft opening' in September (as soon as caretakers are on site). Jenny's listserv and The Ledger will be notified when the grand opening/dedication is scheduled - should be in October when the weather cools off. See you there!

Oct. 8 Water, Wings & Wild Things - Circle B Bar Reserve - Lakeland. Polk County's Naturefest.

Nov. 12 Trek Ten Trails Annual Celebration - Circle B Bar Reserve - Lakeland. Launch of the new season.

Service at Circle B Bar Reserve

Volunteers are always needed to help at the reception desk, create signs for special events, check the trails, etc. For more information and to volunteer call Tabitha Biehl-Gabbard at 863 668-4673 or email tabithabiehl@polk-county.net

Service - These events are Ridge Ranger projects.

These stewardship projects start at 8AM at their respective locations unless otherwise noted.
For more details and to register call the Volunteer Coordinator, Bill Parken, at 863 699-3742 or email bill.parken@myFWC.com. The schedule may change so be certain to register.

Aug. 6 Bok Tower Gardens - Lake Wales. Planting of native plants until 11AM

Aug. 13 Bok Tower Gardens - Lake Wales. Ridges to Rivers. Education for Ridge Rangers and others will provide a much broader view of our ecosystem and its importance. Runs from 9 until noon.

Aug. 27 Archbold Biological Station - Venus, FL. Removing invasive plants until 11AM.

Sept. 10, 12, 13 & 14 Tenoroc Management Area - Lakeland. Planting pine seedlings until noon.

Sept. 17 TNC Tiger Creek - Babson Park. Fencing and posting until 11AM.

Sept. 24 FWC Lake Blue Scrub - Auburndale. Maintain experimental scrub lupine plots until 11AM.

Oct. 1 Lake Louisa State Park - Clermont. Removing invasive plants 9 until noon.

Special activities such as native plant nursery, Lakewatch, GPS plant mapping, woodworking, etc., are available.
Become a Citizen-Scientist! Call Bill for details.

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 most 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

Ancient Islands - FL Sierra
P.O. Box 7544
Winter Haven, FL 33883

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RETURN SERVICE REQUESTED

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

AUGUST 11 and SEPTEMBER 8 MEETINGS

PROGRAMS:

**AUGUST: Let's Talk Outings & Eat BBQ
and "Naturally Central Florida" DVD**

**SEPTEMBER: Protecting Florida's Waters
Through Local Fertilizer Ordinances**

Presented by

**Cris Costello, Sierra Regional
Representative**

*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.

August 11 Meeting: hosted by Andy and Susan Quinn, 1011 S. Tennessee Ave., Lakeland. From US 92 turn south on Florida Ave. and drive through downtown; at the McDonald/Cresap traffic light (look for Southside Cleaners on the SW corner) take a left on McDonald and then a right on Tennessee. Andy's is the 13th house on the right. From Winter Haven south: take the Polk Parkway west, get off on Florida Ave. and go right (north); after several lights turn right (east) on McDonald and follow directions above. 863 683-9600

September 8 Meeting: This meeting will be held at Circle B Bar Reserve. The Reserve is located on State Road 540 (Winter Lake Road) at a mid-point between Lakeland, Bartow and Winter Haven. From Bartow, take US 98 north to SR 540 and turn right; from Lakeland, take US 98 south to SR 540 and turn left; the property entrance is approximately two miles east of US 98 on the south (right) side of SR 540. From Winter Haven, take SR 540 and after the exits to the Polk Parkway (where there is a traffic light) look for and follow the Reserve signs; it will be a left turn. **Bring flashlight for parking lot.**

Sierra Membership Application

Name _____

Street Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

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

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

Introductory \$15

Regular \$39 \$49

Senior \$25 \$35

Student \$25 \$35



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 421041, Palm Coast, Florida, 32142-6417

2011 ANCIENT ISLANDS SIERRA GROUP

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