



SIERRA
CLUB
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Calusa Digest



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Serving Southwest Florida

December, 2002

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Want to receive notification of **Emergency Action Alerts**? Send your email address to: **bobbieleehasty@aol.com**
You will be notified of events that require prompt action such as letters, phone calls, and email.

Impaired Waters Update

We recently filed a petition challenging the Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) on the reclassification of several of the Estero Bay tributaries which had been listed as marine systems. We had a mediation meeting on 21 November. The attorney representing both Sierra Club and ECOSWF was Mimi Wolock of Naples, Ralf Brooks of Cape Coral was the attorney for Responsible Growth Management Coalition. A representative from the Conservancy of Southwest Florida was also present.

After much data was presented from our side, it became obvious that there were many problems with the locations of the water sampling stations. The scientific data that we presented was DEP's own. The sampling

stations on the majority of the tributaries are located far east of where they should be to properly characterize the streams. After much discussion, DEP admitted that the scientific evidence showed the systems turned into fresh water systems further east.

The outcome of our meeting was the reclassification of the tributaries by DEP as partially marine and partially fresh. We now have nine segments added for certain pollutant-loading criteria that were not there before, and Estero River, Spring Creek, and Hendry have been added to the list. DEP admitted that they could do a better job in the future by adding some sampling stations nearer to the Bay. It will be after the first of the year before DEP can finalize resolutions on this issue.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

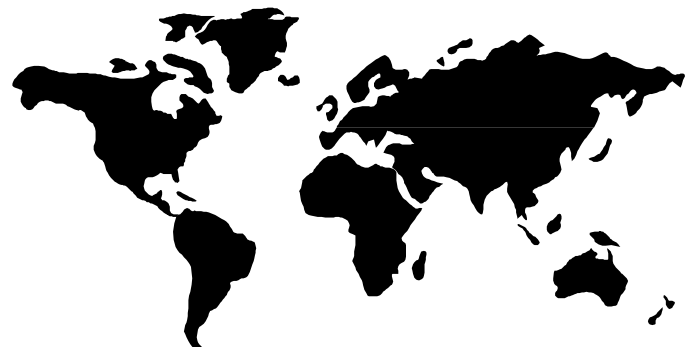
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Calusa Digest is a publication of the Calusa Group of the Sierra Club and is published four times yearly. Subscription is included with Sierra Club dues or can be obtained by non-members from the Calusa Group for \$5/year.

EARTH DAY 2003!

Mark your calendars and don't miss our **Second Annual Earth Day Festival at Koreshan State Park on Saturday, 19 April 2003!** As of this writing, there will be live music, kayaking trips down the beautiful Estero River, and Ecotours out to the Bay. The Lions Club will once again be providing food and accepting donations of old eyeglasses. In the Founders' Home there will be many environmental presentations and educational videos throughout the day. Representatives from local environmental groups will have tables set up to distribute literature and answer your questions. New this year: there will be a 5K race in the morning and a canoe race in the afternoon. A stunning Clyde Butcher photograph will be raffled, and wildlife photography will be on display. Keep checking the website as more events are scheduled. For more information or to donate an item to be raffled, contact Bobbie Lee Hasty, Calusa Group Chair, at **239-992-9061**. *See you there!*



Please recycle this newsletter!

Greater Everglades Land Trust

A new land trust has formed! We will be keeping you posted on new developments as things get off the ground. The purpose of the Land Trust is to buy environmentally sensitive land, land that if not purchased will ultimately be destroyed. The only way to really protect the environment for our families and our future is to purchase lands that need to be preserved. Much of our wetlands are being destroyed at an alarming rate. The endangered species habitat that still exists is disappearing rapidly. One huge issue is our ground water resource areas; without them we will not have enough water for a sustainable Florida in the future. We need everyone's help in purchasing critically sensitive lands. If every one who truly cared would give what they could afford, we would have millions of dollars to purchase land. It's just that simple. For more information please call Mimi Wolock at 403-9992

***"I know that I can't
save the world, but we
can."
- Bono***

CALUSA GROUP WEBSITE

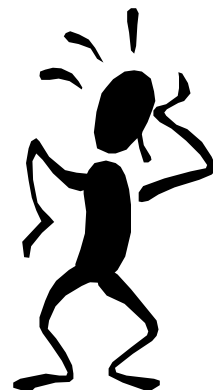
We apologize for the confusion, but we are back to using the original website. As it turns out, we must use a webpage that is linked through National Sierra Club. So...

The current and correct address is:

[www.sierraclub.org/chapters/fl
/calusa/index/htm](http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/fl/calusa/index/htm)

Correction

OOPS! On page 7 in the September, 2002 issue of the *Calusa Digest*, a typing error was made. The name of our Representative to the U.S. House of Representatives (14th District) is Porter Goss, not Peter Goss. We apologize to our members and Congressman Goss for this oversight and any embarrassment it may have caused.



More Everglades Monitoring Needed, Scientists Say

By Cathy Zollo
crzollo@naplesnews.com
Saturday, 5 October 2002

More monitoring wells and a deeper look into how water quality will affect ecosystems are some of the suggestions lobbed at the Everglades restoration project Friday by a group from the National Academy of Sciences. The Committee on the Restoration of the Greater Everglades Ecosystem is an independent advisory panel to the South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Task Force. The task force is comprised of state and federal agencies overseeing the multibillion-dollar restoration. Those agencies had the committee's highly technical, 75-page report in hand Friday, but many officials had not yet studied the conclusions and recommendations from the panel of fifteen scientists.

A central feature of the complex effort to restore the Florida Everglades is a proposal to drill more than 300 wells that would funnel up to 1.7 billion gallons of surface water a day into underground aquifers. There, the water would be stored and then pumped back to the surface to

replenish the ecosystem during dry periods.

Aquifer storage and recovery (ASR), as the process is known, has been successfully employed on a much smaller scale in Florida since 1983. But the size of the new proposal - 330 wells along the northern shore of Lake Okeechobee, the Caloosahatchee River, and dotting Palm Beach County - is unprecedented and has raised concerns. The panel suggested that the plan to study the use of ASRs needs to include a more comprehensive look at the water's impact on larger ecosystems versus individual species, said Jean Bahr, professor of geology and geophysics at the University of Wisconsin and chairperson of the committee. "We've given them detailed recommendations that will strengthen the study," Bahr said. "They need to better coordinate the developing tasks that deal with water quality and its ecological effects, and they are likely to need more monitoring at the pilot sites." The pilot sites are three test wells that will be functional ASRs. The report calls for more monitoring wells to keep tabs on

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A Message from the Editor

While historically the production of the *Calusa Digest* was monthly, the Executive Committee recently decided to put it out quarterly as the cost of printing and postage was becoming prohibitive. Unfortunately, we feel it is much better to have more frequent issues in order to keep our members informed, especially with the disruption of our website (see page 3). This was discussed at length at a recent Executive Committee Meeting, and a suggestion was made.

If enough members would prefer to receive their issue of the *Digest* via email as a Word document or view it on the Calusa Group website and discontinue receiving a paper issue via snail mail, we may be able to produce more issues. In addition, we would be aiding in tree conservation by reducing the amount of paper consumed. The website address is: **www.sierraclub.org/chapters/fl/calusa/index.htm**. As of this printing, the webpage is being updated. All newsletter issues will be available by Adobe Acrobat Reader and can be printed, if you desire.

At this point in time, we are asking for your input. A decision will be made regarding this at an upcoming meeting; we may do this on a trial basis and then revisit the issue. If you would like to receive your *Calusa Digest* electronically or have other comments, concerns, or suggestions, please don't hesitate to contact me at **kathleen.sullivan@syngenta.com** or **239-272-0474**.

Peace River Audubon Society Yard and Native Plant Sale

The Peace River Audubon Society will be hosting a yard and native plant sale on **11 January 2003 from 8 AM – 4 PM at 466 Azalea, Port Charlotte**. This event will benefit Florida Scrub-Jay land acquisition in Charlotte County.

The Florida Scrub-Jay is a state- and federally-threatened species. The principal reason for the decline of this species is loss of habitat. Acquisition of Florida Scrub-Jay habitat will also protect other native plant and animal species, protect our watersheds, and add to the quality of life in Charlotte County by providing additional open space. Proceeds from the sale are anticipated to be matched by the state, furthering your contribution. Please start looking for items that may be cluttering your house. We will gladly accept these unwanted items.

Florida Scrub-Jays are dependent on your generosity!

Please contact Cathy Olson, President of the Peace River Audubon Society, at **941-613-6753** or **cathyolson@comcast.net** if you have questions or items to donate.



OUT THERE

Some Good News about our Environment

20 November 2002

This was an amazing day of kayaking. I put in on the south side of the Franklin Locks and headed downstream on the Caloosahatchee River. Being near the locks is always interesting with big boats leaving and entering the lock system. I crossed the river and paddled down the north shore, entering the first oxbow. In there I saw great blue, tri-colored and immature little blue herons and two limpkins, a rare treat. Further downstream there were several great egrets sitting amongst the dead branches of an old bush on the water's edge; they flew off and joined a group of other great egrets and snowy egrets sitting on a sandbar in the river. So many birds...they must have been there for the same reason that I was in this area: it was too windy to go on any open water.

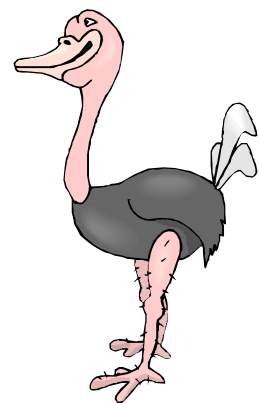
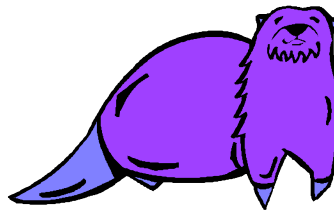
I turned up into Telegraph Creek and right away saw a little green heron and an alligator. Continuing upstream against the strong current due to the heavy rains we had this past weekend, I saw many turtles, an elusive otter, many more herons and egrets, two more gators and even some ostriches!

There was a cornucopia of smells on the creek, with many plants in bloom. Some of the scents came from the climbing aster and hemp vine. It was fun having a current to battle against and was very exciting when I turned around to go back; I had to be careful not to get rammed into any of the bushes or trees in the creek. It was almost like white water kayaking...as close as you can get around here, anyway.

It was a wonderful day on the water, and I was so happy to see and smell so much wildlife.

We truly live in paradise.

Connie Langmann, *GAEA Guides*, guided kayak nature tours: 239-694-8192



Everglades Monitoring

Continued from page 4

what the injected water is doing in the aquifer below.

The scientists also called for more flexibility in the overall plan in case ASR technology employed on such a large scale proves impractical or harmful to the environment. Dennis Duke, program manager of the ecosystem restoration for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, said plans are in the works that would address a restoration effort with fewer ASRs or none at all. "We committed six months ago to do a contingency plan if ASR doesn't work," Duke said. "We're just starting on that effort as a parallel to the regional (ASR) study." Duke said that plan should be complete by late next summer. It could include limited use of ASRs and more storage of water at the surface. And Peter Kwiatowski, lead project manager for the district on ASR projects for the South Florida Water Management District, said the study of effects on individual species includes indicator species that point to stress on an ecosystem. He said district officials need time to study the report and look for ways to put the panel's suggestions into practice.



UPCOMING OUTINGS

We are doing a series of "Getting to Know Your Watershed" Outings!

There will be a guided walk in the Estero Bay Buffer Preserve on **Saturday, 7 December 2002**, 9:00 AM – Noon: \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members.

On **Sunday, 12 January 2003**, 9:00 AM – Noon, there will be a guided walk of the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed (CREW), which has an assortment of habitats, beautiful wild flowers, panthers, birds, boars, and bobcats. \$3 for members, \$5 for non-members

Sunday, 2 February 2003 - Rookery Island Kayak Tour. Start time: one and a half hours before sunset, lasts around 2 hours. Visit an island that has 10,000 - 20,000 birds of many different species that roost every night. See them as they come flying in. \$13 for members, \$15 for non-members. All equipment provided.

Reservations are a must for all outings! Call Outings Chair Connie at **239-694-5513**.

OUTINGS

1. *Arrive 10 minutes before outing to get signed in. Every effort will be made to start outings on time. Please be prompt!*
2. *A small fee will be charged for every outing. All outings are rated EASY unless otherwise specified.*
3. **IMPORTANT!** *Call Leader first to be sure outing is still scheduled. You don't have to be a Sierra Club Member to come to an outing. Everyone is welcome!*

2003 - 2004 BALLOT

Each year, half of the Sierra Club Calusa Group Executive Committee is up for election to two-year terms. This year, Mike Andoscia, Karen Cartwright, Meg Hutchins, Connie Langmann, Patrick Nitch, Wendy Ohlweiler, Ellen Peterson, and Kathleen Sullivan are beginning the second year of their terms. The specific offices to be held by the elected officers will be determined by the Executive Committee on 9 January 2003.

Write-ins are welcome as there are usually more positions than Executive Committee members.

Please take this opportunity to vote!

Send completed ballots by 2 January 2003 to:
SIERRA CLUB, CALUSA GROUP
27063 ALLAN STREET
BONITA SPRINGS, FL 34135

TWO-YEAR TERM (2003 – 2004)	YES	NO
Bobbie Lee Hasty		
Shirley Sheehan		
John Swingle		

Write-in Candidate (*This could be you!*): _____



MEMBERSHIP FORM

- Yes, I want to be a member of the Sierra Club*
- Yes, I want to give a gift certificate.*

My Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Home Phone Number _____ E-Mail Address _____

I understand that a gift announcement card will be sent for my use. I've entered my name and address above and the recipient's name and address below.

Gift Recipient's Name _____

Address _____

City/State _____ Zip _____

Membership Categories

(Check One)	Individual	Joint
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$35	<input type="checkbox"/> \$43
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$60	<input type="checkbox"/> \$68
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$120	<input type="checkbox"/> \$128
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$19	<input type="checkbox"/> \$27
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$19	<input type="checkbox"/> \$27
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250

PAYMENT METHOD:

- CHECK MASTERCARD VISA

CARDHOLDER SIGNATURE

CARD NUMBER

EXPIRATION DATE

Contributions, gifts, and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax-deductible; they support effective, citizen-based advocacy and lobbying efforts. Your dues include \$7.50 for a subscription to Sierra magazine and \$1.00 for your chapter newsletter.

Enclose payment information and mail to:

SIERRA CLUB

P.O. Box 52968, BOULDER, CO 80322-2968

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Residents of Canada may remit in Canadian funds

The Sierra Club's Statement of Purpose:

To explore, enjoy, and protect the wild spaces of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment; and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives

General Meeting

Second Thursday of Every Month

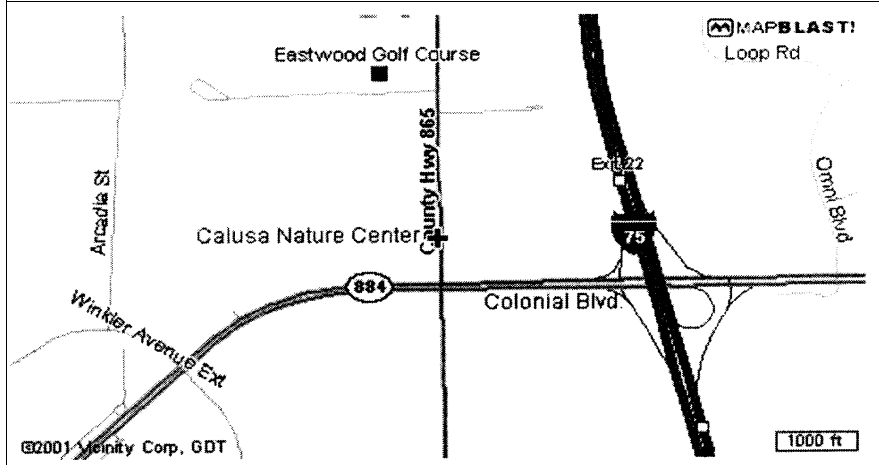
Calusa Nature Center Classroom

Next Meeting: 12 December 2002

6:00 – 6:30 PM Socialize and Snack

6:30 End-of year wrap up and planning session

Everyone Welcome!



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