

# POLK GROUP

Issue: 07-08



SIERRA  
CLUB  
FOUNDED 1892

**AUGUST 2007 NEWSLETTER**

*serving DeSoto, Hardee, Highlands and Polk County*

## **SIERRA CLUB LAUDS LEADERSHIP OF GOV. CRIST Florida Becomes Key State in Fight Against Global Warming**

Florida Governor Charlie Crist (R) in mid July signed three executive orders setting out policies to combat climate change. He committed to an 80 percent reduction in global warming emissions by 2050. He also ordered that Florida adopt the California Clean Car Standards--adding a significant new state to the 14 others that have already announced their intention to adopt the landmark standards which will lower global warming emissions from new automobiles by 30 percent.

Statement of Carl Pope,  
Sierra Club Executive Director

"Governor Crist demonstrates that it doesn't matter whether you're red or blue, that we all can--and must--be green. While politicians in Washington are locked up in partisan bickering, officials in cities, states, and counties across the country are delivering the leadership on global warming and energy issues that the American people are demanding.

"We applaud Governor Crist for doing what all public officials should do: make sound policy based on science, not politics. An 80 percent reduction in global warming emissions by 2050--or an achievable average annual reduction of 2 percent--is what scientists tell us is necessary to avert the most catastrophic effects of global warming. With over 1300 miles of coastline [and over 8,400 miles of tidal inlets, bays and waterways], Florida will be ground zero in dealing with the rising seas that will come with a warming climate. While Governor Crist's plans will help protect the climate for all of us, they are essential for protecting Florida.

"The governor's actions place Florida at the forefront of the fight against global warming. We hope that his extraordinary leadership will inspire other governors across the country and we look forward to working with him to implement the plans he has outlined today."

Editor's Note: Florida Sierra will need to campaign vigorously for conservation and the use of solar and wind. State government may be inclined to rely on nuclear in order to meet Crist's goals.

## **PROGRAM FOR AUGUST 9**

**The Green Swamp - Florida's Liquid Heart** is a recent production sponsored by myregion.org and the University of Central Florida. Conservationists from Polk provided background and insight. Join us at the home of Al and Margery Greulich for this beautiful documentary on the jewel in our own backyard. (see page 4 for directions).

## **POLK WINS TITLE OF ALL-AMERICA COUNTY**

Polk County was one of ten communities given the honor of being named an All-America County by the National Civic League following a three-day competition in Anaheim, California on June 6-8. The League's web site states that the All-America designation recognizes "exemplary community vision, collaborative problem-solving and inclusiveness to meet local challenges." One of 20 finalists at the competition, Polk won the designation on its first attempt.

During the three-day competition a delegation from each community presented their innovative programs and local solutions to a jury of their peers from across the United States. Their presentations addressed a wide range of social and economic issues and included youth engagement, education, poverty, housing, sustainability, immigration, integration, and race relations. A jury of national business, government, philanthropic, and nonprofit leaders selected the top 10 communities based on their presentations and applications.

A 35-member Polk County team of civic, political and teen leaders participated in the competition. This is only the second time a local community has been named an All-America City. Lakeland received the designation in 1970 but was unsuccessful in subsequent attempts for the designation in 1988, 1994 and 2002.

Applications highlighted innovative local community efforts. Highlighted programs included Polk Vision; Hurricane Heroes, a program developed to revive tourism following the 2004 hurricanes; the Teen Pregnancy Prevention Alliance Youth Leadership Team; and the Friends of the Parks Park Partners Program, which is a grass-roots effort to improve local parks through community volunteers and partnerships with civic groups, organizations and schools.

Marian Ryan, a Sierra Club member and president of Friends of the Parks was a member of the team. The Polk Sierra Group is a supporter of the Park Partners Program which emphasizes the cultivation and use of native plants in public park landscaping projects. The program provides these plants free of charge to those volunteers who adopt all or portions of a public park or conservation land.

Come join a community celebration and encore performance of



*(Continued on page 2)*

(Continued from page 1) All-American County  
the winning All-America County presentation!

### **ENCORE PERFORMANCE FOR THE COMMUNITY** (Bartow Civic Center)

Wednesday, September 5th – 5:30 p.m.

Polk Vision is organizing the event, which promises to be a lot of fun and a place where “Civic Pride” will take center stage. Also...CHECK IT OUT!!!

Go to [www.polk-county.net](http://www.polk-county.net) and click on the AAC Shield. The website is still a work in progress and more photos will be uploaded as will personal stories/testimonials, news coverage and other things as they come in, so check back from time to time to see what's new. Call 863-293-6961 for reservations. ....Marian Ryan

### **HERE WE GO AGAIN**

At his global summit last week in Miami, Governor Crist mentioned several forms of alternate energy that could be used to fight global warming, AKA greenhouse gases. However, cheers from the assembled environmentalists went silent when they heard the N word. That's nuclear. Perhaps it's time to take a step back in history.

My sixth grade teacher in the late forties was upbeat on atomic power. It would be so cheap she said that it would not need to be metered. The heat produced by the controlled nuclear reaction would boil water making steam which would spin the turbines producing abundant electric power at a very low cost. She also told us that man would never set foot on the moon and that evolution was an unproven theory about man coming from monkeys. Wrong, wrong, wrong. Science has always been confusing to most people. The facts seem to change depending on who you talk to.

For most environmentalists, nuclear energy is the ultimate evil. Yet few, especially the younger generations, know about the reasons for our fierce opposition. The disaster at Three Mile Island near my home in the Midwest and the explosion at Chernobyl in the Ukraine happened over 20 years ago. The China Syndrome is just a movie. Currently the difficulty in storing the radioactive waste products and the expense in construction receive scant coverage in the press. Mostly, fear of the unknown sums up why generations of Americans have fought to prevent nuclear power plants from being built. No one wants one in their neighborhood for sure.

Yet burning of nonrenewable fossil fuels which produce greenhouse gases clearly needs to be curtailed or eliminated. Will nuclear power plants be one of the new alternative sources of power along with solar, wind, and hydrogen? Before we give a knee jerk reaction we all need to take a deep breath and study our options in terms of the new reality. There are plenty of nukes around; France for example gets 80% of their electricity that way and in Florida, Turkey Point in South Florida and Crystal River to the north of us operate every day.

Will we trade the evils of burning coal and petroleum for the evils of storing spent radioactive fuel rods for 50,000 years? It's time to take another look at our options.

....Chuck Geanangel

## **TREK TEN TRAILS KICKS OFF IN OCTOBER**

The Friends of the Parks Foundation has developed a program to debut this fall in conjunction with National Trails Month that will provide residents and visitors an opportunity to experience the wide range of trails Polk County has to offer. TREK TEN TRAILS will launch on October 6, 2007, at the Fort Fraser Trailhead in Highland City. A fun event for the whole family, the kick-off celebration will announce complete details on how you can qualify to become a member of a very elite TREK TEN TRAILS Trail Walkers Club. The premiere event will feature exhibitors and vendors with FREE information on trail safety, health-related issues, and the latest phenomenon in outdoor adventure - GEOCACHING. You will even have an opportunity to custom-make a walking stick to chart and personalize your hiking treks. While Polk County has more than 125 miles of paved and unpaved trails, Trek Ten Trails will be featuring ten trails for trekking between October 2007 and the finale in September 2008. Some of the trails will have sponsored events with bonus rewards for participating to qualify your membership in the Trek Ten Trails Trail Walkers Club. Many of the trails include approved geocaches, even some that can be located without a GPS unit! One of the best rewards for participating in a cache hunt is the adventure of simply being outdoors.

There is nothing to do now but indicate your interest. By registering early, you will receive a VIP invitation to the kick-off celebration and a chance to win one of several GPS units to be awarded. If you are unable to attend, let us know how to get in touch with you and you will receive a complete information packet by mail. You can preview the program on the Friends website: <http://www.friendsoftheparks.net/TrekTenTrails.html> For more information contact Marian Ryan 863-293-6961 or [mryan@pipevines.net](mailto:mryan@pipevines.net)

### **WOLVES UNDER ATTACK** **END RUN AROUND THE ESA**

Wolves were reintroduced in the northern Rockies in 1995. Their recovery has been an outstanding success story for the Endangered Species Act. Recovered species should be delisted; as a step in this process the states involved must adopt management plans which would convince the US Fish and Wildlife Service that wolf populations would be maintained at a minimum level. Wolves were delisted in Minnesota, Wisconsin and Michigan in January 2007. Montana has a first rate management plan but its neighboring states of Idaho and Wyoming still consider wolves predatory animals (i.e. vermin) and if delisting were to occur, recovery would be undone in the northern Rockies.

Since the ESA is still in effect, the Bush Administration has proposed a Wolf Rule change that could result in the extermination of half the wolves in Idaho and Wyoming. The National Resources Defense Council reports that planes and helicopters are already being assembled for an aerial assault which is planned to begin as early as

(Continued on page 3)

(Continued from page 2)Wolves

October. Why the politicians in Idaho and Wyoming are so anti wolf is difficult for Easterners to understand. Wolves account for very little livestock depredation and owners can receive reimbursement from Defenders of Wildlife and other entities. In some areas elk population is down but good science demonstrates that's the result of multiple factors (habitat destruction, drought, etc.) - and in many areas elk are so numerous people have resorted to feeding herds in the winter (Elk Refuge, Jackson). Nobody seriously regards wolves as a threat to humans. And

wolves that have repeatedly killed livestock have always been destroyed by authorized hunters. What's the problem?

Look at this Wolf Rule change as an attempt to get around the ESA. The deadline for citizen input is only a few days from now - August 6. Call 406 449-5225 ext. 204 (Wolf Recovery Coordinator in Helena, Montana) and insist on no increased hunting of wolves until Idaho and Wyoming adopt a decent management plan. Or go online at [http://www.nrdconline.org/campaign/actionfund\\_wolfaerial](http://www.nrdconline.org/campaign/actionfund_wolfaerial) ....Frances H. Coleman

## EVENTS/ACTIVITIES

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

**Aug. 20** **Lakeland Bi-Partisans** present Rick Dantzler who will provide information on and answer questions about the proposed **Heartland Parkway** - a massive toll road planned for the center of the state. 6:30PM at the Lakeland Library on Lake Morton.

**1st Saturdays of the Month Through Nov.** **Colt Creek State Park** is offering free tram rides into the backcountry areas at 9AM. The trips will be led by naturalists who will help you identify the flora and fauna along the route. This new state park is on County Road 471 in the Green Swamp. Each day's tram ride is limited to the first 30 people who call 863 815-6758; admission to the park is \$2 per vehicle.

**2nd Wednesdays of the Month Through Dec.** **South Lake Howard Nature Park - Winter Haven.** Guided nature walk from 8:55 - 9:30AM. Call 863 291-5881 for additional details.

**2nd Thursdays of the Month Through Dec.** **Lake Hartridge Nature Park - Winter Haven.** Guided walks with emphasis on the stormwater treatment system. Call 863 291-5881 for additional details.

**Service** - These Saturday events are Ridge Ranger projects.

They all start at 8AM at their respective sites; if you want more details, call Lynne Flannery at 863-6699-3742 or email [Lynne.Flannery@MyFWC.com](mailto:Lynne.Flannery@MyFWC.com)

**Aug. 11** **MacKay Gardens - Lake Alfred.** Tour of the gardens, native area, and historic home; enjoy a potluck lunch.

**Aug. 18** **Lake Wales Ridge National Wildlife Refuge Lake McLeod Tract - Eagle Lake.** Fencing.

**Aug. 25** **FWC's Lake Blue - Auburndale.** Natal Grass Tug.

**Sept. 8** **FWC Carter Creek - NE Sebring.** Trash Removal.

**Sept. 15** **Polk County's SUMICA property on Lake Walk-in-the-Water.** Seed Collecting (training provided).

**Sept. 22** **Historic Bok Sanctuary - Lake Wales.** Stewardship.

**Sept. 29** **Polk County's SUMICA property on Lake Walk-in-the-Water.** Seed Collecting (training provided).

### Karst Documentaries

In case you missed the first showing of a particular documentary at the Winter Haven Library (325 Avenue A,NW - 863 291-5880), repeat showings are scheduled as noted below. The films are shown on the big screen with surround sound and start promptly at 6:30PM. Popcorn and other refreshments will be available for a nominal charge during the movies or you are welcome to bring your own.

**Aug. 9** **Everglades: Currents of Change.** This film provides us with a visit to the heart of the Everglades.

**Aug. 16** **A River Returns.** Now we go on an exploration of the St. Johns from marsh to mouth.

**Aug. 23** **Hidden Rivers of Florida.** Florida has the most unique concentration of springs on earth. A team of explorer-scientists descend into the floridan aquifer to trace the path of this hidden water world.

**Aug. 30** **Polluting the Fountain of Youth.** This film is about an exploration of underwater caves in north central Florida.

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.



**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](mailto:address.changes@sierraclub.org)

**AUGUST MEETING**  
 Thursday, August 9, 2007

**PROGRAM:**

**The Green Swamp - Florida's Liquid Heart**

**Water and Wildlife**

Produced By

**myregion.org and the University of Central  
 Florida**

*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.**

This special summer meeting will be held at the home of Al and Margery Greulich on Lake Ariana, 345 Bay Street, Auburndale. From US Hwy 92 turn north at the traffic light onto Main St. Stay on Main through town (there are several sharp turns - follow the I-4 signs). Go around a small lake and Stambaugh Middle School will appear on your right. At almost the end of school property Bay Street will be on the left; 345 is the second house (blue) on the right. Park in the school parking lot and walk across Main St. to the house. 967-6783.

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**

**2007 POLK SIERRA GROUP**

**Al Greulich**  
 Chair - 967-6783

**Paul Anderson**  
 Vice-Chair - 965-8241

**Marian Ryan**  
 Secretary - 293-6961

**Charles Geanangel**  
 Treasurer - 326-5748

Members-at-large  
 Vacant

**Gail Bond**  
 Membership - 298-8134

**Bob Taylor** - 439-2251  
**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  
[jenjacobs\\_1@netzero.com](mailto:jenjacobs_1@netzero.com)

**Newsletter Editor**  
**Frances Howell-Coleman**  
 956-3771