



SIERRA
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Calusa Digest



VOLUME XX NUMBER 10

SERVING SOUTHWEST FLORIDA

DECEMBER, 1999

1999 Legislative Session

With less than 24 hours remaining the 1999 Legislative Session, we can report that this has been the best year for conservation in a decade. The Legislature is on the verge of completing the task that voters gave them with the approval of Revision 5—The Conservation Amendment. Today, the Senate passed and sent to the Governor the bill implementing the Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The bill creates the finest wildlife agency in America by transferring all programs relating to fish and wildlife, including marine endangered species to a new independent constitutional agency. Today, the House passed and sent to the Governor the Everglades Re-Study Bill. While it is not everything we would like, it sets into motion the state participation for the Everglades Restoration. Also today the House passed and sent back to the Senate for their approval Florida Forever. This bill gives constitutional protection to one million acres of conservation lands purchased under Preservation 2000. It also implements bonds for a \$300 million per year program to acquire endangered lands, restore degraded ecosystems, and protect water resources. Legislators also made commitments to come back next year and address the funds required to implement the Everglades Restudy.

Last November the environmental community won a significant victory with the passage of the Conservation Amendment. We are on the verge of implementing a program that fulfills the high expectations of the voters.
Clay Henderson

Outings Report

There are over 800 of you members in the Calusa Group, and we've only been getting about 1% for our outings. I know there are more of you who enjoy the great outdoors, or you would not be Sierra Club members.

SW Florida is blessed with some of the greatest diversity of plant and animal life in the country, and it's just waiting for you to enjoy it. We are having a dinner meeting on December 8th at the **Passage To India** restaurant in Bonita Springs, to discuss and plan some outings for the coming year.

Come on out and take part in this fun event. We need your ideas and input so we can tailor the outings program for you, the members!
Lynn Livingston, 269-6645

Executive Board Meeting

DECEMBER 6, 1999
7:00 P.M.

EVERYONE WELCOME!

CALL ELLEN PETERSON
992-5455
FOR DIRECTIONS

Index

1999 Legislative Session	1
Outings Report	1
Call to Action	2
Bioengineered Crops	2
The Forests Need Your Voice	3
Water Supply	3
Action Alert From Save the Manatee Club	3
Upcoming Outings	4
Tips For an Environmentally Responsible Holiday Season	4
Executive Committee	5
Voting for New Officers	6

Call to Action

Bioengineered Crops

Next week the World Trade Organization ministerial will be meeting in Seattle. We need your help. GREEN has been circulating a petition calling for a moratorium on the trade in biologically engineered crops (Bt corn, maize, etc.) We are demanding this moratorium to protect both biodiversity AND organic farming. If your group has not signed on yet, please do so immediately. Our deadline for this is November 29th.

In less than a month, over 200 groups from thirteen different countries have joined in this effort. The diversity of these groups represent the broad concern many have for the unknown impacts of Bt crops. In addition to environmental, consumer, and farming organizations, there is representation by scientific, medical, religious and student organizations. This petition has gained support from five different continents. From Australia to Canada, from Indonesia to Spain, from Argentina to India groups are demanding a change.

Help us send a strong message to the irresponsible corporations attempting to strong arm the WTO. Let them know we want biodiversity and organic production methods protected. Please consider signing your group on today.

Thanks,

Roger Featherstone

GREEN Director

PO Box 40046

Albuquerque, NM 87196-0046

(505) 255-5966 x102

fax, (505) 255-5953

rfeather@defenders.org

<http://www.defenders.org>

grnhome.html

To member nations of the World Trade Organization,

We, the undersigned groups, representing citizens internationally, call on member nations of the World Trade Organization (WTO) to place an immediate global moratorium on the trade of all bioengineered Bt crops. Genetically modified Bt crops (like Bt Corn) pose immediate threats to biodiversity (e.g. Monarch Butterfly) and organic agriculture. The effects of this dual threat remain shrouded in scientific uncertainty and precautionary measures must be taken. Trade in Bt crops is a global experiment, the consequences of which no one fully comprehends.

Genetically modified Bt crops powerfully underscore the urgency for ratification of a strong biosafety protocol. We are not calling on member nations of the WTO to negotiate the expansion of GMO trade, but to protect existing agriculture and biodiversity by imposing an immediate moratorium on the trade of this potentially dangerous production method.

Sincerely,

(Your Name Here)

THE REASONS WHY...

I. Bt Crops KILL Monarch Butterflies — Bt seeds are an untested bio-technology proven by scientists to kill Monarch butterflies (Lepidoptera: Danaidae) in their larval stage. Scientists agree Bt seed pollen may be equally fatal to other moths and butterflies - including endangered butterfly species internationally.

II. Bt Crops THREATEN organic farming! Bt crops will hamper the ability of organic farmers and gardeners to grow pesticide-free food. For decades, organic farmers have occasionally used Bt powders to control pests like the tomato horn worm. Genetically modified Bt

crops broadcast lethal toxins indiscriminately throughout the year onto millions of acres of Earth's farmland. Scientists, government, and industry, agree this will cause rapid immunity in pest insects, thereby eliminating an important tool for organic production and necessitate intensified use of pesticides.

III. Bt Crops could DAMAGE other vital links in the food chain!

Last year, Swiss scientists reported laboratory results showing detrimental effects of Bt corn on green lacewings, beneficial insects that feed on pests, including the European corn borer. Research from New York University indicates that active Bt toxins genetically engineered into Bt crops, including corn, may accumulate in soil, kill sensitive soil-inhabiting insects, and place soil ecosystems at risk.

IV. The Problem is SPREADING! While these Bt seeds remain untested, sales are growing rapidly and new varieties of Bt crops are being engineered continuously.

V. The World Trade Organization must not threaten the environment! By invoking the precautionary principle, members of the WTO can protect sustainability and diversity. This principle, imbedded in numerous international treaties, dictates that immediate precautionary measures may be taken to stop practices that raise threats of serious harm to the environment.

Calusa Digest is a publication of the Calusa Group of the Sierra Club, and is published ten times yearly.

Subscription is included with Sierra Club dues or can be obtained by non-members from the Calusa Group for \$5/year.

The Forests Need Your Voice!

We need your help again! Thanks to your previous action, President Clinton is proposing protection for America's last wild and scenic forests.

If this historic opportunity is to become reality, the Forest Service needs to hear from you.

Our forests continue to be threatened by roads and logging trucks. As expected, the timber industry and their allies in Congress will be fighting hard to stop this proposal.

From now until December 20th, we have the opportunity to state loud and clear that our forests need a strong protection policy. It is up to you to tell the Forest Service about the priceless value of our National Forests.

For the Forests, For the Future,
Rebekah

PS: For more information about this action, please visit <http://www.ourforests.org> or email me at rebekah@emediacy.org.

We STRONGLY encourage you to make edits directly to our sample letter below, and put the alert talking points into your own words. An individualized letter is worth ten computer generated letters. Of course, hundreds of unedited letters will still create a large impact, so please reply even if you don't have time to personalize the letter.

Mail to:

Senator Bob Graham

524 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

Senator Connie Mack

517 Hart Senate Office Bldg.
Washington, DC 20510

USDA Forest Service

PO Box 96090

Washington, DC 20090-6090

YOU MAY EDIT THE LETTER BELOW:

Dear Forest Service:

I applaud President Clinton's announcement that you will be preparing a roadless area protection policy. I urge you to protect the 60 million acres of remaining roadless wild lands in our national forests, which provide excellent recreational opportunities for millions of Americans, habitat for wildlife, and clean water for communities.

I urge you to adopt a policy that:

- Accords roadless areas strong, effective protection from all damaging activities, including logging, mining, and off-road motorized vehicles,
- Provides immediate and permanent protection for ALL roadless areas 1000 acres and larger in all national forests, including the Tongass National Forest in Alaska, and
- Does not defer protection of roadless areas to the forest planning process.

We all have a responsibility to protect these roadless, wild forests. Once they are gone, they are gone forever.

Water Supply

Fill out the DCA questionnaire on the restudy which will effect our water supply on the web site: DCA.state.fl.us

Also we have a great video and a slide show on the Everglades Restoration that we will go to any group to show. Call Karen Cartwright or John Swingle to make arrangements.

Munters of Ft. Myers released 222,515 pounds of pollutants into the air in 1997. KCS of Cape Coral was second with 37,492 pounds, Precision Econowind, Inc released 22,600 pounds; Dean Steel Bldgs, 18,599; Action Craft, 17,162; Jack Berry, 13,080; Etura Corp., 1,285; and Polymer Casting, Inc. was eighth with 1000 pounds of pollutants released.

Action Alert From Save the Manatee Club

For all Florida residents who are sick at heart over the rampant development occurring in all parts of our beautiful state, here is an opportunity to weigh in on the growth issues bothering you. The Department of Community Affairs (DCA) is offering an on-line survey where you can submit your opinions on how the state is managing growth. This is a very timely poll since the word is out that Governor Bush is directing his staff at DCA to look into ways to weaken the Growth Management Act, shrinking the state's role in growth management and giving more power to local governments. This is tantamount to going back to the time when there was no growth management in Florida!

You can be sure that the developers and other growth-related interests are going to be taking part in this survey, so its important that DCA hear from those of us who care about responsibly managed growth (or limiting growth or stopping growth – hey, its your survey, tell them how you feel!).

As concerned citizens of Florida, please take the time to go to the web page and fill out the survey. Of course it is anonymous. It is mostly multiple choice but there are several opportunities to add personal comments if you wish. Please be aware it is a lengthy survey and may take 30 minutes or more to complete. So set aside a little block of time for this important exercise. And please do so as soon as possible. The web address is: <http://www.dca.state.fl.us>

Outings

Dec 4-5 (Sat-Sun) Fisheating Creek Celebration. You're invited to celebrate Fisheating creek is now in public hands. Save our Creeks is planning a celebration at the old Fisheating creek camp ground on the banks of Fisheating creek (near Palmdale) on Sunday December 5. We will begin about 10 am, serve lunch from 12 'til 3 and enjoy. Save our creeks will provide bar B Q ribs, beans and drinks. You're invited to bring a dish to share. Come and canoe, kayak, birdwatch or just enjoy. When the campground opens at 9 o'clock, the Board of Save Our Creeks and board members of ECOSWF (our partners through the years) will be there to greet you. Optional camping on site Saturday night Call Ellen Peterson at 941-992-5455 for details.

Dec 8 (Wed) Outings Committee Meeting and Dinner at Passage to India Restaurant. 7 pm. Meet at the Passage To India restaurant located on Bonita Beach Rd, between US 41 and the beach. The restaurant is on the south side. We'll have dinner (ala carte) and then discuss ideas and details for outings for the year 2000. Come join us and bring your ideas! Call Lynn Livingston at 941-269-6645.

Dec 18 (Sat) Barefoot Beach Preserve Hike. 10:30 am. Meet at the last Parking lot in the Barefoot Beach Preserve (Collier County Park). From I 75, take exit 18 (Bonita Beach Road) west to Barefoot Beach Blvd, just before the road take at the gulf. Turn left on Barefoot Beach Blvd and go past the guard house without stopping, through the residential area to the

ranger station at the entrance to the Preserve. This looks like a private road but it's not. \$3 entrance fee or Collier County Park Pass. We'll hike a mile along the nature trail, and then turn and hike back along the beach. Bring water for the hike. Restaurant stop afterwards at Dolly's on Bonita Beach Rd. call Lynn Livingston at 941-269-6645.

Dec 18-19 (Sat-Sun) Overnight camp at Flamingo Campground, Everglades National Park. We'll car camp at this beautiful area and take day hikes on the nature trails. Options are canoeing/kayaking in the bay. Bring your own gear and food, and we'll have a group campfire to swap stories. Limit '12, reservations required by Nov 1st, with \$10 deposit. Call Don Kolson at 941-437-8740.

Dec 21 (Tues) Winter Solstice Full Moon Hike at Six Mile Cypress Slough, 7 pm. We'll hike about a mile and listen for owls and other nocturnal creatures. Bring a flashlight and your imagination, as we celebrate the Winter Solstice. From I 75, take exit 22 and go west ½ mile to Six Mile Parkway. Turn left (south) and drive three miles. Turn left (east) on Penzance Boulevard to enter facility. Meet in parking lot. Call Lynn Livingston at 941-269-6645.

Jan 1 (Sat). Lover's Key Hike. 10:30 am. Come celebrate the new year with us on the beautiful trails at Lovers Key State Recreation Area. We'll hike about 3 ½ miles, and then head for the beach for a swim. Bring water and lunch, if desired. Lover's key is 11 miles west of exit 18 on I-75, or south from Ft Myers Beach. Leader Lynn Livingston 269-6645

Tips For an Environmentally Responsible Holiday Season

There are over 250 million Americans today. The Holiday season is when many retailers make up to 50% of their annual sales. If we commit to making our Holidays more environmentally sensitive we can have a huge impact. Being creative will help restore the joy of the holidays overrun by consumerism.

Some things to keep in mind; watch out for excess packaging, if it is not recyclable it will end up in the landfill. The Christmas Tree is a poignant symbol of how we treat the environment. We take what we want and when we are done we throw it away. Instead of a dead tree why not buy a live tree? How about a native Loblolly Pine? Slash Pine? Red Cypress? Think about the choices you make while shopping, "Can I add to the thought-fulness of this gift by going the extra effort to keep the environment in mind.

Here are some ideas on how you can make your Holiday's a little greener:

- * Save wrapping paper off large packages and reuse on smaller presents.
- * Wrap presents in Sunday Funnies.
- * Wrap presents in plain Funnies and have children color them.
- * Buy only recycled paper wrapping paper.
- * Buy only recycled paper Greeting cards.
- * Use the Holiday cards you received last year as your own Holiday Post-Cards this year (Just cut off the personalized side and address it as a post-card)
- * Only light up the Christmas Tree in the evenings when you can

Continued on page 5

appreciate it.

* When you are shipping presents, substitute popcorn (unbuttered) or newspaper for packing material or reuse Styrofoam peanuts.

* Save the Styrofoam peanuts you receive and give it to the local Mailbox Etcetera store.

* Buy a live native tree for your yard; decorate it for the Holidays then plant it for the New Year.

* If you go the cut tree route, compost your tree. Check with your local municipality for their composting program.

* String your tree with popcorn or cranberries just add them to your compost after the holidays.

*Decorate your tree or gifts with pinecones, shells, flowers and other found objects. Use old ribbons rather than tinsel

* Use the Internet to shop rather than driving.

*Keep the catalogs you might use (Throw them in a box in the garage) and recycle the rest.

* Call the catalog companies and ask to be removed from their list(s).

* In planning a party, use reusable utensils, plates, napkins and tablecloths instead of disposable ones.

*Give native plants, they bring the added gift of wild life into your yard. Wild Coffee will do well indoors indefinitely.

* Give gifts that are: durable, not overpackaged; energy efficient; wind up or use rechargeable batteries; recycled (antiques, reconditioned bicycle)

* Make or Bake something yourself. There is nothing like the personal touch of a hand-made gift.

For those hard to buy for folks:

* Membership in your or their favorite environmental organization.

* Organic cotton clothing. (25% of the insecticides used in the World are applied to cotton)

* Hemp clothing (It is not just kid's ware. There are fine silk products made from hemp as well.)

* Plant a tree in their honor.

*Reusable linen napkins, table clothes

* Reusable canvas shopping bags (good for Holiday travel to tote gifts about)

* Adopt a Manatee for someone. Save the Manatee Club (800) 432-5646 or www.savethemanatee.org

* Bird feeders with single seed feed (not mixed seeds)

* Bird houses

* Bat houses

* Movie or Theater or Sporting tickets

*Sierra Club Books (800) 935-1056, 10% discount to Members. To order from SIERRA CLUB BOOKSTORE, 85 Second St., Second Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105-3441, USA, or FAX it to 1-415-977-5793.Or www.sierraclub.org.

* "Most of all, use this holiday to think about your everyday habits and actions to reduce waste 365 days a year. Individual actions can make a huge difference in our future" — Jackie Prince Roberts, EDF senior scientist.

*Buy gifts from environmentally responsible companies like Patagonia and the Nature Company. Did you know that 25% of the world's pesticides are used on one crop? COTTON! The following companies offer environmentally responsible products via catalogue:

Earth Preserv, upscale bath & body products 800 9earth9

Continued on page6

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SIERRA CLUB, CALUSA GROUP
<http://www.sierraclub.org/chapters/fl/calusa/index.htm>

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Wes Wilkins

At-Large 352-5601

Voting for New Officers

Each year, half of the Executive Board of the Calusa Group is up for election for two year terms. This year, Cullum Hasty, Bobbie Hasty, Fay Phillips, Gary Beardsly, and Shirley Sheehan are beginning the second year of their term.

Write-ins are welcome as there are usually more offices than officers. The specific offices that the elected officers will hold will be determined by the executive committee at the meeting on January 4, 2000.

Please take a moment and vote. Send completed ballots to Sierra Club, P.O. Box 345, Estero, FL 33948.

Up for election for the next two years are:

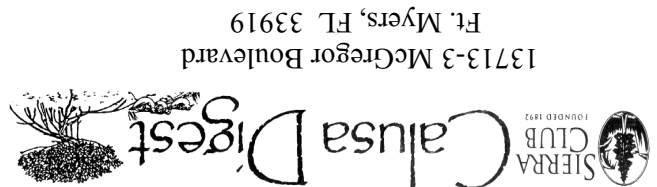
	Yes	No
Karen Cartwright		
Don Kolson		
Lynn Livingston		
Ellen Peterson		
John Swingle		
Wes Wilkins		
Joyce Wyman		

Write-in candidate:

Continued from page 5

- Eco Zone, organic cotton, toiletries, hemp 800 874 2310
- Real Goods, "solutions for sustainable living" 800 762 7325
- Harmony, napkins to toys to furniture 800 456 1139
- Reflections Organics, organic cotton clothing 800 852 9273
- Fisher Henney Naturals, organic cotton apparel 800 343 6639
- The Natural Baby Catalog 800 388 2229
- Berea College Crafts, hand carved & hand crafted 800 347 3892
- Patagonia, organic cotton and recycled polyester 800 638 6464
- Planet Natural, home, lawn, garden, pets 800 289 6656

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