



Suwannee-St. Johns Group

Sierra Club

Newsletter

Published monthly except June and August from Gainesville, Florida

VOLUME 34 • NUMBER 3 • March 2004

Forests Caught in the Revolving Door

BY SVENN LINDSKOLD

Most people, not only dedicated environmentalists, treasure a walk in the woods as a stress-reducing, head-clearing retreat to the complex wonders of nature.

But only 5 percent of native forests still stand in the U. S. We all understand that from first settlement of the continent by Europeans, the forests have served as a major source of resources for development and big profits.

These days, forestry provides a model of reckless exploitation of natural resources and attendant corruption in the abuse of public lands. The U.S. Forest Service, the

Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Wildlife Refuges, the State of Florida and its Water Management Districts all allow forestry on public lands – some wise, some not so wise. As an example of how bad it can get, in Alaska’s Tongas National Forest 400-year-old hemlock, spruce, and cedar are sold to big timber companies for less than the price of a cheeseburger.

What’s more, the public foots the bill to build the access roads to those beauties!



These facts come from a slim 2003 book by Derrick Jensen and George Draffan (with a foreword by that most wonderful global environmentalist, Vandana Shiva). *Strangely Like War: The*

see FORESTS, page 5

Alachua County Forever

This month’s program will be on the Alachua County Forever program and will be presented by the program manager, Mr. Ramesh Buch.

Alachua County Forever is a land conservation program. Through this program, Alachua County seeks to acquire, protect and manage environmentally significant lands, protect water resources, wildlife habitat, and natural areas suitable for resource-based recreation.

On November 7, 2000, Alachua County Voters passed the bond referen-

dum that allowed this program to begin. The referendum passed with 60 percent of the popular vote.

Mr. Buch will update us on lands that have already been acquired by the county and what plans are being made for those lands. He will also discuss the land acquisition process and how lands can be nominated for purchase.

Suwannee-St. Johns Sierra Club was very active in getting this referendum passed in 2000 and it will be rewarding to see what the fruits of our labors are. Don’t miss this exciting program!

For more information go to the ACF website at http://environment.alachua-county.org/Land_Consevation

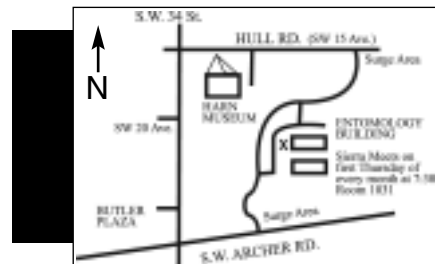
GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, March 4, 7:30 PM

Nematology/Entomology Building on the UF campus
(Just east of the Performing Arts Center. Turn right off
Hull Road on to Natural Areas Road.)

**ALACHUA COUNTY
FOREVER**

RAMESH BUCH
ALACHUA COUNTY FOREVER PROGRAM MANAGER



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Personal Success in the Environmental Millennium

BY DAVID AUTH

I quote from a fact sheet provided at a February 10th talk at the University of Florida given by Werner Fornos, President of the Population Institute in Washington, D.C. and winner of the 2003 United Nations Population Award. This is the short version of why we have entered the Environmental Millennium and its attendant crises.

"We live in a world of over six billion people, which grew in 2000 by nearly 80 million. 97 percent of these births occurred in the poorest countries.

"Three billion young people will enter their reproductive years within this generation. Thus, a child born in 2000 can expect at the age of ten: 600,000 square miles of the world's forests disappeared, one-fifth of the world's plant and animal species extinct, deserts claiming an area equal to the size of the continental United States, air containing considerably more carbon dioxide, many more lakes and fish destroyed by acid rain, and a great deal more agricultural land disappeared, with one million acres lost in 1999 in the U.S. alone."

How can you be personally "successful" as an adult in the Environmental Millennium?

First, you must continually learn more about environmental matters.

Second, you must have an internal value system which urges you to do something.

Third, you must have the time to do something. Perhaps I am "preaching to the choir" in this column, but if that were completely true, our group would be formidable in its effectiveness, with many more leaders than our Executive

Committee and a few others. I often fail to follow my own advice, but these eleven values still make a lot of sense to me, and I do try to follow them:

- If you have one child or more, make sure you fulfill all your responsibilities as a parent as your first priority.
- Reduce your personal materialism, which does not mean reducing your quality of life.
- Practice freedom of religion and choose one which fits you or create your own.
- Volunteer your time to at least one non-

governmental organization. Get active in an NGO which is structured to allow you to quickly take a leadership position.

- Understand that accumulation of wealth is not the measure of success, but rather what you do to improve the world around you.
- Vote for candidates who understand the environmental crisis and act accordingly.
- Live a healthy lifestyle, so your body does not desert you, forcing premature abandonment of your chosen commitments.
- Practice lifelong financial responsibility, because it makes helping others more feasible.
- Always treat every person with whom you communicate with respect.
- Design a personal environmental plan which fits your personality and skills. Improve it incrementally as you learn more.
- Don't get discouraged and give up because of the magnitude of life's problems, environmental and otherwise. Collectively, we do make a difference.

CHAIR'S



CORNER

THE NEXT SIERRA CLUB MONTHLY MEETING IS THURSDAY, MARCH 4.

Visit the National and Local Sierra Club Websites!

National: <http://www.sierraclub.org> • Local: <http://www.gatorsierra.org>

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E-MAIL TREE

Please contact Kristina Jackson at 372-2464 by phone or by e-mailing kristinajackson@cox.net if you would like to assist with the Sierra Club e-mail tree.

FOLDING PARTY

Interested in hosting a newsletter folding party? Contact Scott Camil at 375-2563

Suwannee-St. Johns Group Sierra Club Newsletter (UPS 317-370) is published 10 months a year, **except June and August**, by the Suwannee-St. Johns Group Sierra Club, 1024 NW 13th Ave, Gainesville, 32601. Non-member subscription rate is \$5.00. Periodicals Postage Paid is paid at the Gainesville, FL 32608 post office. **Postmaster: Send change of addresses to Suwannee- St. Johns Group Sierra Club Newsletter, c/o The Sierra Club, Member Services, P.O. Box 52968, Boulder, CO 80328-2968. Send both your old and new addresses and a Sierra address label, which contains your membership number. PLEASE ADDRESS ALL GENERAL CORRESPONDENCE FOR THE SUWANNEE-ST. JOHNS GROUP OF THE SIERRA CLUB TO: P.O. BOX 13951, GAINESVILLE, FL 32604.**

Protecting Florida's Springs

BY JIM STEVENSON

Those of us, who live or work in spring recharge areas in north and central Florida, unknowingly contribute to the pollution of our springs.

If we are to save and restore our magnificent springs, each of us must take responsibility for our own pollution. We must reduce the nutrients finding their way to the groundwater beneath our homes, farms, and businesses and reduce our use of water. The sources of the nutrients that are contaminating spring water are fertilizers from lawns, golf courses, pastures, and croplands; and human and animal wastes from septic tanks, wastewater

sprayfields, dairies and poultry operations.

Water Quality Protection: The maintenance of each lawn makes a difference. Reduce the use of fertilizers and pesticides and use only slow release fertilizer. Insure that your septic tank and drainfield are properly maintained.

Encourage the county and city commissions to make land use and stormwater decisions that will safeguard the groundwater flowing to our springs. Encourage landowners to protect sinkholes from dumping. Direct stormwater away from sinkholes.

Spring Flow Protection: Our groundwater is not limitless. Use less water. Encourage the water management district to protect the historic flow of our springs from pumping.

Take a child to see a spring. Thank you for taking responsibility for your own pollution.

VOLUNTEERS NEEDED

We need volunteers to table at 3 upcoming events:

1. The Spring Garden Festival at Kanapaha Botanical Gardens, Sat., Mar. 20th, 9:00 a.m. - 6:00 p.m., Sun., Mar. 21st, 10:00 a.m. - 5:00 p.m.

2. Nature Fest 2004 at Fanning Springs, Sat., April 17th, 8:00 a.m. - 4:00 p.m.

3. 2004 Farm and Forest Festival at Morningside Nature Center, Sat., May 1st, 8:30 - 6:00p.m., or Sun., May 2nd, 8:30 - 6:00 p.m.

The more help we get, the more events we can participate in, so please call Sherry Steiner at 352-375-2563.

Spring is in the Air

BY KAREN GARREN

Spring has sprung and the exterior decorating is peaking. Garlands of yellow jessamine festoon fences, maples' red samaras are vivid in every wetland, winter-drab fields are brightened by chickasaw plums' snowy clouds of flowers. Violets peek from the woods' floor and, in sunny lawns, dandelions sport plumey heads. Skies are filled with the warbling of sandhill cranes as the migrant subspecies head north. Titmice "peter-peter" and cardinals "what-cheer". Check the Alachua Audubon website www.flmnh.ufl.edu/aud/calendar.htm for spring birding outings. Check out the Native Plant Society's website www.fnps.org/ for excursions highlighting spring wildflowers.

The azaleas should be in full flower for Ravine Gardens State Park's Azalea Festival, scheduled for the weekend of **March 13-14** this year. Nearer to home, the annual Kanapaha Spring Garden Festival runs **March 20-21**.

March 13-14, overnight

backpack/hike to Sweetwater Branch near River Rise, O'Leno State Park. Regional Outings Coordinator Rudy Scheffer had a schedule conflict so I will be leading this outing. The Santa Fe River drops underground and forms a natural land bridge where it is crossed by the historic Bellamy Trail. There are many interesting karst geologic features. We will hike through some restored red oak/long leaf/hickory uplands habitat, one of Florida's most endangered ecosystems, and also through scrub and cypress lowland habitat. Now is the best time to visit, tick & chigger season is not far off. To participate, contact Karen Garren, at 352-371-0008, email iluvfla@gru.net.

March 27 and March 28-29, Cumberland Island National Seashore, Georgia day trip and overnight camping. All the ferry reservations have been spoken for but not paid for so there is a waiting list

for cancellations. If you're the adventurous type, drop in at the St. Mary's Park Service Office. There are usually a few no-shows, particularly during weekdays.

April 9-19, Shenandoah National Park, Virginia. A little hiking, a little mushroom hunting, and a lot of hot chocolate and oatmeal: what more could one ask for? If interested in participating contact Karen Garren (above). Dates flexible.

March 27 Outing Leader Training at Upper Tampa Bay Park. Learn how to become a Sierra Club outing leader. For information contact Rudy Scheffer at 727-726-8375.

April 3-4 Wilderness First Aid (WFA) course in Gainesville. Cost is \$75 for the 16 hour course. Includes book and three year certification from the American Health and Safety Institute. Instructed by UF staff. For another \$25, the CPR certification class follows later in the week. Contact UF Student Health Care Center at 392-1161 x4283 for more information.

All SSJ outings are educational and open to the public.



To advertise in the newsletter, contact Kristina Jackson at 372-2464.

The Sierra Club Launches Its: True Cost of Food Campaign

BY MICHAEL BECK

Sierra Club, Angeles Chapter

The United States, with less than five percent of the world's people, consumes over 25 percent of its resources.

And that's not even the bad news: the really scary news is that the rest of the planet is scrambling to catch up with our lifestyle. If all 6.4 billion people did so, we'd need four more Earths to accommodate them.

In response, the Sierra Club Sustainable Consumption Committee has launched a new, national grassroots campaign. It focuses on an aspect of American consumption that's probably the easiest to change: our diet. American food production has a huge impact on the environment:

- Agriculture is the largest source of water pollution in the U.S.
- Our industrialized farming poisons the soil, encourages pests, and destroys biodiversity.
- Three-fourths of the land in the continental United States is devoted to agriculture or grazing, and much of the cropland produces grain for cows, not people.



The Sierra Club expends enormous resources fighting the symptoms of unsustainable agriculture, from water pollution and toxins in the food chain to loss of habitat and species. What the Club has not previously done is to seriously challenge the root cause of the above: American food consumption patterns. By and large, our diet is so unsustainably produced that it jeopardizes not just the environment but also our health. Our diet completely ignores the true cost of food.

That's about to change. The Sierra Club's National Sustainable Consumption Committee has launched the "True Cost of Food" campaign to make the Sierra Club a leader in sustainable eating. Our goal is to encourage people to eat:

- Low on the food chain
- Organically produced food
- Locally grown food



The first prong of this campaign is building a nationwide network of activists who will target local markets to provide more food that is organically grown, locally produced, and reasonably priced. These goals are practical and doable. There already exists a pent-up public demand for organic. Rapidly growing numbers of local farmers want to give up their dependence on poisons. And the Sierra Club already has the ideal structure and experience to galvanize this movement.

The second prong is educational. We're producing brochures and fact sheets for activists, and articles for local newsletters. We're completely redoing our website: www.sierraclub.org/sustainable_consumption. This campaign has one special advantage: it shows environmentally minded people how they can immediately start making a big difference in their everyday lives. That's empowerment. And empowered people are already halfway to becoming activists. Consider the value of this one fact to someone who is already trying to conserve water: it takes 2,500 gallons of water to produce a pound of beef. This equals a five-minute shower every day for six months!

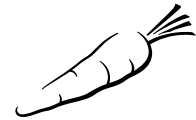


The third prong is a new kind of Sierra Club outing: "Sustainable Tuesdays." On Tuesdays, we encourage everyone (not just activists) to make a fun-filled effort to live more lightly on our planet. It might be a group outing for a prearranged sustainable meal at a local restaurant or an intimate sustainable potluck family dinner. We could turn the thermostat up or down,

depending on the season. We could walk or use alternate transportation when possible. Maybe we could hike in the park with a friend instead of going shopping. The main thing is to make it fun!

Our "True Cost of Food" campaign can potentially bring a whole new class of people into the heart of the Club. There are thousands of environmentally sensitive folks who don't gravitate to our more traditional efforts on land use, pollution, and so forth. But they will warm up to a campaign like this. We can find countless allies in the following communities:

- The organic food and vegetarian movements
- The health community



- The simple-living movement

The Club's traditional work on forests, habitat, clean air, and so forth must be strengthened. Few things will help more than addressing a major root cause of these problems, the wasteful and excessive consumption in our society.

That's where the Sustainable Consumption Committee comes in. Switching consumer demand to low-impact food is our current focus area, but we will also educate on sustainable wood production, energy use, water consumption, and related issues. Furthermore, we plan to talk about the Madison-Avenue-driven, buy-and-consume craze that has virtually become our national religion.

We'd love to have you get involved at any level of activity you're comfortable with. Please contact our volunteer coordinator, Gordon LaBedz at glabedzmd@aol.com. In Gainesville, you can contact Anna Peterson at alp@religion.ufl.edu or 352-337-2957.

Are you a Club activist with too much on your plate? Here's an easy way to help! You probably know someone who has an interest in sustainable food or belongs to one of the above-mentioned communities. This person ought to be delighted to find out the Club is working on this. Encourage them to contact Gordon LaBedz.



FORESTS, from page 1

global assault on forests (Chelsea Green Publishing Company) is 140 pages of text crammed with facts and indignation that should be truly inspiring to environmental activists – with references, a bibliography, and a list of action groups. A great way to spend an evening! Luckily, I happened upon it at the library; the list price for the paperback is \$15.

When we hear about forests, we usually hear about giant redwoods, the spotted owl, and the Pacific Northwest. Yet in North Central Florida we are in the midst of some of the most concentrated forestry operations. My crude estimate from forestry publications is that there are 6 to 7 million acres of forests in our region. We also have huge pulp processing plants that flavor our air and contaminate our streams (the Fenholloway River, Florida's only river classified for industrial use, absorbs Buckeye Mill's effluent.)

Florida DEP Secretary Struhs recently announced that he was resigning to go to work for International Paper. Here we have a close-to-home case of the revolving door through which individuals pass as they travel from public regulator to private enterprise and back again.

International Paper has major operations in Florida and they have been involved in protracted compliance controversies with DEP, usually resolved amicably for the company. International Paper is a

huge corporation. It is the largest private land-owner in the U. S. with over 10 million acres. It owns another 10 million in other countries around the world. According to their website, they employ some 90,000 people worldwide. Don't be surprised that IP is also one of the top contributors to political campaigns.

Strangely Like War is such a fascinating short read because it takes us through the whole host of corrupting factors that sabotage citizen efforts to be conservers and good stewards of natural resources. Selling giant trees for the price of a cheeseburger is bad enough, but there is a huge amount of outright stealing of trees in public forests. Loose laws, weak or absent supervision and

enforcement, and simply looking the other way allow timber outlaws to walk off with as much of 10% of the total harvest from federal lands. In one investigation, Weyerhaeuser had illegally taken 6 million board feet. The Forest Service gave retroactive permission! Too big a corporation to embarrass? Bail-outs take many forms.

The methods of harvest are, of course, a big issue. Road building is the primary

source of erosion and landslides. Road traffic brings in invasive species and leaves heavy metal contamination.

Sedimentation can create flooding and choke streams, killing fish. Clearcutting is disaster for a forest. Heavy equipment compacts the soil, reducing productivity.

Burning of slash (the waste tops and branches left on a site) can sterilize the soil, eliminate understory plants, volatilize nutrients, and reduce permeability to water, increasing runoff and reducing plant nurturance. The multi-storied native forest is home and habitat for all manner of animals and all-important fungi. No more!

Forestry is an important industry across the nation that provides jobs. But forestry is a model of what has happened in most industries. Mills have become larger. In the 70's and 80's timber harvested increased 55 percent while logging and milling jobs decreased 10 percent. The spotted owl didn't do it! Per employee paper production has quadrupled in the last fifty years, but 2,900 jobs in pulp mills vanished from 1987 – 1997 and 12,100 in paper mills.

Jensen and Draffan cite statistics indicating that paper consumption in the U. S. is about 700 pounds per person per year. That number in the U. K. and Japan is 330.

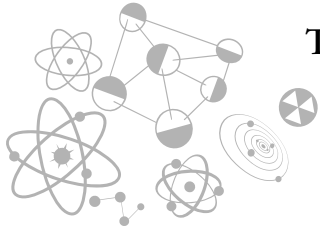
In the non-industrialized world, it stands at 12. How much is foolish extravagance, ignoring real cost? In the U.S., 40 percent of the municipal waste stream is paper. Worldwide, the percentage of waste

LOOSE LAWS, WEAK OR ABSENT SUPERVISION AND ENFORCEMENT, AND SIMPLY LOOKING THE OTHER WAY ALLOW TIMBER OUTLAWS TO WALK OFF WITH AS MUCH AS 10 PERCENT OF THE TOTAL HARVEST FROM FEDERAL LANDS.

paper recycled is around 50 percent, the heaviest users are not the biggest recyclers, however.

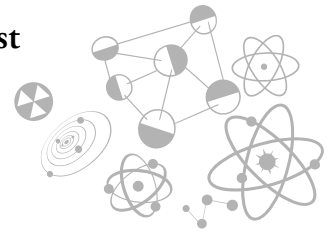
Government supervision of forestry and paper is weak on environmental impact. The environmental impact statements invariably find no significant impact. That's far, far off the mark!

Meanwhile, one estimate has 214,000 acres of forest cut per day.



The Alachua Conservation Trust Honors Sierra Club Activist

Dwight Adams



BY KATHY CANTWELL

Longtime Sierra activist, Dr. Dwight Adams, will be honored this month by the Alachua Conservation Trust. He will receive the land conservation organization's Conservationist of the Year award at their fundraising dinner March 17. Other ACT honorees this year are Larry Harris, Ph.D., Helen Hood and Pamela Zaber, D.V.M.

Dwight is a well-known figure around Gainesville. For years he has led the fight for responsible growth in the city and county and has been a participant for over 10 years in the comprehensive planning process.

Joining the Sierra Club in 1982, he has held many positions on the executive committee of the Suwannee-St. Johns Sierra Club group and for years was the political chair for the group. He is also the issue

chair for the Florida Chapter on solid waste issues and is a champion of recycling. He and his wife, Joan, received the Oak Leaf award from the Florida Chapter of the Sierra Club in 1986 for their work in waste management education.

In 1990, he received the Land Conservationist of the Year award from the National Wildlife Federation.

What may surprise many is that there is another side to Dwight. He is a professor emeritus at the University of Florida in physics and a world expert in ultra low temperature physics. He even has a device for measuring ultra cold temperatures named after him and another scientist: The Straty-Adams gauge.



According to the University of Florida Dwight Adams website, his interests include "magnetic and thermodynamic properties of solid ^3He using sensitive pressure measurements and nuclear magnetic resonance; neutron scattering from magnetically ordered solid ^3He in collaboration with colleagues at Hahn-Meitner Institut Berlin, ultra-low thermometry and cooling techniques." (Whatever that means!)

Alachua Conservation Trust is a local, non-profit land trust that works with landowners to protect our great places. Since its incorporation in 1988, ACT has facilitated more than 12,000 acres of public land purchases and private conservation easements in Alachua County.

Comp Plan Battle:

Candid Camera Inside the Court

BY DWIGHT ADAMS

Mercifully, the trial on our challenge of the 2003 amendments to Alachua County Comprehensive Plan ended on February 6. Everyone was sick of the ordeal. Before I get to what's next, let's look at some interesting happenings in the trial.

DESPITE STATE LAW THAT SAYS INTERVENORS MUST HAVE AN OPPORTUNITY TO PARTICIPATE IN THE MEDIATION, WE WERE CUT OUT OF THE MEDIATION.

As you know, the 2003 amendments grew out of "mediation" between the County, Florida Department of Community Affairs (DCA), and us as Intervenor on one side and rural property owners and Builders Association of North Central Florida as challengers to 2002 plan. From the outset, DCA was actually

on the side of the challengers. Under strong pressure from the County Commission, the county staff switched from defending the 2002 plan to doing as they were told. Despite state law that says Intervenor must have an opportunity to participate in the mediation, we were cut

out of the mediation that took place behind closed doors or by email and phone calls.

There was almost a full day of questioning of Rick Drummond and DCA planner, James Stansbury, on the mediation process and what the law requires. Both of them maintained that it had been

above board. DCA's position was that essentially anything goes and there was no violation of the provision that Intervenor have a right to participate. Even with the phone call between challengers and County, Intervenor "could have gotten in on the call," (without knowing about it).

Although there was no involvement of BoCC in mediation between the 12/11/02 session and March 2003 when the settlement was presented as a fait accompli, we knew by the "grapevine" that Rodney Long had put staff under intense pressure to agree to challengers' positions. Under oath, Rick Drummond testified that Long had met with staff and said, "he wanted it settled."

This is a violation of the County's charter that allows only the county manager to direct staff, following directions from the County Commission.

The next step in the process is for parties involved to write their Proposed Recommended Order for the judge's consideration in writing his Recommended Order. Transcripts of the 12 days of testi-

see COMP PLAN, page 7

COMP PLAN, from page 6

mony are needed with the cost estimated at \$25,000. Apparently, the law requires that non-profits be given copies of the transcript (for just the cost of copying). However, the County and DCA with taxpayers' money to spend are balking at paying.

What are our chances of the judge finding the 2003 amendments to be "not in compliance?" Actually, they are quite good, assuming that he is not predisposed to side with government.

We are quite strong on conservation issues with two highly credible witnesses, Dr. Tom Hctor and Dr. Ken Dodd, skillful questioning by our attorney, Hank Morgenstern, and good 2002 comp plan supporting data and analysis. Although the County made an effort to refute testimony of our witnesses, their key witness, Mike Drummond "told the truth," and said little to hurt our case.

As an amusing aside during testimony, the county was embarrassed when attorney

Scott Walker, representing Jonesville Property Owners, discovered that Drummond was using a "script" with questions and answers that David Schwartz had prepared. After each question, Schwartz and Linda Shelley, attorney for the Rural Property Owners, would visibly check it off the list. At Walker's request, Drummond relinquished the list to him, but Schwartz objected that Drummond was not authorized to let it go.

Finally after some heated, amusing discussion, Judge Stevenson "made Walker give it back" and Schwartz was able to pull his proverbial pants back up. On landuse issues, we are not quite as strong, but still in a good position because of the facts in the case rather than testimony of expert witnesses.

We actually managed to improve our position when the County put on its case with Rick Drummond as its key witness (he was on for three days). Attorney Hank Morgenstern was not fully familiar with the

landuse issues, so Judge Stevenson allowed me to question Rick Drummond on these issues. December McSherry represented herself. Although Drummond was a master at obfuscation, we made some facts clear. A key point is the over-allocation of land within the Urban Cluster and Urban Services Line. An important number in the calculation is the fraction of units that will be developed into multi-family units. In the data & analysis, only 17 percent was assigned to multi-family units, while in the December 11, 2002 presentation to BoCC, when the new county commission majority gave marching orders to staff on mediation, as the tape of the meeting clearly shows (and in a subsequent meeting) Rick Drummond had said that this was low and should be 40 percent.

This reduces enormously the amount of land needed since many more units are in high density.

During intense questioning under oath, Drummond maintained, "I do not recall saying that." Was it amnesia?

If you want more details on the trial, email me: adams@phys.ufl.edu. By the way, we can still use contributions to the legal expenses!

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MARCH 2004 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

March 4, Thursday, 7:30 p.m. General meeting at the entomology/nematology building on UF campus, room 1031-1033.

March 11, Thursday, 7 p.m. Executive Committee meeting at Santa Fe Comm. College, Downtown Campus.

March 13-14, Overnight backpack/hike in O'Leno State Park, Public is welcome! See Outings article, page 3.

March 17, Wednesday, Alachua Conservation Trust awards dinner. Contact Lauren Day at 352-373-1078 or www.alachuaconservationtrust.org.

March 19, Friday, 7:30 p.m. Newsletter folding party, Scott Camil & Sherry Steiner's house, call 352-375-2563 for directions.

March 27 - 29, Outing to Cumberland Island National Seashore. See page 3 for more info.

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