

From: Debbie Matthews
To:
Date: 12/3/2008 12:04 PM
Subject: Causeways - December 2008



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Greetings!

Don't forget, December 8th is our Holiday Dinner Fund-raiser! See below for more information.

We have some great new campaigns for the entire State of Florida. Please, read below, and see which campaign you feel strongly about, and give us a call or email to see how you can help. We are at the ground stage, so we need help planning, organizing and getting the word out.

Are you going out in nature over the Holiday Season? If so, send me your photos of your outings, and I will print the best ones in the upcoming newsletters.

Have a safe and wonderful Holiday Season.

December /2008

General Meeting - Upcoming Speakers

General Meetings are held the 2nd Monday of each month at the Coconut Grove Sailing Club. Social Time is at 7:00 PM. Club news and updates start at 7:30 PM, and the speaker starts at approximately 8:00 PM.

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December 8th - 7:00 PM - Coconut Grove Sailing Club - 2990 South Bayshore Drive

Every year the Miami Group transforms our December meeting into a Holiday Pot Luck Celebration of friendship, accomplishment and the environment. Put it on your calendars! This year's location, the Coconut Grove Sailing Club, 2990 S. Bayshore Dr. The date is December 10th, at 7:00 PM. There will plenty of food, good people, and music. Come celebrate with old friends or meet new ones.

The Sierra Club Miami Group will provide turkey. Please bring a vegetarian side-dish or appetizer to share that will serve 8-10 people. Please bring an index card with the ingredients to place beside your dish.

The cost is \$5 if you bring a dish.

If you don't bring a dish, the cost is \$10.

Bring your own utensils, (plate, knife, fork, spoon and cup), or it will be \$1 for cutlery, cup and plate.

This year's organizer is Debbie Matthews (treehuggerdeb@yahoo.com), 305-766-8035. Please call or email to volunteer to help set up, or to help clean up, collecting money, setting up utensils, etc.

Also, we need tablecloths! If you have any that we can borrow, please let me know! Thanks!

Hope to see you there!

Upcoming Speakers for 2009:

January's Speaker: David Lotker from Miami-Dade College's Environmental Center

February's Speaker: T. J. Marshall - Ocean Conservancy

THANK YOU MATT SCHWARTZ

A big thank you to Matthew Schwartz, Conservation and Political Chair from the Broward Group. He gave us a very enlightened presentation on Big Cypress, and the damage being done by off-road vehicles. If you would like to help with this conservation effort, please contact Matt, at 954-764-2739.

Governor Crist's Clean Car Rule Adopted

Victory Confirmed!

The Florida Environmental Regulations Commission adopted Governor Crist's clean car rule on December 2nd by a 6-1 vote.

Some highlights of today's action:

The auto industry vigorously pursued a weakening amendment that would have effectively gutted the proposal. Their amendment failed by a 3-4 vote, setting the stage for final passage.

Jon Ullman and our lobbyist Sue Mullins helped save the day at a crucial point in the debate. Just before lunch, commissioners were grilling a Florida Department of Environmental Protection (DEP) staff member on the economic impacts of the proposed rule. When the staffer couldn't answer the questions, Ullman and Mullins persuaded the DEP legislative director to intercept Department Secretary Mike Sole at the airport and have him postpone his flight and return to the ERC meeting. Sole did a masterful job answering commissioner's concerns on economic impacts and, more importantly, showed his resolve to get the clean car rule adopted.

Sierra Club generated more than 1,200 grassroots emails and calls to Governor Crist, lobbied commissioners and organized a Florida clean car show/media event to help secure this win. Major coalition partners included Earthjustice, Audubon of Florida, Florida Wildlife Federation and Environmental Defense.

Next steps:

- 1) Thank you notes to Governor Crist and Florida DEP Secretary Mike Sole and ERC Commissioners;
- 2) Develop strategy for major fight on adoption of the rule by Florida Legislature in April and May.
- 3) Secure C-4 resources need for step 2) above.

Thanks again to each of you for helping to make this victory possible.

-- Frank Jackalone

SIERRA CLUB FLORIDA ANNOUNCEMENT

At their recent Planning Conference, Sierra Club Florida Leaders identified the top four conservation goals and five organizational goals for the club for 2009. The Conservation Campaign Committees and Task Forces now need to be formed. These campaigns are crucial to the Sierra Club work in Florida, and we will be forming a search team to recruit the skills and talent needed to make each of them succeed. You are invited to be part of this work.

2009 CONSERVATION CAMPAIGNS

Waste Minimization (Establish Statewide Deposits and Ban Plastic Bags):

Dwight Adams (adams@phys.ufl.edu)

Establishing Wildlife Corridors:

Gayle Reynolds (reynoldsdesign@comcast.net)

Protect Critical Coastal and Marine Environments:

Cathy Harrelson (cathy_bam@earthlink.net)

Comprehensive Transportation Alternatives:

Emily Casey (ecasey21@hotmail.com)

2009 ORGANIZATIONAL TASK FORCES

Expanding the Volunteer Base:

Linda Bremer (linda@bremer.net)

Developing New Leaders:

Al Donn (adonn@tampabay.rr.com)

Increasing Local Donors:

Rudy Scheffer (rudy@adventuresworldwide.com)

Expanding Community Partnerships:

Craig Diamond (cjdiamond@comcast.net)

New Communications and Education:

Betsy Grass (betgrass@ix.netcom.com)

For more information about any of the above committees, you can email the leader listed, or Craig Diamond (cjdiamond@comcast.net), or Betsy Grass (betgrass@ix.netcom.com).

Please consider volunteering your time and expertise to one of the committees, and please let us know of your interests by January 7, 2009.

WHY FLORIDA CAN'T LET GO OF SPRAWL

The Suburbs March On

By ALAN FARAGO

Some people are burying their cash in backyards. The wealthiest developers in Miami are burying their cash in a plan to build a small city in 2014 at the far western frontier of Miami-Dade County edging toward the Everglades called Parkland.

Into the headwind of the biggest crash in housing values since the Depression, the owners of Parkland are winding their way through Florida's planning approval process. To understand how poorly the public interest is served by Florida's growth rules, you need patience and a willingness to follow the worst forms of development through its initial stages to conclusion.

Today, Parkland is 1,000 acres of farmland outside the Urban Development Boundary, purchased by a group of politically influential developers at sky high prices during the late stage of the housing market bubble. Today they are seeking a zoning change to move the urban growth curb obstructing their development. If they get their way, a small city of 18,000 residents will grow when the market revives. And revive it will, as it was, if they have anything to see about the billions of dollars unleashed to build infrastructure and help crippled economies. After who know best if not local authority?

Of the Parkland supporters scrounged up to appear at County Hall yesterday, one spoke exactly to why bad development encroaching to Everglades "restoration" must be stopped: the young woman who may or may not have lived in the area testified, "There is nothing out there." In other words, there was nothing there before the new suburbs. Now that we are there, with our two cars, satellite dishes and Mediterranean roof tiles, give us something more than row crops for neighbors. Not vegetables, or tropical fruit, or avocado groves; give me parks and schools for my children, and movie theaters to escape for all of us.

Today, only a few miles from Parkland is some of the most egregious examples of suburban sprawl in the nation. People stuck in cars, in unremitting traffic, living in flood plains underserved by infrastructure, with mounting fees and taxes, tend to think that the maladies of modern life are the inevitable costs of progress; they are not. They are the function of deliberate decisions socializing the cost and risk of bad planning in order to maximize the profits of developers and the entire supply chain of the real estate industry; from the lowest rung of local zoning to the highest ether of Wall Street where laying off risk provides an opportunity for wealth generation through the securitization of debt, including projects like Parkland and dozens of others.

Parkland was the big show in the main ring of yesterday's Planning Advisory Board (PAB) meeting in downtown Miami. The board is comprised of political appointees, representing the thirteen single member districts in Miami-Dade County. They are appointed by the county commission, and in their demeanor and performance represent the composition of the unreformable majority of the county commission; whose incumbency and insularity is as guaranteed as AAA rated debt by Moodys so long as the campaign finance system is dominated by interests who profit from zoning decisions in farmland; interests, in other words, like Parkland.

The PAB is only one step on the way to approval, but an important one leading to a vote by the full county commission in a few weeks.

By the time the Parkland proposal was heard, it was nearly one in the afternoon; most of the assembled crowd at County Hall had been in their russet movie-style seats since early morning. Few had a clue what they were bearing witness to, nor apparently did the mainstream media in attendance.

Their presence was for the public record; for the former, in the eventual case of lawsuits against the plan, and for the latter--the media--, another chance to miss reporting the origins of the housing debacle.

Scattered throughout, a handful of civic minded and conservationists convinced--with good reason--that putting 18,000 more residents in the position to demand more flood control is another nail in the Everglades coffin, whose nails already weigh in aggregate more than the coffin itself. None, however, mentioned that 2014 is within one mortgage cycle of sea level rise predicted for South Florida.

The public hearing unfolded as an entirely pro forma routine, a charade of well-rehearsed places. Why should such a predetermined outcome take hours to complete, when judging from the result, the votes of the board members could have been as easily submitted scribbled on post-it-notes right away?

Parkland is only a few miles from Everglades National Park, the centerpiece of the largest environmental restoration effort in history. Already, \$8 billion has been spent on various pieces that may or may not connect up to anything that looks like a tangible result, depending mostly on whether big industrial-scale projects like Parkland or a massive "inland port" planned for western Palm Beach County take root in the landscape before anything resembling restoration takes place.

A day earlier, at a meeting in Tavernier at the head of the Florida Keys a meeting of Everglades agency staffers allowed a reporter to write, "The first eight years of a two-decade schedule to restore the Everglades and Florida Bay have produced few tangible changes, experts acknowledged Tuesday." Not that any of the Parkland developer have much to boast of, of their own industry's tangible results in the past eight years.

If the record of the last eight years is bad for the Everglades, it is actually worse for production home builders like those assembled under the corporate partnership of Parkland. The entire business model for sprawl has disappeared, vanished in the flames of a financial crisis. What the last eight years and previous decades in places like Parkland disclose are the drainage canals supported by Congress and farms and land speculators and property rights activists and new homeowners, oblivious to the lost record of natural history, taxpayers logging countless, unquestioned hours stuck in traffic, left with infrastructure deficits following the march of tarmac, of strip malls, office parks, and gated communities westward. The few and the lucky banked a lot of money on the back of such results in Florida, Arizona, in California and Colorado; the fast growing regions now at the epicenter of crashing housing markets.

Lacking any other idea how to reclaim their investment, Parkland's owners are pushing forward on a wing and a prayer that what doesn't work in 2008 will rise Phoenix-like in 2014.

The PAB meeting took hours to complete, with approval assured by the developers' lobbyists who watched the proceedings on live video feed; Ramon Rasco, former organizer of the Homestead Air Force Base fiasco and chairman of US Century Bank, Sergio Pino, Ed Easton, both Bush loyalists, and Rodney Barreto, Governor Charlie Crist's appointed chair of the Florida Wildlife Commission. All, members of good standing in the Latin Builders Association,

the South Florida Builders Association, the National Association of Homebuilders, the Chamber of Commerce, and appealing charities.

Parkland is being called a "green" development. But it is "green" the way that a chameleon is green in the grass. It is green by folding its nature to camouflage its real interests. At this point in nation's narrative, being green is a good way to play into the mainstream without attracting attention to the fact that the very developers who used politics to inflate the toxic housing bubble in Florida need another tactic to pump the air back into ether.

County planning staff-- all good and solid professionals -- advised the Planning Advisory Board to deny the project. But the minds of the appointees had been made up long before the meeting began, never mind what the professionals had to say in objection. When the public hearing was closed it was clear that the appointees minds had been closed long before it even began.

After all, even if the 18,000 future residents never materialize, or materialize only in small numbers, someone will need to do their accounting work, the real estate deeds and titles, someone will need to lay the water pipe, and if it's not me--the thinking goes-- then there are always other government agencies whose approval is more necessary than mine.

It didn't used to be this way, in Florida's growth planning regime. In the late 1990's, the developer driven Florida legislature approved the following damaging change to Florida law: allowing major projects like Parkland, called "developments of regional impacts" or DRI's to proceed at the same time and on the same permitting path as changes to the local jurisdiction's master plan. The way it had been was to require the details of the DRI to be disclosed to the public first, through a series of public hearings and planning thresholds. Only after the details had been thoroughly disclosed was the developer, then, allowed to apply for a change to the local zoning and master plan map.

Now, the development industry is "allowed" to police itself through the permitting process; assuring in the early stages like the planning advisory board meeting that all the details will be ironed out through consultations and in collaboration with dozens of government agencies-- though it is known full well that once the political process of development approval is set in motion by affirmative votes, all the rest is muscle.

The planning board member representing the district in question, Jay Sosna, offered a motion to "deny and not transmit", that would have had the effect of shutting down Parkland. Sosna tried to alert his colleagues on the dais to the burden of congested roadways in the area, the plight of commuters who spend up to three hours a day in cars commuting twenty miles to work downtown and back at night, but his words dropped like a stone in a well. The motion to deny and not transmit failed on a count of 7-3. A second motion, by Al Maloof, to "approve and transmit" was quickly approved by the same margin. It was over.

The matter is headed to a public hearing on December 18th at the full county commission. The outcome is likely to be approval or the developers would not be marching forward. The only drama left is whether the Parkland will emerge with a margin of victory to override a mayoral veto, by Miami Dade Mayor Carlos Alvarez.

It is dispiriting to see how these predetermined outcomes rule the day, even in the teeth of the worst housing market crash since the Depression.

The only frisson during the entire session occurred after the public hearing had closed, when a representative of the planning department stepped forward to offer an analysis of the alarming rate of foreclosures in the county. It was a point that several of opponents had emphasized from the speaker's podium, to refute the need for more housing, hence no need to permit another city closer to the Everglades. Tens of thousands of foreclosures dot Miami's urban landscape, within the Urban Development Boundary; why build more until all the available housing is absorbed by the marketplace?

The developer's main argument--faulty statistics by county planners in assessing available housing stock to the year 2018 --is wrecked by the volume of foreclosures and abandoned homes in Miami Dade. This moment of reality intruding was more than the Parkland lobbyists could bear.

You had to be in the front row to witness what happened, when county staff introduced a matter off the meticulously planned script for the proceeding, planned by a dozen highly paid lobbyists, lawyers, engineers and planners. It was as though an Indian had stepped off the Reservation. Suddenly, the lobbyists began squirming. Jeffrey Bercow, the developer's lead lawyer/lobbyist, standing watch at the podium began stiffening in several directions at once, attracting the attention of his allies on the dais. The chair of the Planning Advisory Board, compliant to a fault, quickly shut down the offending voice, cutting him off less than a minute into his explanation, in mid sentence.

In the end, not even a Depression could obstruct the approval of more suburbs edging to the Everglades.

The end game for Parkland may be predicted by events unfolding in an administrative law court room, with respect to two 2005 applications to move the Urban Development Boundary; the county commission approved, the mayor vetoed, the commission over-rode, the state of Florida rejected, and in a few weeks those applications are headed to court and possibly, later, to the 3rd District Court of Appeals where they would be heard by a panel of judges appointed by the governor.

Here is the bottom line: the Miami-Dade County Commission is being used as a cudgel to beat up on the office of the governor, lead today by the amiable Charlie Crist, and the state planning agency. Notwithstanding Crist's eternally sunny disposition, the enmity is the smoldering remnant of Jeb Bush's two terms as governor, largely supported by Miami-Dade's developers like the owners of Parkland.

But times changed. The lead corporate partner of Parkland is Lennar Homes, a shrunken production home builder leading the charge to Congress, grousing for subsidies and bailouts. Lennar and its private partners are determined to party on like it was 2005, with taxpayers help. It used to be called the free market.

There is no better argument for Florida Hometown Democracy--a citizen's petition initiative to amend the Florida constitution giving voters a choice and vote on projects like Parkland-- than spending a few hours listening and

watching the Kabuki Theater that passes for growth management in Florida. But the owners of Parkland hear the drumbeat, and if they have their way--and if bankruptcy doesn't come first--Parkland will be on the books and grand fathered before voters have a chance.

Corcovado: A Diamond in the Rough



Considered the crown jewel of national parks and biological reserves across Costa Rica, Corcovado is Costa Rica's hidden treasure. National Geographic has called Corcovado National Park 'the most biologically intense place on Earth.' With at least 13 different vegetation types ranging from Montane forest, Cloud forest, Jililo forest (palm swamp), Prairie forest, Alluvial plains forest, Swamp forest, Freshwater herbaceous swamp, and Mangrove forest, Corcovado's richness in diversity is only superseded by its importance as a biological corridor between North and South America.

This huge 42,469 - hectare park with 8 distinct habitats has more than 400 species of birds, 116 amphibians and reptiles, 139 mammals, and the largest concentration of scarlet macaws in Central America. However, problems have existed. Up until 1960, the park was undisturbed. Afterwards, illegal clear-cutting, poaching, and gold-mining, became widespread, causing severe erosion in the rivers and streams. In 1975, the park was established as a government-administered park. Although today illegal clear-cutting and gold-mining has been reduced, poaching not. The victim of current poaching, the Jaguar and White-lipped peccary populations have been drastically reduced by 85% in the last 5 years. Moreover, the past illegal clear-cuts have been concentrated on the lowland tropical forest, where the richest biodiversity exists. Today, what is left is too small to support the original natural biodiversity.

Reinvigorated efforts have begun again to reestablish these areas with regeneration programs and anti-poaching law enforcement. Cousins of the Jaguar like the Ocelot, Margay, Jaguarundi, and Puma have been luckier. Their habitat has been less affected by these impacts. So too have been the 4 primate populations: Geoffrey's Spider Monkey, Central American Squirrel Monkey, White-faced Capuchin, and the Mantled Howler. Moreover, Corcovado is only one of two places in the country that has Squirrel Monkeys and the only park in the country that harbors all 4 primates. Other species like the Three-toed Sloth, Northern Tamandua, Silky and Giant Anteater are common sights as well as

the Red-eyed tree frog, Glass frog, and the Enamel-bright poison-arrow frog. Moreover, Baird's Tapir and the Harpy eagle can only be found in this area within Costa Rica. Other animals include herbivores such as the Red Brocket, Agouti, Tayra, Kinkajou, and the crab-eating skunk.

Whether hiking through the wet and muddy trails of her green and emerald forests during rainy season or trekking through her hot and humid canopy during dry season, Costa Rica is gorgeous to visit at all times of the year. However because Corcovado is a rain forest, the best time to visit are during her driest months of January - April. The dry season is officially from December to April. The following are wildlife watching opportunities along her trail system: Sirena Trail: Open and constant crashing of waves covers the sound of noisy walkers. White-faced Capuchin, Red-tailed Squirrel, Collared Peccary, White-nosed Coati, Northern Tamandua. Birds: Scarlet Macaw, Black hawk, Frigate birds, and Brown Booby

San Pedrillo Trail: Playa Llorona is a nesting area for Leatherback, Olive Ridley and Green turtles. In addition, Ocelots, Jaguars as well as birds like the Scarlet Macaws, Black hawk, Frigate birds, and Brown Booby.

Los Patos Trail: Lowland rain forest. Attracts birds like the Curassow, Chestnut-mandibled Toucan, Fiery-billed Aracari, Turquoise Cotinga, Rufous Piha, Trogon, Hummingbird, and Wood creeper. Primates and White-lipped peccaries can also be seen.

Along Rio Sirena: the Heron, Ruddy Turnstone, Western Sandpiper, American Crocodile, 3 Toed Sloth and the Bull shark.

*Our tours will range from 4, 7, 10, and 13 days and must contain at least 4 per group.

Next Tour dates to Costa Rica:



January 16, March 28 and April 6, 2009

Contact: Elston Raimundo Chavarria

www.latinamericanadventuresllc.com

raimundochavarria@yahoo.com

Phone: 954-662-1539

Thank you

A big thank you for all the dedicated Sierra Club Volunteers that manned our table for the Ramble.

From Alison, Education Outreach Community Coordinator, Fairchild Tropical Garden:

I want to thank each of you, and your volunteers, for your part in this past weekend's Ramble Festival. We appreciate your efforts to inspire environmental awareness and action in our community, and know that our visitors benefited from your presence. I hope that you enjoyed the weekend!

Many thanks,
Alison

If you want to help for future festivals, we have more coming up, please contact Maria at miami-enviroed@florida.sierraclub.org.

MIAMI GROUP 2008-2009 OUTINGS SCHEDULE

MIAMI GROUP OUTINGS INFORMATION

Our outings are listed as Leisure, Moderate, or Strenuous. Be realistic about your physical condition and the degree of challenge you enjoy. Come ready to paddle, bicycle or hike and share the work. There are no passengers on our outings, only participants. Family trips are open to everyone. Once you have made a reservation, we ask that you make a serious commitment to attend the trip. Cancellations are detrimental to our program. Our outings leaders are unpaid trained volunteers.

Camping trip fees typically include food, transportation, canoes and campground fees. Trip participants need to furnish their own tents, backpacks, sleeping bags, and personal gear. Because of changing costs, outing fees listed may be changed at the opening of the trip.

If you are interested in a trip, call or e-mail the trip leader and ask for details or come to the signup table at the general meetings. Reservations open at the general meeting three months in advance of the trip. At the leader's discretion, reservations close one week before the date of the trip. Please sign up early for planning purposes. All reservations must be accompanied by a non-refundable deposit. Make all checks payable to Sierra Club Outings. Please write the name and date of your trip on your check and include your phone number. Deposits are \$10 on trip fees of up to \$100 and \$20 on trips over \$100. Fees on trips of \$15 or less are to be paid in full with your reservation. Full payment is due 30 days in advance of the trip. Please send all payments to the trip leader.

If you must cancel, call the leader or assistant leader as early as possible. If you cancel 30 days or more in advance, your deposit will be refunded. If you cancel less than 30 days in advance, you lose your deposit. If you cancel 7 days or less in advance, you will forfeit all fees at the discretion of the leader.

2008 - 2009 Miami Group Outings Schedule

December 2008

December 13 - Everglades National Park "101" Day Walk. Introductory visit and "walk-hike" sampler in the 'Glades for beginners and refresher for veterans and guests. We'll preview our experience with film, displays and visiting art show at the Coe Visitor Center then stroll the Anhinga Boardwalk Trail and nearby Gumbo Limbo Trail followed by a visit to the Pinelands area for a gourmet lunch (included) and walk an unimproved trail there. Time and weather permitting we'll visit Pa-hay-okee Overlook boardwalk. Each trail less than one mile long. We'll look for gators, birds, turtles, fish, maybe a snake or two and bugs in season. Leisure. Limit 10. Cost \$20. Please email: Leader Kaatje Bernabei, kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net , 305-223-6551 and Assist: Alan Nowell, mrhitnmiss@aol.com 305-253-4250.

January 2009

January 10 - Everglades National Park "101" Day Walk. Introductory visit and "walk-hike" sampler in the 'Glades for beginners and refresher for veterans and guests. We'll preview our experience with film, displays and visiting art show at the Coe Visitor Center then stroll the Anhinga Boardwalk Trail and nearby Gumbo Limbo Trail followed by a visit to the Pinelands area for a gourmet lunch (included) and walk an unimproved trail there. Time and weather permitting we'll visit Pa-hay-okee Overlook boardwalk. Each trail less than one mile long. We'll look for gators, birds, turtles, fish, maybe a snake or two and bugs in season. Leisure. Limit 10. Cost \$20. Please email: Leader Kaatje Bernabei, kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net , 305-223-6551 and Assist: Alan Nowell, mrhitnmiss@aol.com 305-253-4250.

January 31 - Florida Trail/Big Cypress Day Hike. Hike the famous orange-blazed Florida Trail within Big Cypress Preserve. We head out wet or dry north from Oasis Ranger Station just off the famous Tamiami Trail way west of civilization. Put on your mud boots, pack your lunch in a day pack and grab your walking stick for this sometimes muddy adventure. Please email: Leader Kaatje Bernabei, kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net , 305-223-6551 and Assist: Alan Nowell, mrhitnmiss@aol.com 305-253-4250.

February 2009

February 7 - Shark Valley Moonlight Bicycle Trip. Leisure. Limit 18. Cost: \$15 members, \$20 non-members.

Leader: Ken Smith, 305-758-3121, e-mail: kpsmith@gate.net. Asst: TBA.

February 14, 15, 16 - Ocala National Forest Camp/Hike/Canoe. Camp and recreate in beautiful Ocala National Forest. Camp, transportation, canoe rental, camp fees and most meals included. Camp in the pines, day hike a trail, swim in the spring, moderate canoe down Juniper Springs Run and back to camp for campfire and camaraderie. Moderate. Limit 8. Tentative cost: \$150 members, \$175 non-members. Email: Leader Kaatje Bernabei, kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net , 305-223-6551 and Assist: Alan Nowell, mrhitnmiss@aol.com 305-253-4250.

February 28 - Everglades National Park "101" Day Walk. Introductory visit and "walk-hike" sampler in the 'Glades for beginners and refresher for veterans and guests. We'll preview our experience with film, displays and visiting art show at the Coe Visitor Center then stroll the Anhinga Boardwalk Trail and nearby Gumbo Limbo Trail followed by a visit to the Pinelands area for a gourmet lunch (included) and walk an unimproved trail there. Time and weather permitting we'll visit Pa-hay-okee Overlook boardwalk. Each trail less than one mile long. We'll look for gators, birds, turtles, fish, maybe a snake or two and bugs in season. Leisure. Limit 10. Cost \$20. Please email: Leader Kaatje Bernabei, kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net , 305-223-6551 and Assist: Alan Nowell, mrhitnmiss@aol.com 305-253-4250.

March 2008

March 7, 2009 - Florida Trail/Loop Road to Oasis Ranger Station Day Hike. Come slosh with us north from the southern terminus trailhead of the Florida Trail (at Loop Road) past Robert's Strand to Oasis Ranger Station on Tamiami Trail. Orchids, bromeliads, dwarf cypress, giant sword ferns. Rough, wet, beautiful and remote. Potentially strenuous 7.7 miles for the fit, experienced hiker. Limit 6. Cost \$15. Email: Leader Kaatje Bernabei, kaatjebernabei@bellsouth.net , 305-223-6551 and Assist: Alan Nowell, mrhitnmiss@aol.com 305-253-4250.

South Florida Group Outings

December 20 - Hypoluxo Scrub Ecowalk near Lantana. Take a break from the holiday hustle and bustle with a leisurely hike in a beautiful natural area. Our walk on the nature trail will take us past many rare plants and the burrows of several threatened gopher tortoises that thrive in this 97-acre preserve. More info can be found at www.pbcgov.com/erm/natural/natural-areas/hypoluxo-scrub/. Leisure to moderate. Limit 15. FREE. Sabrina Carle, 561-732-4486, Carles@bellsouth.net.

January 10 - Ecowalk at Seacrest Scrub in Boynton Beach. We will walk, with frequent stops to look, listen and absorb, for about 1½ hours. This natural area has changed quite a bit since the controlled burn in 1996 and three hurricanes. Bring your water, and binoculars. There are no facilities at this natural area. The Seacrest Scrub is located on Seacrest Blvd, one mile south of Bethesda Hospital in Boynton Beach. FREE. Leisure but we will walk in

sand. Limit 10. Lisa Hanley, 561-732-9578, lisa.hanley@Juno.com.

January 18 - Urban Canoe/Kayak in the Intracoastal Waterway near Lake Worth. We'll explore the artificial islands created north of Bryant Park in Lake Worth. Bring your own canoe/kayak. FREE. Moderate. Limit 20. Ron Haines, 561-964-1995, RonaldHaines@bellsouth.net

January 24 - Hypoluxo Scrub Work Outing near Lantana. Under the direction of the Palm Beach County Environmental Resource Management team, we will remove exotic plants and trash from this urban nature preserve in Hypoluxo. Wear closed shoes and long pants. Hat and sunscreen highly recommended. Snacks, tools and work gloves will be supplied by ERM. More info can be found at www.pbcgov.com/erm/natural/natural-areas/hypoluxo-scrub/. Pre-registration required. Limit 20. FREE. Moderate or Strenuous tasks available. Sabrina Carle, 561-732-4486, Carles@bellsouth.net

Friday & Saturday, March 13 & 14, 7 PM to 7 PM - Yes, this is a 24-hour event! **Muir Trek™ through J. W. Corbett Wildlife Management Area.** This sunrise to sunset journey, conducted in the "here and now," emphasizes the Muir-inspired qualities of zest, celebration, joy, and adventure. The focus of the Muir Trek is on the individual in the natural world, not the group. Group bonding is not emphasized on a Muir Trek. Instead, the day is accented with leader inputs which include readings from John Muir's journals and which help the participants explore their own perceptions and experiences in nature. More info about Corbett can be found at http://myfwc.com/recreation/jw_corbett/default.asp. We will camp at the Everglades Youth Camp and spend the day Saturday exploring the natural area. Moderate. Limit 10. \$30. Joan Hourican, 561-306-2462, hourican@fau.edu.

March 21 - Shark Valley in Everglades National Park for a 15-mile bike ride. Link: <http://www.florida-outdoors.com/9trail-sv.htm> Bike rentals are available. Lots of wildlife to be seen and a tower to climb halfway through with a terrific view of flat Florida everglades terrain. We'll find somewhere tacky and funky for lunch afterwards and then head home. Shark Valley is about an hour and 40 minutes from Lantana. FREE except for bike rentals and park admission. Moderate. Limit 19. Ron Haines, 561-964-1995, RonaldHaines@bellsouth.net.

March 28 - Public Transportation Adventure and Mangrove Park Ecowalk in Boynton Beach. Explore the mangrove system along the Intracoastal waterway and hopefully see migrating birds from the short walking trail and boardwalk. More info can be found at www.boyntonbeach.com/points/mangrove/index.html. Meet your leader at the Boynton Tri-Rail station and we'll take the free trolley to the park at 9:46. This is a great opportunity to explore a natural area via public transportation! After the walk, we will have lunch at a local restaurant (at your own expense) and then return to the Tri-Rail station via trolley. Leisure. Limit 10. FREE. Sabrina Carle, 561-732-4486, Carles@bellsouth.net.

Environmental Meetings and Happenings Around Town

Sierra and Beer - December 16th - at Titanic Brewery - 7:00 PM

All welcome, 21 and older will get a free award-winning local micro-brew beer thanks to Titanic Brewery. Come socialize and talk about all things green.

5813 Ponce De Leon Blvd

Coral Gables, FL 33146

(305) 668-1742

(Right next to the University of Miami Baseball Field)

<http://www.titanicbrewery.com/>

Friday, December 5 through Sunday, December 7 Flow: For the Love of Water. Irena Salina's documentary investigates what experts label the most important political and environmental issue of the 21st century-the world's water crisis. Salina builds a case against the growing privatization of the world's dwindling fresh water supply with an unflinching focus on politics, pollution, human rights, and the emergence of a domineering world water cartel. Admission is \$6 for all University of Miami alumni, faculty, and staff, and is free for students. General admission is \$8. The film screens on Friday at 9 p.m., Saturday at 2 and 6 p.m., and Sunday at 4 and 8 p.m. For more information visit, www.cosfordcinema.com.

Friday, December 5 through Sunday, December 7 Whaledreamers. With the current concerns over global warming and the future of humanity seemingly hanging in the balance, comes a story of hope, awakening, and reconciliation. More than 15 years in the making across five continents and oceans, Whaledreamers (produced by Julian Lennon) is the heartfelt story of the return of an aboriginal whale-dreaming tribe from the edge of extinction, and the equally long journey of the whales-not only to survive the slaughter, but to engage the human race into waking up in time. Admission is \$6 for all University of Miami alumni, faculty, and staff, and is free for students. General admission is \$8. The film screens on Friday at 7 p.m., Saturday at 4 and 8 p.m., and Sunday at 6 p.m. For more information visit, www.cosfordcinema.com.

**Earth Learning & Voice of the Earth
Weekend Workshop: Deepening our Connection to Earth**

Deepening our Connection to Earth

The Work That Reconnects, intensive weekend workshop and camp-out

December 13 & 14, 2008

This powerful two-day intensive, based on the work of eco-philosopher, Buddhist and deep ecologist Joanna Macy, explores our intimate connection with the world around us and the common threads that weave us together in the web of life.

Through a combination of experiential group activities, meditation and discussion, this work deepens our understanding of ourselves and the roles we play as participants in this shift to a life-sustaining society, honors our common emotions, and creates a sacred space to acknowledge fear and to explore the depth of our compassion and creativity.

As we learn to recognize the depth of our interconnectedness and interdependence to everything and everyone around us, our sense of self expands and awakens in solidarity. This work offers a profoundly transformational experience, bringing us an enhanced awareness of our connection to life.

Workshop will begin 9 AM Saturday, December 13, and will conclude Sunday late afternoon, December 14.

All participants are expected to attend both days, including camping.

Don't miss this life-changing event!
Limited to 20 participants. Register by December 6th.

For any questions, contact Val Silidker
Val@TheVoiceoftheEarth.com or 954-562-4981



Last Saturday of each month - EarthSave Potluck dinners

Call below for more information.

Free to EarthSave members and first-timers - \$5 for non-members
Bring a vegan* dish that serves 8-10 and your own plate & utensils
(\$1 eco-fee for not bringing your own place setting)
We welcome everyone no matter what your dietary preference

*Vegan means free of all animal products: no meat, fish, eggs, dairy,

honey, hydrogenated oils or chemical additives

Not sure what to bring? We suggest organic green salad or fresh fruits

EarthSave Miami
305-228-1116 · miami.earthsave.org
A local Chapter of EarthSave International

Contact Info for Sierra Club Miami Group

Chair/Newsletter Editor: Debbie Matthews - treehuggerdeb@yahoo.com

Vice Chair: Barbara Lange

Secretary:

Betsy Grass

Treasurer: Margarita Borda

Conservation: Mark Oncavage - 305-251-5273

Education: Maria Papazian- 519-0877

ICO: Mark Walters - mark@icomiami.org

Outings Chair: Jim Gross-JMGross3013@aol.com

Outings Sec: George Fedorko - 305-254-1716

Political Chair: Kent Harris Robbins

Ads: Georgia Guerra georgiapg@msn.com

Meeting Coordinator: Ken Smith - 305-758-3121

Board Members: Barbara Lange, Betsy Grass, Debbie Matthews, Kent Harris Robbins, Margarita Borda, Maria Papazian, Mark Oncavage, and Stephan Mahoney

Please feel free to forward this newsletter to your friends, family and colleagues. Also, do you want to contribute to the newsletter? Share your nature photograph(jpg format please)? Email them to me, and I will put them in!

Debbie Matthews
Miami Sierra Club - Newsletter Edition

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