



Suwannee-St. Johns Group

Sierra Club

Newsletter

Published monthly except June and August from Gainesville, Florida
VOLUME 35 • NUMBER 6 • July 2005

Saving the Scrubjay

HALF MOON WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST NANCY DWYER WILL DISCUSS THIS UNIQUE BIRD

BY KRISTINA JACKSON

Nancy Dwyer is a wildlife biologist with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission at Half Moon Wildlife Management Area in Sumpter County. Her specialty is birds and she will be speaking to us about Florida scrub-jays.

Florida scrub-jays are unique to Florida—our only endemic bird. They are one of our most habitat-specific birds and will only live in open scrubby areas with few trees above 20' tall. About 30 scrub-jays inhabit Half Moon WMA, which is an hour south of Gainesville, 8 miles off I-75. Over 60 jays have been color-banded there since 2001. To manage habitat for jays, Half Moon has an active prescribed burn program and uses mechanical treatments like tree cutting and roller chopping to counteract the effects of past lack of fire.

Half Moon WMA is a 9,480-acre composite of wetlands, hammocks, flatwoods, and improved pasture. The Withlacoochee River borders the area to the west and Ventura Ranch borders Half Moon on the east. Mill Creek and Gum Slough, scenic



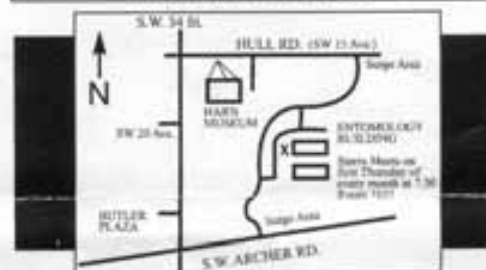
spring-fed tributaries of the Withlacoochee, traverse the area. Excellent opportunities exist for a variety of recreational activities, including horseback riding, wildlife viewing, biking, hiking, fishing, and hunting.

Nancy has years of experience with threatened and endangered birds such as Florida sandhill cranes, snail kites in the Everglades, kestrels, and bald eagles. She considers herself lucky to have studied nesting black-necked cranes in Tibet in 1991. Additionally, she and her husband served as Peace Corps volunteers in a

GENERAL MEETING
Thursday, July 7, 7:30 PM
Entomology/Nematology Building on the UF campus
(Just east of the Performing Arts Center. Turn south off
Hull Road on to Natural Areas Road.)

**SAVING THE
FLORIDA SCRUBJAY**

NANCY DWYER
WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST, FWCC
HALF MOON WMA



national park in the Philippines.

Come learn about this fascinating bird from one of our talented land managers. Enjoy lots of slides and stories about this friendly and unique Florida bird.

SIERRA FORUM TO DISCUSS MARION COUNTY ISSUES

August 4, Thursday 6:30 to 8 p.m.

Ocala Public Library, 2720 East Silver Springs Blvd.

Think globally, act locally on issues like land use, transportation and water supply.

Guest speakers include Darlene Weesner, Citizens for a Scenic Florida,
and David Bruderly, P.E. Consulting Engineer

Bring your own ideas & concerns.

HOW CAN THE SIERRA CLUB HELP IN MARION COUNTY?

SUPERFUND SITE-BIGGER THREAT THAN THEY THOUGHT	4
HELP ACT PURCHASE IMPORTANT FLATWOODS	5
TAMIAMI SKYWAY INTEGRAL TO EVERGLADES RESTORATION	6-7

Coalitions Win in Putnam Co.

REASONS TO REJOICE AND ISSUES TO WATCH IN OUR REGION

BY LINDA POLLINI

It seems like the summer doldrums are setting in, but there are a few things that still need our attention. A plan by Gainesville Regional Utilities to go ahead and build a coal-fired power plant has been slowed down for now. The city commission has wisely decided to not act in haste and to give this a closer look before proceeding. New Commissioner Jack Donovan, made the motion that they consider all of the recommendations and come back on June 28 to decide which four experts they will hire and what mission they will be asked to undertake. Keep an eye on the outcome as it will affect our environment for many years to come. Coal-fired power plants are the second biggest source of air pollution (next to automobile emissions) in the country and a big bad influence on global warming too.

Now the good news

The folks over in Putnam County won their first major victory when the Planning

Board rejected an application by Florida Rock to change the zoning on 665-acres of land from agriculture to mining. Two hundred residents or more stayed from 4:00 p.m. until 1:30 a.m. while attorneys and experts battled the issue on both sides. Thanks go to the efforts of the West Putnam Lakes Region Association, a citizen group that was formed at the very first notice of this land-use change over a year ago. They first attacked Putnam County's Comprehensive Land Use Plan and were successful in getting numerous new guidelines in place. Thanks also go to Dr. Kathy Cantwell, representing Sierra Club, who gave a presentation that showed that this area was in the middle of the Cross Florida Greenway and vital to migration corridors and overall health of the surrounding ecosystem. Dr. Sydney Bacchus, an eco-hydrologist, also gave an impressive demonstration of how the wet sand that would be removed every day for years, would lower the water tables in the area. Florida Rock experts tried to attack her credibility to no avail and threats of lawsuits from both sides were heard. The Planning Board's decision was based on the residents' pleas and the fact that they found the land use to be inconsistent with the area - many residents live around the site.

There is still one more very big hurdle to get over before this can be called a total victory. Everyone is asked to attend the

next Putnam County Commission meeting in Palatka, July 12 at 1:30 in the afternoon (when most folks are at work!). This is when the commissioners will make the final decision. There is still the possibility that they could vote in favor of Florida Rock and reject the Planning Board's recommendation, so please come on out if you can. The meeting will be held at Beasley Middle School, 1100 South 18th Street, off State Road 20 in Palatka.

CHAIR'S Airboat noise to be addressed



CORNER

Last week I attended an Alachua County Commission meeting where they decided to move forward with preparation of a Countywide Recreational Water Use Master Plan. One of the controversial issues involved with this is the movement

to regulate the use of airboats and more particularly the ear-splitting noise that they produce. Residents around our lakes are awakened at all hours of the night from this presently uncontrolled noise and mufflerless airboats. The airboaters are alarmed by the thought of regulation and will protest loudly, but the disregard by some of their own for the rest of the population needs adjustment. Russel Roy, physics professor, gave an informed and interesting explanation of how different levels of noise affect our hearing.

see CORNER, page 3

Visit the National and Local Sierra Club Websites!

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

Suwannee-St. Johns Group Executive Committee

Chair	Linda Pollini	481-2048	thirdeyegrafix@earthlink.net
Program Chair	Kristina Jackson	372-2464	kristinajackson@cox.net
Conservation Chair	Josh Dickinson	373-2377	josh@foresttrust.com
Secretary	Annette Long	352-490-8930	MLongAKorn@aol.com
Treasurer/Membership Chair	Roberta Gastmeyer	336-2404	rgastmeyer@earthlink.net
Administrative Chair	Dwight Adams	378-5129	adams@phys.ufl.edu
Outings Chair	Karen Garren	371-0008	ILUVFLA@gru.net
Events Coordinator	Sherry Steiner	375-2563	s.camil@att.net
Political Chair	David Auth	371-1991	davidauth@hotmail.com
Newsletter Editor/Listserve	Kristina Jackson	372-2464	kristinajackson@cox.net
Government Liaison	Rob Brinkman	337-1757	robbrinkman@cox.net
Environmental Education Chair	Russell Roy	372-7305	raroy4@bellsouth.net
Newsletter Folding	Scott Camil	375-2563	s.camil@att.net
Webmaster	Louis Clark	373-5377	klouisc@bellsouth.net
At-large member	Roxane Gonseth	352-895-1566	firewlf@earthlink.net
At-large member	Bruce Gonseth	352-546-5659	firewlf@earthlink.net

Newsletter Layout • Colin Whitworth • 372-2464 • colinwhitworth@cox.net

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.

Is it hot here, or is it just me?

BY KAREN GARREN

Outings Chair

Is it my imagination or does this late spring seem to have heated up faster than usual? I'm OK for out-of-doors activities as long as there's access to water or at least shade. With that in mind, the following Sierra Club outings are planned. Dates are tentative and can be adjusted to accommodate participants.

July 2-3: Saturday/Sunday. Camping/canoeing/hiking at Rainbow River State Park. It's always cool in this spring-fed river.

July 17: Sunday. Florida Museum of Natural History - Butterfly House. Fun for

all ages.

Admission fee of \$7 for Butterfly House, discount for seniors and small children.

July 30/31: Saturday/Sunday. Camping/canoeing/hiking at Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge.

Coming soon: Ride the Gainesville/Hawthorne Rail Trail. Sixteen miles to Hawthorne, do all or part. Visit Phifer Flatwoods, the newest property acquired by Alachua Conservation Trust. (See page 5.)

Our Potluck Picnic at Poe Springs was so successful that we plan to repeat several times a year at various locations. Next will be Labor Day Weekend, Saturday September 3. Another potluck picnic and hike at Goldhead State Park. Camping available at the park.

The Suwannee St. Johns Sierra Club Outings Committee will meet Saturday, September 24th, at 6:30 pm, location TBA. Check your September newsletter for details.

Remember, all SSJ

Sierra Club Group outings promote environmental awareness and inform on community issues. A donation fee will be requested (except this month's visits to the museum).



Discovering a Sense of Place

BY DEDEE DELONGPRE'

Executive Director, Sustainable Alachua County

After a successful introduction of discussion circles this past spring, Sustainable Alachua County is pleased to offer a summer discussion course on Discovering a Sense of Place.

These discussion circles provide an enjoyable and supportive setting in which to examine personal values and habits, engage in stimulating discussion, and make lifestyle changes. Each circle consists of six to twelve people who meet for an

hour each week for several weeks in workplaces, homes, or community locations. Course books with short readings guide the discussions.

Goals for Discovering a Sense of Place

- To understand the meaning of a bioregional perspective, and what it would mean to develop one
- To consider the benefits of consciously developing an intimate relationship with your place
- To explore what it might mean to protect the place we live

Introductory Session

Tuesday, June 28th, 7:00 - 8:30 p.m.

Florida Community Design Center - Commerce Building, 300 E University Avenue, Gainesville.

Join us for an introductory session to learn what the discussion circles offer, how the program works, and how you can participate. After you attend the free intro session, if you are interested, the eight-week course will begin the following week. You may take a course reader with you from the introductory session.

For further information, contact Dedee DeLongpre' at SAC_Discussions@yahoo.com or at 352-318-1218.

SUSTAINABLE ALACHUA COUNTY
PRESENTS

DISCOVERING A SENSE OF PLACE

AN EIGHT-WEEK DISCUSSION FOR THE HOME,
WORKPLACE, OR FAITH CENTER

CORNER, from page 2

Since our sheriff, Steve Oelrich, now lives on Orange Lake, he has taken more of an interest in this issue. He has even arranged for two airboats, one with a muffler and one without, to be brought downtown. He will fire them both up so that everyone can hear the difference in decibels for themselves. The date has not been announced yet, but watch for this.

The commissioners were very respectful and listened to everyone's opinions on this issue, before moving to go forward and spend \$150,000 for a consultant to make

recommendations on this and many more issues involved. This plan will have a long way to go and a lot more public involvement before it will be finalized.

National Sierra and national security

Lastly, the National Sierra Club is holding its first annual National Environmental Convention & Expo, September 8-11 at the Moscone Center, San Francisco. The keynote speakers will be Robert F. Kennedy, Jr. who recently published the bestseller "Crimes Against Nature".

Also, Arianna Huffington, political

commentator, satirist and author of many books including "The Game Plan for Winning Back America" and "Pigs at the Trough". She is the co-founder of the Detroit Project, a national campaign linking fuel efficiency and addiction to foreign oil to national security.

There will be an evening with Bill Maher, the host of the TV show "Politically Incorrect" and author of "When you ride ALONE you ride with bin Laden—a guide for Americans who want to help the war effort. Visit www.sierra-summit2005.org for up-to-date information and to register.

Time Running Out on Kopper's Superfund Site

BY ROB BRINKMAN

Government Liaison

Just six months ago, the contamination threat to Gainesville's water supply was believed to be of little concern for the next 20 to 30 years. Now, recent reports have caused Gainesville Regional Utilities (GRU) to warn that problems may be four or five years away. A new flurry of studies indicates Alachua County's only federally designated Superfund site, Koppers Industries, maybe more of a threat to groundwater than we thought.

The history of pollution at the Koppers site stretches back nearly a century or more. This site, located at NW 2nd Street and 23rd Avenue, was designated a Superfund site in 1983. You would think that they were keeping a close eye on it all these 20 years but in a recent presentation to the Gainesville City Commission, GRU detailed actions that need to be taken immediately. They include increased monitoring of the Floridan aquifer within 60 days. Design and install an interim Floridan aquifer containment within 180 days and promptly remove contamination from the surficial aquifer.

While this expedited schedule is a welcome development, the history of this site indicates that it would be a complete break with the past for these steps to be implemented on schedule. For more than two years, U.S. EPA and local officials have agreed that a dozen additional monitoring wells are needed. One thing is certain: the further this contamination spreads the harder and more expensive it becomes to deal with. In 1965, contamination at Gainesville's former wellfield downtown forced relocation to the current site at NE 53rd Avenue and 15th Street. Another relocation may serve to buy time but would be quite costly.

GRU is employing an expert consultant team to advise them on the Koppers site; current costs to GRU for these efforts to protect the wellfield are \$400,000. This amount does not include the costs of monitoring wells or containment and removal efforts; that cost should be borne by Beazer East, a company that briefly owned the site

and continues to be fiscally responsible for it's cleanup. Exactly how much that will cost is unknown, and the extent of the contamination is unknown. Estimates range into hundreds of millions of dollars!

Beazer East is responsible for the clean up of at least seven other Koppers sites around the country that are listed as Superfund sites by the EPA. Two years ago Beazer agreed to pay \$18 million to clean up a site in Pennsylvania and build a new water supply for a community of 900 homes. Our situation would seem to be far more expensive - can Beazer afford to meet all of its obligations?

Pollutants such as arsenic, benzene, naphthalene and a class of contaminants referred to as DNAPL's (Dense Non-Aqueous Phase Liquids) have been migrating downward through clay layers once believed impenetrable and have now entered the aquifer. Four years ago, the EPA recommended a strategy of onsite containment that relied on the Hawthorne clay layer beneath the waste and concrete containment walls and cap to entomb the wastes "permanently."

Both the Gainesville and Alachua County Commissions wisely rejected that plan and asked for complete removal and remediation. Two years later contamination of the Floridan aquifer was discovered, proving that the previously proposed solution of entombment would have failed. One year ago "significant contamination" of the aquifer was reported. This prompted GRU to hire expert consultants and was soon followed by the detection of high levels of arsenic in the aquifer in December 2004.

As recently as March, Beazer released a draft plan for monitoring wells at a meeting with the EPA, GRU, and Alachua County staff. Beazer's plan calls for the addition of seven wells, with two of them offsite; currently there are eight wells with two offsite. GRU wants to add 12 wells, all onsite, including a transect line north of the area of greatest contamination known as the North Lagoon. This would serve to accurately define the extent of contamination and the direction of migration.

A key issue of contention between GRU and Beazer has been the travel time of these contaminants toward the Murphree wellfield, less than two miles away. One of the factors that would influence this travel time is called "effective porosity." The model developed by Beazer's consultant used a value of 15%.

Using this value, models predict that it could take 50 to 60 years for the contamination to reach the wellfield. If a value of 1% is assumed, the travel time is on the order of four to five years. A definitive determination of effective porosity can be determined by a tracer test, which GRU's consultant is recommending. The only tracer test that has been performed is in what is known as the Ocala Formation, the limestone layer containing the Floridan aquifer in this region. This was conducted at the old Tampa wellfield in 1995. The results indicate an effective porosity value of 0.3 to 1.5%; thus a value of 1%. If our area has a similar value, four years is far more reasonable an assumption than several decades.

The Koppers site has been on the EPA Superfund priority list for 22 years. While there have been some efforts made at surficial aquifer remediation, the real danger is the contamination seeping into the aquifer that supplies our drinking water. To say that opportunities have been missed is a gross understatement. According to the company that is financially responsible, there is no problem in the near term; however, those responsible for providing clean water feel that time is running out. Who do you believe?

Can we afford to wait much longer? Efforts have been made to get action on this site; Senator Bill Nelson visited in April of 2004.

If Beazer does not begin sinking the monitoring wells by the Gainesville City Commission's August meeting, perhaps the Commission should take the Gainesville Sun's advice and proceed directly to federal court to demand that the EPA require immediate action.

Time is of the essence, and it is not on our side.

Protecting Phifer Flatwoods

BY ROBERT HUTCHINSON

Project Manager, Alachua Conservation Trust, Inc.

Phifer Flatwoods is being protected from development by Alachua Conservation Trust (ACT). This 658-acre property, just north of the Lochloosa Wildlife Management Area, had been auctioned to a Louisiana development company in April. In an after-auction scrum, ACT emerged with a purchase contract for nearly \$3 million, but with only ninety days to raise the money.

Phifer Flatwoods is important to conserve as a critical link in a north-south wildlife corridor that ultimately connects the Ocala National Forest to the Okefenokee Swamp. During this decade, the state's conservation organizations are working to create these landscape linkages while the lands are still available. Had Phifer Flatwoods been developed into a rural subdivision, it would have cut a swath across nearly the entire width of the western leg of this important corridor. This wildlife corridor is used extensively by migrating birds and by bears and other critters large and small.

The property forms the northern border of the Gainesville-Hawthorne Rail Trail for three miles. Once developed, the experience of trail users would more likely have included boom boxes and bulldogs than wildflowers and songbirds. In the southeastern U.S. and in North Central Florida, natural flatwoods have nearly all been converted into pine plantations, and so has Phifer Flatwoods. But the management plan that ACT is developing will return the forest to a naturally regenerating, uneven age flatwoods. Longleaf pine will predominate in the drier sites and slash pine will transition into pond pine and cypress in the lower areas, as it probably was until the era of modern silvicultural practices. Despite the bedding (plowing) that has occurred in



TOP: Flocks of turkey roam these flatwoods (photo B. Bush) ABOVE: Pitcher plants at Phifer (photo H. Jelks) RIGHT: Anole at home in Phifer (photo P. Nesmith)



the past, the understory of herbs, flowering shrubs, ferns, and wildflowers is surprisingly intact. Most people have never experienced the diversity and beauty of a natural flatwoods, which supports a rich botanical palette with its complex micro-topography, shifting shade and ephemeral wetlands. This site creates a rare opportunity for the public to observe the restoration of this ecosystem from the Rail Trail and hiking trails that will traverse the preserve.

On the same day that ACT's offer to purchase this square mile of land and water was accepted, the trust submitted a \$3 million proposal to Florida Communities Trust for a reimbursement grant. The Alachua County Forever program has also placed the property on its "priority acquisition list" making it eligible to be acquired by the County.

To protect Phifer Flatwoods, ACT is raising funds, both gifts and loans, from individuals in the community. So far, over 80% of the goal has been reached, but the real estate closing is July 29th, and nearly \$500,000 must still be raised. For loans,

ACT is paying 3% interest, and will probably need the funds for one year, when a potential Florida Communities Trust reimbursement become available, or Alachua County purchases the property. Gifts and loans earmarked for land purchases show our community's willingness to protect our cherished landscapes in the strongest way possible, by purchasing them.

Alachua Conservation Trust is a non-profit, charitable land trust that has partnered with public agencies and private landowners to protect more than 12,000 acres in and around the county since 1988. ACT is one of only two Florida land trusts among the nation's top fifty in terms of both value and acreage of lands protected. For more information about the Phifer Flatwoods project or ACT, visit: www.AlachuaConservationTrust.org or call 352-373-1078.

Let the Everglades Water Flow

BY MICHAEL MATTHEWS

Tamiami Trail (US Highway 41) cuts through Shark River Slough, one of the Everglades' deepest and most important water passageways. Scientists say this 11-mile section of the old 1928 road must be elevated into a "skyway" if Everglades restoration is to succeed. The skyway will be an important first step in returning the historic sheetflow of water through parched Everglades National Park and into Florida Bay.

This elevated roadway will be beneficial to wildlife by reducing habitat fragmentation and preventing road kill. The project will create jobs and increase tourism while raising Everglades awareness at the same time. Best yet, an 11-mile skyway will serve as a visible symbol of Everglades restoration; a real benefit to the floundering project. This year, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers will make a decision on the skyway. The Corps is considering alternatives, such as a smaller-scale, 4-mile bridge—an inadequate second best option to the environmentally preferred 11-mile skyway. The Sierra Club believes that Everglades restoration cannot happen

without the full 11-mile skyway.

When Marjory Stoneman Douglas called the Everglades a "river of grass" she was referring to sheet flow—how water would flow in a miles-wide sheet from Lake

the same time damming the water and retaining too much on the road's north side. Raising the 11-mile stretch of the highway that crosses Shark River Slough will do much to restore this fragile ecosystem to its true state.

Raising the Tamiami Trail will be beneficial to wildlife. Presently, you can drive across the trail at any time and be assured of seeing some poor animal mutilated along the side of the road. Road kill is a major problem along the Trail. Another related problem is habitat fragmentation. Put simply, the Trail diminishes the habitat available to wildlife, forcing many animals to try

and cross the road looking for food or mates. Raising the Tamiami Trail to a skyway solves both of these problems. You can also see that the more skyway we have, the more benefits wildlife will enjoy.

Tamiami Trail used to be a tourist attraction. When it was built, back in the 20's, many people would travel on it just for the experience itself. We can make the Trail an attraction again. Raising the Trail will mean that the view will be spectacular.

see EVERGLADES, page 7



Conceptual illustration of the Tamiami Skyway

Okeechobee south through the Everglades and out into Florida Bay. Deeper channels in this sheet flow are called sloughs. Sloughs are the life-giving arteries of the Everglades, and when combined with ridges of land shaped by the flowing water you get the "ridge and slough" terrain that once epitomized the area. If we are to restore the Everglades, we must recreate this landscape. Tamiami Trail prevents this because it is a tourniquet, depriving the Everglades of its precious lifeblood while at

North Carolina Mountain Home



\$500 PER WEEK/4, \$50/
extra person, max 8 people

4 BR, 2 1/2 BATH
fireplace

2 miles to App. Trail
6 miles to rafting, hot
springs bathing
h/c accessible

Phone: 352-395-7441
Available May thru Oct

Unlock the beauty of your Plants naturally with



GreenEdge[®]

Environmentally Friendly • Adds Organic Matter to
Your Soil • Grow Your Plants With Less Water

www.green-edge.com

Gainesville:
Garden Gate Nursery
Harmony Gardens

North & Central Florida:
ACE Hardware Stores

Slow Release Organic Fertilizer

EVERGLADES, from page 6

Imagine yourself driving along that 11-mile stretch with no trees or bushes to block your view—nothing but a 360-degree panoramic view of beautiful Everglades landscape. This will bring more tourists to Florida and the Everglades, pumping millions into our economy. More visitors to the imperiled Everglades mean more awareness of the plight of our embattled wetlands. The skyway will not only be good for our wallets and pocketbooks, it will also be good for Everglades awareness.

Some bad news: Everglades restoration is floundering. Sure, there has been some progress, but generally not enough is happening and any significant Everglades restoration may be in jeopardy. What could help? How about a symbol—something tangible with importance that can easily be grasped? We need a success story that we can all rally around and say, "See, it can be done. Let's do more." An 11-mile skyway could be just that symbol.

Everyone agrees that the 11-mile version of the skyway is the best for the environment. But, sadly, what seems to be driving this decision is money. The plan seemingly being given the most consideration at present is a small, 4-mile bridge with the other seven miles of roadway being raised with asphalt layered on top of it (to compensate for increased water levels expected after CERP). The thinking seems to be that since an 11-mile skyway would have the highest overall price tag (\$250 million) it is the most expensive.

But, the skyway really does make more

financial sense than the other alternatives. When broken down to cost-per-mile, here's what we get: the skyway costs about \$20 million per mile compared to the estimated \$30 million per mile for a 4-mile bridge or \$50 million per mile for a half-mile span. The skyway is not only the better decision for the environment; it is also a better bargain all around. However, this is not even taking into consideration that the other alternatives would involve further alterations down the line, raising their price tags and wasting our taxpayer's money. Even though the other alternatives may be cheaper in the short term, and might (arguably) even be quicker to enact, the plan that clearly has the most long-range benefits and that makes the most sense is the 11-mile skyway.

You can see that there are many good reasons to support the 11-mile skyway across Shark River Slough. But, it might not happen. We need your help to ensure that it does. Please let your elected officials know that you support the full 11-mile Tamiami Skyway. Public comment to the draft of the **Supplementary Environmental Impact Statement** will begin in August, and a final decision will be made by the end of the year. Time is of the essence.

To volunteer your time or resources to our campaign, contact Jonathan Ullman at 305-860-9888 or e-mail jonathan.ullman@sierraclub.org. Also, please visit our website at www.build-the-skyway.com.

Help save Florida's natural environment and set an example for the rest of the country. "Let the water flow."



PLEASE CONTACT THESE ELECTED OFFICIALS AS SOON AS YOU CAN:

U.S. REPRESENTATIVE MARIO DIAZ BALART
 DC office: 202-225-2778, Fax: 202-226-0346
 Miami office: 305-225-6866, Fax: 305-225-7432

U.S. SENATOR BILL NELSON
 DC office: 202-224-5274, Fax: 202-228-2183
 Orlando office: toll free 1-888-671-4091, Fax: 407-872-7165
 Email: senator@billnelson.senate.gov

U.S. SENATOR MEL MARTINEZ
 DC Office: 202-224-3041, Fax: 202-228-5171
 Orlando Office: 407-254-2573, Fax: 407-423-0941
<http://martinez.senate.gov/index.cfm>

FLORIDA GOVERNOR JEB BUSH
 Phone: 850-488-4441, Fax: 850-487-0801
 Email: jeb.bush@myflorida.com

JOIN THE SSJ SIERRA E-MAIL DISCUSSION BOARD

If you live far from Gainesville, this is a great way to keep in touch with our local sierra club. And you can post and let us know what is happening in your neck of the woods.

Go to florida.sierraclub.org/ssj/ and sign on to the email list. Have your membership number handy (the 8-digit number above your name on any sierra magazine or newsletter). You can post and receive announcements of interest to our Suwannee St. Johns Sierra Group.

WOOD • GAS • ELECTRIC



THE WOOD STOVE AND FIREPLACE CENTER

611 N. Main Street 377-9535
 WEB SITE: woodstoveflorida.com

Dental Arts

Eric J. Amundson DDS
 Restorative & Cosmetic Dentistry

- Comprehensive Dental Care
- Cleanings in a Spa-like Setting
- The Art of Cosmetic Dentistry
- Affordable Teeth Whitening
- Restorative Dentistry Including Implants
- Preventative Dentistry for Your Family

4040 W. Newberry Rd. Suite 1200 • Gainesville, Florida • 32607
 352-376-3400 www.dentalarts.us

Suwannee-St. Johns Group
Sierra Club
NEWSLETTER
P.O. Box 13951
Gainesville FL 32604

Periodicals
U.S. POSTAGE
PAID
Gainesville FL 32608



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Explore, enjoy and protect the planet.



Printed on Post-Consumer Waste
Recycled and Recyclable Paper

JULY 2005 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

July 7, Thursday 7:30 p.m. General meeting at Entomology & Nematology Bld. on UF campus. Details on page 1.

July 14, Thursday 7 p.m. Executive committee meeting at Santa Fe Comm. College Downtown Gainesville campus.

August 4, Thursday 6:30 p.m. General meeting at Ocala Downtown Public Library. Focus on Marion County issues.

August 11, Thursday 7 p.m. Executive committee meeting at Santa Fe Comm. College Downtown Gainesville campus.

August 19, Friday 7:30 p.m. Folding Party for the July newsletter. At Scott Camil and Sherry Steiner's, call 352-375-2563 for directions.

NO AUGUST NEWSLETTER.

NEXT NEWSLETTER WILL COVER SEPTEMBER EVENTS.

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

Membership

Yes, I want to help safeguard our nation's precious natural heritage. My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____

State _____ ZIP _____

email _____

Check enclosed, made payable to Sierra Club

Mastercard Visa Exp Date ____/____

Cardholder Name _____

Card Number _____

Contributions, gifts and dues to the Sierra Club are not tax deductible; they support our 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.

MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
INTRODUCTORY	<input type="checkbox"/> \$25	
REGULAR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$39	<input type="checkbox"/> \$47
SUPPORTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$75	<input type="checkbox"/> \$100
CONTRIBUTING	<input type="checkbox"/> \$150	<input type="checkbox"/> \$175
LIFE	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1000	<input type="checkbox"/> \$1250
SENIOR	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
STUDENT	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32
LIMITED INCOME	<input type="checkbox"/> \$24	<input type="checkbox"/> \$32

F94Q W3305 -1



Sierra Club

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