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Calusa Digest



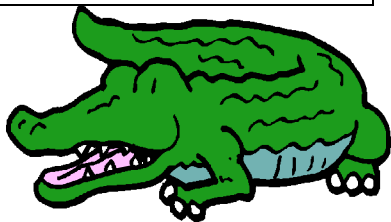
Vol. XXIV, No. 5

Serving Southwest Florida

September, 2002

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Want to receive notification of **Emergency Action Alerts**? Send your email address to: **bobbieleeahasty@aol.com**. You will be notified of events that require prompt action such as letters, phone calls, and email. See our web page: **www.naples.net/presents/calusasierra**



Environmental Groups Sue to Protect Wetlands

Jennifer Sergent

The Army Corps of Engineers ignored years of warnings and criticism (and four federal laws) in approving rock mining permits across 5,000 acres of sensitive Everglades wetlands, claims a federal lawsuit filed 20 August.

Three environmental groups filed the suit in U.S. District Court for the Washington, D.C. circuit in an attempt to have those permits revoked. The **Sierra Club**, the Natural Resources Defense Council and the National Parks Conservation Association also accuse the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service of ignoring its duties as the Corps' environmental overseer by allowing the permits, despite many documented concerns its officials had expressed about them.

The permits at issue are in an area of western Miami-Dade County known as the Lake Belt, a major component of the \$8 billion Everglades restoration plan Congress approved in 2000. The Lake Belt envisions turning two major mining pits into water storage areas once the miners are done there, in 35 to 50 years.

The environmental groups state in their suit that the Army Corps conceived the Lake Belt project in the face of warnings that the mines would destroy important habitat for endangered wood storks and Cape Sable seaside sparrows. The suit also quotes warnings that the porous limestone pits would cause massive water seepage from Everglades National

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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.

Please recycle this newsletter!

OUR NEW WEB SITE!



Calusa Group of Sierra Club is pleased to announce that we now have a new web site. The new site is presented through the guidance of Naples Free-Net especially for nonprofits. This means that no expensive equipment is required to keep the site updated and that the process is simple enough for the main participants to update their portion of the site. For example, Bobbie Lee can import her articles onto the Issues and Action Alert pages, Ryan can add outings to the Calendar and Trips pages, Shirley can update membership, and Patrick can update the Student page. Soon we will add a link from the old site to this new web site. For those without computers, you, too, can view the web site at your local library. One of the Microsoft founders has arranged for EVERY library to have computers and access to the web FOR FREE. So please don't be shy-take advantage of this offer. The librarians will be very welcoming and delighted to help you get on site and print material that you can use once you get home. Ready? Just type in **www.naples.net/presents/calusasierra** and you are there. Clicking on the menu on the left brings you to the page you want. Please check in with the web site every week or so for the latest news. Happy web surfing!



Constitutional Challenge to HB 813 Filed 14 August 2002

TALLAHASSEE - Representatives from civic, homeowner and environmental groups filed a lawsuit against the State of Florida and Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) Secretary David Struhs over a bill that silences citizens in critical environmental decisions affecting the state. The controversial anti-citizen enforcement and participation bill (SB270/HB819) was amended to the Everglades Bill (HB813) during the final hours of the 2002 Legislative Session. The main plaintiffs in the lawsuit are: the **Sierra Club, Florida Chapter**; Environmental Confederation of Southwest Florida, Inc. (ECOSWF); The Florida Wildlife Federation; Manasota-88; and Tom Reese. The groups are represented by a legal team that includes Tallahassee attorneys David Guest, Earthjustice; David Ludder, Legal Environmental Assistance Foundation (LEAF); Dean LeBoeuf, Brooks, LeBoeuf, Bennett & Foster; Dan Hendrickson, Public Interest Attorney; and Jacksonville attorney Warren Anderson, Anderson and Howell. "We're here today for those 103 community and environmental organizations who urged the Governor to veto this anti-citizen legislation," said Susie Caplowe, spokesperson for the Sierra Club and The Florida Consumer Action Network.

"The legislature passed this legislation for the special interests, and the Governor signed it as one of his three major environmental mistakes during the post-session approval of bills. We recognize the need for a permanent funding source for the Everglades and regret that this albatross, the anti-citizen enforcement/participation bill,

was hung around the neck of the Everglades," said Alan Farago, Everglades Issue Chair, Sierra Club Florida Chapter. "It's been a historic and sad year when the special interests and their legislators very deliberately shut the door on another avenue for citizens to be involved personally to help protect the environment," stated Pat Rose, spokesperson for the Save the Manatee Club. "The efforts of the lawsuit announced today is invoking the Florida constitution's 'single subject rule' to strike down Session Law 2002-261, which deprived citizens of their rights to protect their communities," summarized David Ludder, General Counsel LEAF, and one of the attorneys for the plaintiffs.

Among the people attending the news conference were: David Ludder, LEAF; Dan Hendrickson, Florida Consumer Action Network; Nancy Brown, Florida League of Conservation Voters; Pat Rose, Save the Manatee Club; Bobby Billie, Independent Seminole; Leon County Commissioner Bob Rackleff; Anita Davis, Past President, Tallahassee NAACP; Della and Chad Hanson, Tallahassee Green Party; Shannon Larson, Environmental & Human Rights Activists; Larry Block, Lake Carolyn Homeowners Association; Greg Patterson, President, Council of Neighborhood Associations (Tallahassee); Karen Woodall, activist.

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A Letter from the Chair

I am very proud to announce that one of our own is running for the state board for Sierra Club. Be sure to look in the next issue of *The Pelican* for John Swingle's name. He is a dedicated environmentalist on both local and national issues and will represent us well on the state level.

As you all know, our next meeting, to be held on 12 September, will be a planning session. I encourage everyone who is interested in environmental activism to attend. We have many issues facing us on the local level, and everyone has their place in the fight. Some of us are good public speakers and some of us are great at writing letters or sending emails; others are good at motivating new people to join us. Let's put our heads together and come up with a plan for the coming months. We need activists from Charlotte, Collier, Glades, Hendry, and Lee Counties. We have around 1700 members and only a small fraction of those are even on our action alert list. The action alert list is the most powerful tool we have to keep up with emerging issues; quick responses to issues on the local and state levels are the only way to truly be effective. To be added to the action alert list please send your email address to **bobbieleehasty@aol.com**.

IF YOU HAVE SUGGESTIONS OR COMMENTS PLEASE LET US KNOW. WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU! We are looking forward to meeting you at our Sept. Meeting! Look in our upcoming issues (and the new Web site) for information on our Second Annual Earth Day Festival. It will be held on 21 April 2003 at Koreshan State Park. Last year's event was a big success and we are planning to do it much bigger and better for this year.

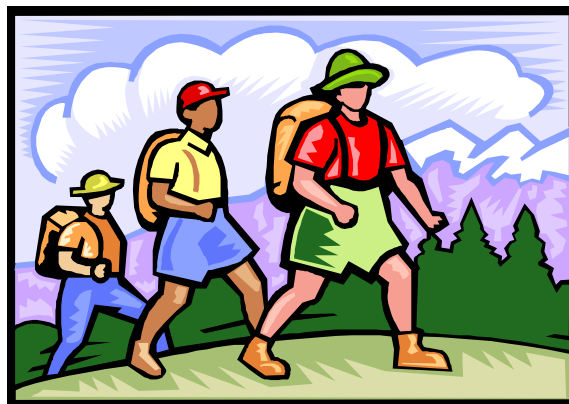
Upcoming Outings

Upcoming outings information can be found on the new web site: www.naples.net/presents/calusasierra

For more information on any trips contact Outings Chair Ryan Combs at **239-495-7962**. Remember, if you don't come out for the trips, who will?

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!*



34 Million Friends Campaign

Kathleen M. "Sulli" Sullivan
Florida Population Issue Chair

It isn't often we can stand together and make our voices heard. It isn't often we can "put our two cents in", literally, and make a profound statement of discord. It isn't often we can make an impact on the global cause of most of our local environmental issues. Today we have a chance to do just that.

Beginning in 1969, the U.S. showed strong financial support to the United Nations Population Fund (UNFPA). However, our support has decreased due to influence from anti-family planning groups. In 2002, Congress allocated \$34 million to the UNFPA. In January, President Bush froze the monies after allegations, made only by Population Research International, an anti-family planning fringe group, that the UNFPA supports coerced abortion in China. The truth is that none of the money allocated to this fund by the United States, as appropriated by Congress, can be spent in China. In addition, the UNFPA only funds programs in the 32 counties where China's one-child policy has been lifted. Indeed, the programs supported by UNFPA have been so successful, in the eyes of the Chinese government, that several more counties have voluntarily dropped the one-child policy and will be eligible for UNFPA funds in 2003. Independent teams of investigators, one hand-picked by the Bush Administration, were sent to China to investigate. All reported that UNFPA funds are not used in any abortion coercion or forced sterilization and only support voluntary family planning.

And yet in July the Bush Administration announced the United States would not be donating the \$34 million we promised to UNFPA. This was a profound mistake.



The monies would have gone to programs in 141 countries for the improvement of women's health, increasing the ability of women and men to choose the size and spacing of their families, improvement of birthing outcomes, and reduction in HIV infections. The irony is that the result of this reversal by President Bush, under pressure from those who are anti-abortion and anti-family planning, is approximately 2 million unwanted pregnancies, 5000 maternal deaths, and 800,000 abortions.

Fortunately, the extreme beliefs and agenda of a few are not the last word. A citizens' campaign to donate the \$34 million promised to UNFPA by the US is underway. We are asking those who are empathetic to the women, girls, and families of the world to send \$1 (or more!) to the US Committee for UN Population Fund to donate to the UNFPA in the name of the citizens of the United States. Peter Purdy, President of the US Committee for United Nations Population Fund, has called this effort "**an exercise in outraged democracy**". Please show your anger over the White House decision and your support for the women, girls, and families around the world. This is an opportunity to show the world that even when our government's actions don't show it, the people of this country do care about the rights and dignities of our brothers and sisters around the world. All funds will be directly transmitted to the UN Population Fund to ease the negative impact of the Bush Administration's misguided decision.

Please send your tax-deductible contributions to:

**34 Million Friends Campaign
US Committee for the UNFPA
220 East 42nd Street
28th Floor
NY, NY 10017**

Furry Math? Market Fails to Capture Nature's Value

Sharon Begley

Wall Street Journal, 9 August 2002

If you belong to the new discipline of ecological economics, to determine the worth of a wetland you might calculate what it would cost to construct levees and other structures to provide the flood control and storm protection that natural wetlands do. From that, you'd extrapolate that the world's wetlands are valued at \$4.9 trillion, the cost of replacing "nature's service" with technology. That's one way scholars, led by Robert Costanza, Institute for Ecological Economics, guesstimated nature's worth in 1997. They also calculated that coastal estuaries recycle nutrients (grabbing nitrogen out of the air and converting it into fertilizer, for instance) and perform other services to the tune of \$4.1 trillion per year. Forests provide services such as regulating climate and recycling nutrients worth \$4.7 trillion per year. All told, they valued nature's services at about \$33 trillion per year.

Some traditional economists responded.

As Paul Portney, president of the Washington, D.C. think tank Resources for the Future, told me, "Equating nature with its replacement value is seductive, but from an economist's perspective, a non sequitur. Something's economic benefit is determined by how much people are willing to pay for it."

The nature's services study was nevertheless a hit, judging by the 375-and-counting papers that cite it (compared with fewer than two citations for the average science paper), and by the books and journals it inspired. Now, in advance of the World Summit on Sustainable Development in

Johannesburg this month (10 years after the first Earth Summit in Rio de Janeiro), a team of nineteen researchers from Britain and the U.S. is weighing in on an equally controversial question: the relative values of developed and undeveloped land. Their conclusion in the journal *Science*: An intact ecosystem is worth 82% more, on average, than the same parcel clear-cut, drained, paved or otherwise developed in a non-sustainable way.

Some examples: A mangrove swamp in Thailand was worth 72% more when left intact to provide timber, charcoal, fish and storm protection than after being converted to a shrimp farm. A freshwater marsh in Canada was worth 58% more intact (thanks to hunting, angling and trapping) than farmed. A Philippine reef was worth 73% more when fished sustainably and providing coastal protection than when blast-fished. "In every case we looked at," conservation biologist Andrew Balmford of the University of Cambridge, England, said, "the loss of nature's services outweighed the benefits of development, often by a large amount."

This raises two obvious questions. If ecosystems are worth more intact, why are they being razed and paved? And surely it can't be true that leaving America the way the Europeans found it would make it worth more today than with its highways, railroads, factories and cities?

Dr. Costanza, who, with his Institute, moves to the University of Vermont in September, readily acknowledges that past conversions - turning Nebraska into grain central and Silicon Valley into tech heaven, for example - "benefited society as a whole." What's different now is that we're running out of nature. What's left has a higher marginal value, which market mechanisms fail to capture. No one collects money from those who benefit from the flood control a wetland

Continued on page 11

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Continued from page 8

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**DON'T FORGET TO VOTE IN THE
PRIMARY (10 SEPTEMBER) AND THE
GENERAL ELECTION
(5 NOVEMBER).**

**CONTACT YOUR STATE AND
FEDERAL REPRESENTATIVES TO
INFORM THEM OF YOUR OPINIONS
ON THE ISSUES! THEY CAN'T
REPRESENT YOU IF THEY DON'T
KNOW WHAT YOU WANT.**

**ADMONISH REPRESENTATIVES
WHO ARE VOTING AGAINST OUR
ENVIRONMENT, AND THANK THOSE
DOING A GOOD JOB, FOR OUR
PLANET, FOR OUR FUTURE!**

To check on the environmental record of our representatives, go to the League of Conservation Voters Web site:

www.capwiz.com/lcv/dbq/officials/

To check on the status of bills in the US Senate, go to:

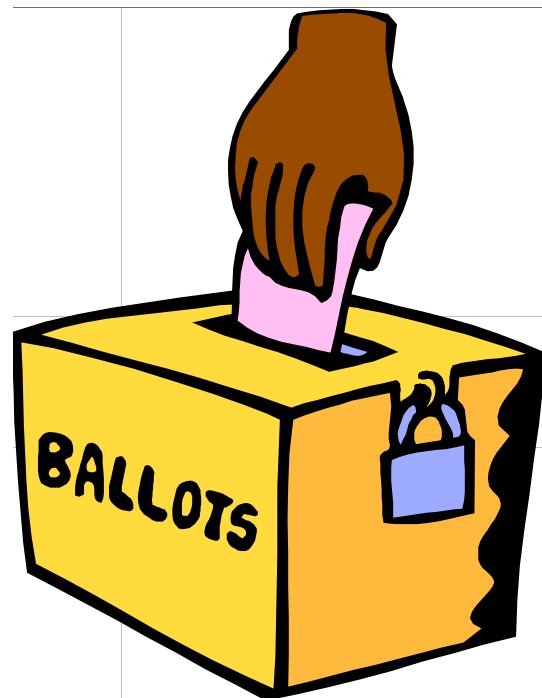
www.senate.gov/

To check on the status of bills in the US House of Representatives, go to:

clerk.house.gov/legisAct/votes.php

To check on the status of bills in the Florida Legislature, go to:

www.leg.state.fl.us/Welcome/index.cfm



General Meeting Speaker 14 November 2002

At our General Meeting at the Calusa Nature Center, Tom Wheatley, Southeast Field Organizer for the Alaska Coalition, will be presenting a slideshow exploring the beauty of the wild Alaskan rainforest.

This slideshow:

- Is an inspiring look at one of the most rare and biologically productive ecosystems on earth. Before a stunning backdrop of coastal mountains towering to 18,000 feet, overlooking hundreds of mist-shrouded islands, the Alaska temperate rainforest spans a thousand mile arc along the pacific coast. The Alaska rainforest boasts 12 million acres of ancient forest; including giant trees hundreds of feet tall and up to a thousand years old. It is also home to the world's healthiest remaining populations of grizzly bears, bald eagles and salmon.
- Explores the wonder of these landmark trees and wildlife, as well as the diverse communities and people who depend on the forest resources for their survival.
- Discusses the threats facing the nation's two largest national forests, the Tongass and the Chugach.

The Alaska Coalition is a coalition of over 600 conservation, sporting, and religious groups working together to protect Alaska's wild public lands.

They work to safeguard the health and wildness of Alaska's public lands from the tundra of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge to the Chugach and Tongass National Forests, the lush temperate rainforests that stretch from Kodiak to the Prince of Wales Island in Southeast Alaska.

See you there!



Upcoming General Meetings:

- 12 September: strategy session
- 10 October: round table on issues
for November elections
- 14 November: Tom Wheatley
- 12 December: end of year discussion
and strategy session

Everglades

Continued from page 1

Park, a contradiction to the notion of restoration.

And in its accusation that the Fish and Wildlife Service ignored its own previous warnings in not fighting the permits, the suit quotes the following statement from former Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt in 1999: "The conversion of the existing wetlands habitat within the Lake Belt area to deep, open-water lakes removes an extensive area of this critical wetland habitat from the system, replacing it with non-natural habitat of little or no value to the Everglades ecosystem."

Originally, the Fish and Wildlife Service and the Environmental Protection Agency were going to stand by their objections, said Brad Sewell, an attorney with the Natural Resources Defense Council. But after President Bush took office in 2001, "the will wasn't there." In its current form, Sewell added, the Lake Belt project "is a sheer act of environmental cannibalism. It destroys the wetlands we've pledged to restore."

Congress has not yet authorized the \$1 billion Lake Belt project. Nonetheless, rock miners already have permits to destroy 5,000 acres of wetlands, with the intention of obtaining more permits for at least 10,000 additional acres. Unless a judge blocks the permits, the mining will go on, whether or not Congress approves the used pits for use in the Everglades restoration plan. A Corps spokesperson declined to comment on the suit because officials had not yet had a chance to read the 44-page document.

But the Corps' former Jacksonville director criticized the plaintiffs, saying they were not present in the years when

the Lake Belt project was being crafted. "There was a lot of effort to bring all the interests together. There was an agreement on what would happen out there," said Terry Rice, a former Army colonel who now advises the Miccosukee Indian Tribe. Rice noted that the environmental groups that were present in the negotiations, Friends of the Everglades and Audubon of Florida, were not among the plaintiffs. He further explained the mine companies that own much of the Lake Belt property would have filed lawsuits if the Corps had denied the permits. "It would have been a taking, and huge amounts of money would have been paid," he said.

Instead, the miners agreed to dig mines in only half the area they originally wanted, and they made provisions to prevent water seeping from the Everglades. He also said the proposed mines are "nowhere near" the sensitive wood stork populations in the Everglades National Park. "In this case here, I think they found a reasonable and balanced solution," Rice said.

Yet the lawsuit states that in making its final decisions on the permits, the Corps violated the Administrative Procedure Act by failing to hold appropriate public hearings on the process to make everyone aware of what was going on. Barbara Lange of the Sierra Club is pessimistic that anything besides a lawsuit can remedy the situation. "They don't have a clue how to do this" as a restoration project, she said. "This is the miners getting away with it, I mean really, how do you think mining the Everglades is Everglades restoration?"

For more information, contact Bobbie Lee Hasty, Sierra Club Calusa Group Chair and member of the Sierra Club Everglades Committee, at 992-9061.

Furry Math?

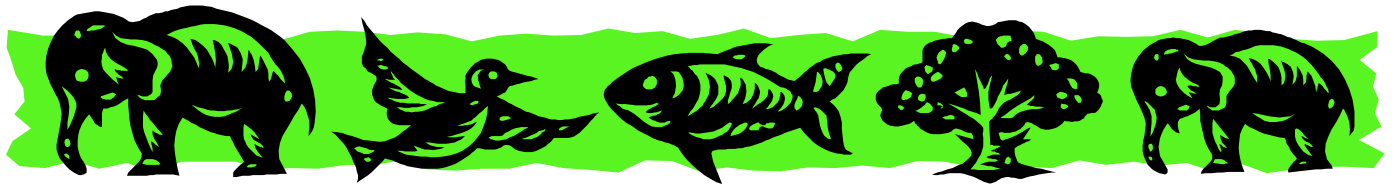
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provides, or the nutrient recycling a forest does. Such non-marketed externalities accrue to society but have no tollbooth attached.

"Every textbook says that the market is the most efficient way to allocate resources," says Dr. Portney. "But the market also fails, especially when it comes to public goods. If you could charge people for using nature, you might show that it's more valuable to preserve it than to convert it, but for now there's no way to capture those values."

In contrast, owners reap the value of development, collecting real money. In a nutshell, market failures help drive habitat loss. Although the benefits of conversion are often private, society bears the losses. "We've already done the profitable conversions," argues Dr. Balmford. "Developing what's left makes less sense, and the benefits of keeping ecosystems intact are much higher."

Since the 1992 Rio summit, Earth has lost an astonishing 11.4% (by area) of its natural places, this in a decade when the nations of the world supposedly cared. Efforts to save habitats to preserve species or mitigate climate change haven't been raging successes. Maybe denominating nature in cold hard cash will work better.



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

MEMBERSHIP FORM

Yes, I want to be a member of the Sierra Club

Yes, I want to give a gift certificate.

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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.

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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:

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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

F99QV 3303 -1

Residents of Canada may remit in Canadian funds

"Climb the mountains and get their good tidings. Nature's peace will flow into you as the sunshine flows into trees. The winds will blow their own freshness into you, and the storms their energy, while cares will drop off like autumn leaves."

-John Muir

General Meeting

Second Thursday of Every Month

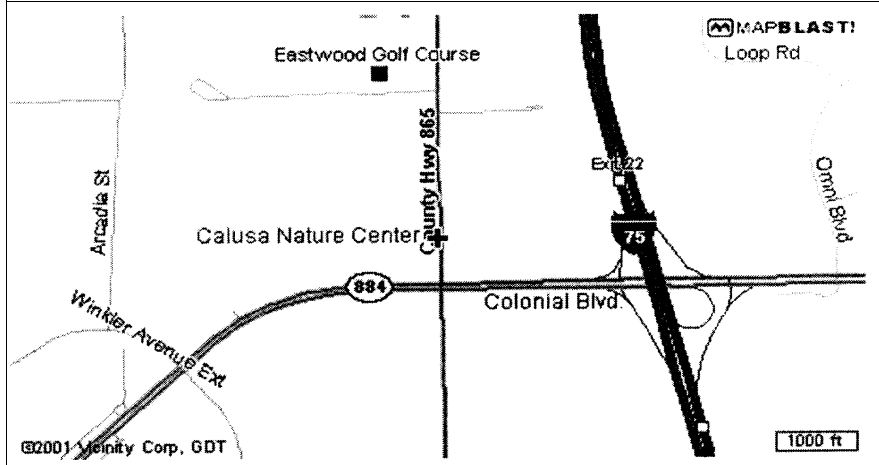
Calusa Nature Center Classroom

Next Meeting: 12 September 2002

6:00 – 6:30 PM Socialize and Snack

6:30 Executive Committee Strategy Session

Everyone Welcome!



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