



Suwannee-St. Johns Group

Sierra Club

Newsletter

Published monthly except June and August from Gainesville, Florida

VOLUME 35 • NUMBER 9 • November 2005



Go To Alaska, Now!

BY: DWIGHT ADAMS

Alaska has fantastic scenery and natural wonders that everyone should be able to see. When should you go (if you can afford it)? Henry Gannett, a member of the Harriman 1899 Alaskan Expedition had this to say:

“There is one word of advice and caution to be given those intending to visit Alaska for pleasure, or for sight-seeing. If you are old, go by all means, but if you are young, wait. The scenery of Alaska is much grander than anything else of its kind in the world, and it is not well to dull one’s capacity for enjoyment by seeing the finest first.”

I say go as soon as possible or Alaska is going to be quite different because of mining, oil extraction, global warming and the



push to “open up Alaska” with numerous new roads.

For example, when Captain George Vancouver sailed to the entrance to Glacier Bay in 1794, there was no “bay.” Vancouver found a “compact sheet of ice as far as the eye could distinguish.” The ice that he saw was a glacier 4,000 feet thick, 20 miles wide, filling the whole bay. The site of the town of Gustavus was under this glacier.

Already when John Muir explored the area in 1879, only 100 years after Vancouver, the ice had retreated into the bay 40 miles, revealing a spectacular network of glaciers, islands, and fjords that Muir explored extensively. One of the current-day glaciers and connecting inlets bears Muir’s name.

Now the glaciers have retreated about 40 more miles, almost to the border with British Columbia.

In early June, Joan and I took a 12-day cruise-tour that began in Fairbanks. Then we went by train and bus to a lodge in Denali National Park and on to Anchorage. A flight brought us to Glacier Bay Lodge for the night, followed by a day of cruising on the spectacular Glacier Bay.

In Juneau, we boarded Cruise West’s small ship, Sheltered Seas, which carries no more than 70 guests. At 90 feet in length it was able to go into small inlets not accessible to larger ships. Cruising was in daylight only, with nights spent in small town hotels along the Inside Passage to Ketchikan, where the cruise ended.

The emphasis with Cruise West small

see ALASKA, page 3

GENERAL MEETING

Thursday, Nov. 3rd, 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.)

GO TO
ALASKA, NOW!

DWIGHT ADAMS

SSJ ADMINISTRATIVE CHAIR
AND WORLD TRAVELER



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Statement of Ownership, Management and Circulation

United States Postal Service
Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation

1. Publication Title: **Suwannee-St. Johns Group Sierra Club Newsletter**

2. Publication Number: **317-370**

3. Filing Date: **9/29/2005**

4. Issue Frequency: **10 times per year**

5. Number of Issues Published Annually: **10**

6. Annual Subscription Price: **\$39.00**

7. Complete Mailing Address of Known Office of Publication (Not printer, city, county, state, and ZIP+4):
**Suwannee-St. Johns Group Sierra Club
 PO Box 141693 GNV FL 32614-1693**

8. Complete Mailing Address of Headquarters or General Business Office of Publisher (Not printer):
**Sierra Club National Headquarters
 85 Second St., 2nd FL. San Francisco CA 94105**

9. Full Names and Complete Mailing Addresses of Publisher, Editor, and Managing Editor (do not leave blank):
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 Editor (Name and complete mailing address):
**Kristina Jackson
 1024 NW 13th Ave. GNV, FL 32601**
 Managing Editor (Name and complete mailing address):
NA

10. Owner (Do not leave blank. If the publication is owned by a corporation, give the name and address of the corporation immediately followed by the names and addresses of all stockholders owning or holding 1 percent or more of the total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, give the names and addresses of the individual owners. If the publication is published by a partnership or other unincorporated firm, give its name and address as well as that of each individual owner. If the publication is published by a sole proprietor, give its name and address.)

11. Known Bondholders, Mortgagees, and Other Security Holders Owning or Holding 1 Percent or More of Total Amount of Bonds, Mortgages, or Other Securities. If none, check box: None

12. Tax Status (For completion by nonprofit organizations authorized to mail at nonprofit rates) (Check one)
 Has Not Changed During Preceding 12 Months
 Has Changed During Preceding 12 Months (Publisher must submit explanation of change with this statement.)

PS Form 3526, October 2002 (Non-Profit Organizations Only)

13. Publication Title		14. Issue Date for Circulation Data Below	
15. Nature and Dates of Circulation		Average No. Copies Each Issue During Preceding 12 Months	No. Copies of Single Issue Published Nearest to Filing Date
a. Total Number of Copies (net press run)		1702	1734
b. Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Do not include)			
(1) Paid in Advance (Subscriptions, Single Copies, etc.)	657	657	
(2) Paid in Advance (Subscriptions, Single Copies, etc.)	1055	1077	
(3) Sales Through Dealers and Carriers, Street Vendors, Counter Sales, and Other Non-USPO Paid Distribution	NONE	NONE	
(4) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS			
c. Total Paid and/or Requested Circulation (Sum of 15b(1), (2), (3), and (4))		1712	1734
d. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		NA	NA
(1) In-Country or Inland (Other)	NA	NA	
(2) Other Classes Mailed Through the USPS	NA	NA	
e. Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Carriers or other means)		100	100
f. Total Free Distribution Outside the Mail (Sum of 15d and 15e)		100	100
g. Total Distribution (Sum of 15c and 15f)		1794	1834
h. Copies not Distributed		0	0
i. Total (Sum of 15g and 15h)		1794	1834
j. Payment for Outside the Mail Circulation (USPS checked by 100, 999, 150)		94.43	14.55

16. Publication of Statement of Ownership: Publication required, this publication is for _____ of this publication Publication not required

17. Signature of Publisher, Editor, or Owner: *[Signature]* Date: **Sept 29, 05**

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- Complete and file one copy of this form with your postmaster annually on or before October 1. Keep a copy of the completed form for your records.
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- If the publication had Periodicals authorization as a general or requester (collective), this Statement of Ownership, Management, and Circulation must be published. It must be printed in any issue published on or after October 1, if the publication is not published in the October, the first issue printed after October 1.
- In item 10, include the date of the issue in which this Statement of Ownership will be published.
- Item 17 must be signed.

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PS Form 3526, October 2002 (Revised)

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

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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.**

Drinking the Rodman?

STATE OFFICIALS CONSIDER SELLING WATER RIGHTS TO OCKLAWAHA RIVER

BY LINDA POLLINI

While it's nice to get outside and enjoy the first cool days of autumn in Florida, we still have a number of issues that need our attention.

Some members of our Florida Chapter Ocklawaha Committee met with Jake Varn, a consultant for St. John's Water Management District. The District is trying to establish who would be the entities interested in using the Ocklawaha River as a water source for areas south of us.

The cities of Orlando and Daytona were mentioned as potential recipients of water transfers from our district. When I spoke about the widespread disapproval of water transfer of everyone living in the northern half of the state, it was dismissed as political posturing by local politicians and seemed to be of little concern. The question wasn't "if" water would be transferred, but who has the money to pay for the treatment and the means of transfer.

Minimum water flows and levels (MFL) for the river have not been established yet, but we were assured that they would be in time for this to happen. Mr. Varn assured us that the Rodman Dam or it's removal had no bearing on the outcome of the water transfer, but he admitted that it could be brought up as added capacity for water storage.

SJRWMD is holding a public meeting October 21 at 10 a.m. about plans for water transfer. Come to Ravine Gardens in

Palatka that day or submit written comments by October 31 to the District Office in Palatka. Tell them to stop this transparent effort to preserve Rodman Reservoir and sell our water to the highest bidder.

Unfortunately, plans for coal-fired power plants are popping up like mushrooms, all around the state due to enhanced federal funding. There is another 750 megawatt coal-fired power plant being proposed over in Palatka to the tune of \$1.2 billion dollars. They are planning another public relations open house at Ravine Gardens on Oct. 20. Expect a report from me on this, next issue.

The Florida Rock Cement Plant monster, raises it's ugly head again in Newberry. There will be a public hearing on October 25, 2005 at their city hall at 7 p.m. Call ahead to confirm the time if you want to attend. Florida Rock is applying to double the size of the plant.

Since the cement plant was annexed into the city of Newberry, they (Newberry City Commissioners) are the ones who will approve the amendment to the special use permit, not Alachua County. The outlook for the environment in this case is bleak.

Public Lands Issue Chair, Dr. Kathy Cantwell's efforts to protect the Williams/Anderson sand mine property from development in Putnam County has

hit a snag. The state has discouraged this land addition to the Cross Florida Greenway conservation project, because they simply don't have the funding to put a management plan into effect for this acreage.

It seems as if the environment is under attack, and it is, but last week a major victory for clean water in Florida was upheld in U.S. Federal Court. In 1999 Governor Bush appointed David Struhs to head the Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection. He delisted 200 previously deemed polluted waterways from the impaired list and set up a new testing plan. Jeb asked his brother George to relax federal EPA standards so he could institute new policies.

I have been to many of these TMDL (total maximum daily load) meetings and always felt the need to scream out, "But this is an illegal way of getting around the Clean Water Act!!" Still Florida continued with their studies as if it didn't even matter. I am thrilled that this process has finally been deemed a violation. Gov. Bush and David Struhs can now be seen as the manipulators that they are.

I'd like to know how much tax payers' money they have poured down this hole. Inevitably, this was a big waste of time and money while the waterways were not given the attention they deserve. The TMDL process was just a way of going around the law and other states were watching Florida to see if it held.

Justice is being served today! It needs to be watched to see if it sticks. Hooray!

CHAIR'S CORNER



ALASKA, from page 1

ships is on casual enjoyment of the scenery, good food in an informal setting, and camaraderie with others just met — no tuxedos, no floor shows, no casinos. With the ability to go into narrow inlets, they also take the time to look for wildlife

and other features.

I will show you a selection of slides from about 700 that I took with my Nikon CoolPix, with which at 8x optical zoom and 5 megapixels, I was able to get close-ups of bears, whales, orcas, mountain goats, sea lions, seals, eagles, glaciers and icebergs, etc.

RECOMMENDED READING

JOHN MUIR, TRAVELS TO ALASKA
PEGGY WAYBURN, ADVENTURING IN ALASKA
ALASKA MAGAZINE

ABOUT THE SPEAKER

Dwight Adams moved to Gainesville in 1962 when he joined the UF faculty and started the program in ultralow temperature physics. With his first graduate student Jerry Straty, he invented a capacitive transducer for sensitive in situ measurement of pressures at low temperatures.

One of the first uses of the "Straty-Adams" gauge was a study of the melting pressure of 3-helium by Richard Scribner, another of his graduate students. The enormous resolution in temperature provided by the sensitivity of the gauge lead them to suggest using the 3-helium melting pressure as the thermometer. After 35 years, the melting pressure was adopted in 2000 as the thermometry standard for temperatures down to 0.001 K.

Last year, Dwight received the Keithley Award with a \$5,000 prize from the American Physical Society for "the pioneering development of the capacitive pressure transducer, its application to the 3-helium melting pressure thermometry, and other scientific uses." The Smithsonian Institution has requested the original Straty-Adams gauge for its collections.

Dwight joined the Sierra Club in 1982 when James Watt was Secretary of Interior. He has worked primarily on solid waste and growth issues. He led efforts to establish recycling in Florida and was chair of the National Solid Waste Committee. He has worked on Alachua County's comprehensive plan from its initial drafting in the late 1980's and has been liaison during two lawsuits that the Sierra Club has fought over the plans.



Unsafe Air

BUSH ADMINISTRATION ATTACKS CLEAN AIR ACT

Statement by Nat Mund, Clean Air Expert, Sierra Club's Environmental Quality Program

"Today, the Bush administration announced changes that would dramatically weaken the Clean Air Act's New Source Review program - a key clean air protection that requires aging coal-fired power plants, oil refineries and other industrial facilities to install modern pollution controls when they make changes or expand in a way that increases pollution.

"The loss of this program means the loss of an important tool in the fight for safe air. The Bush administration needs to enforce the law, hold polluters accountable, and require them to use today's technology to protect our health and safety.

"When enforced, New Source Review has been an effective tool for forcing power plants, refineries, and factories to install modern pollution equipment. This is why the oil, coal and power companies which own those polluting facilities have been so interested in rewriting the rules.

"This latest attack by the Bush administration to dismantle NSR comes from a new angle. The proposal will allow polluting power utilities to make changes that increase the total amount of pollution

released each year if it is done in a way that does not increase the rate of pollution released. By doing this, they can avoid installing modern pollution control technology.

"Simply put, a power utility could refurbish a plant so that it does not release more pollution per hour, but could double the operating time thus releasing more pollution over the course of the year.

"Furthermore, the EPA is saying that any potential increases in air pollution that the proposal causes would be handled under the recently adopted Clean Air Interstate Rule (CAIR) However, EPA's own models suggest that CAIR will not be sufficient to ensure that every community is breathing clean air."

Conservation Conference Dec. 9-11

FLORIDA SIERRA CLUB COMES TO OUR NECK OF THE WOODS

The annual Florida Chapter Conservation Conference will again be held Dec. 9-11, right here in our territory, nestled in the lakes around Hawthorne. Luther Springs is a lovely facility with great cabins and good camping. The meeting room is comfortable and the food is excellent. Plans are shaping up for some

enriching programs along the theme of rivers feeding into our gulf and ocean and the impacts we have on those bodies.

The cost of the conference is reasonable, approximately \$50 - \$75 depending on your lodging and meal selections. Details and a registration form will be in the next Pelican, the Florida Chapter

newsletter. We hope to see you on the weekend of December 9-11.

Help Us Create a Great Event

You know how much fun and how informative the conservation conferences are. Now you can become involved in the planning of this year's event. If you would like to help out, contact Betsy Roberts at 941-266-0192 or betsyred@comcast.net, or John Glenn at gljenjohn@bellsouth.net.



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Calendars are available at all General Meetings (Oct. 6, Nov. 3 and Dec. 1). If you are unable to attend our meetings or if you have contacts where additional calendars may be sold, contact Bill Radunovich, billrad@mac.com.

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GAO: Bush Fails to Protect Wetlands

NATIONAL SIERRA CLUB PRESS RELEASE

The General Accounting Office (GAO) released a report today finding that the US Army Corps of Engineers is failing to protect wetlands, headwaters and other important waters.

The report found that although the Army Corps is required under the Clean Water Act to protect these waters, the agency is permitting their destruction without explaining why it is not following the law, recording the acreage being destroyed or evaluating the natural functions that are lost.

Since January 2003, the EPA and Corps have been following a Bush administration policy directive that jeopardizes Clean Water Act protections by telling agency staff to stop protecting many streams, wetlands, lakes, and other waters unless they first get permission from Washington, D.C. officials.

The EPA and Corps claim that the policy is based, at least in part, on a 2001 Supreme Court decision, *Solid Waste Agencies of Northern Cook County v. the Army Corps of Engineers* (or "SWANCC"), but the terms of the directive go far beyond the holding of that case and jeopardize millions of acres, thousands of miles of streams, and all the rivers, lakes and coastal waters downstream.

What the GAO study found is that the US Army Corps of Engineers is not using its legal authority to protect those waters and wetlands that it can still protect after the SWANCC decision.

"In the wake of Hurricane Katrina, we know that our nation needs to be increasing

- not weakening - protections for waterways that can prevent flooding and provide clean water," said Navis Bermudez, Sierra Club Clean Water Campaign Representative. "The GAO's report confirms that the administration is secretly pursuing a policy that favors developers and other industry interests. The administration's policy needs to be withdrawn and protections extended to the full extent of the law."

In January 2003, the administration proposed rulemaking to weaken the Clean Water Act's requirements defining "waters of the United States."

The administration later abandoned this rulemaking and promised key constituents that it would not pursue that course of action again. The GAO report shows that the administration essentially changed the rules after announcing it would not do so by simply ignoring existing law.

"This administration is not very good at keeping promises made to the American people," said Joan Mulhern, senior legislative counsel for Earthjustice.

"The President and his appointees promised not to change the Clean Water Act's rules, but they are shirking that responsibility by just ignoring those rules," she said. "In turn, they are breaking the promise of the Clean Water Act, which is to protect all of the nation's waters, to make them safe for drinking water, for swimming

and fishing. This cannot be done when the Corps leaves waters out of the law's scope."

The wetlands, streams and other waters that are being destroyed because the Corps is not protecting them are extremely important for our communities' health and safety. For example, when wetlands are destroyed or filled, they are often replaced by impermeable paving or structures that increase water runoff and can contribute to increased flooding.

In addition to protecting homes by storing floodwater, wetlands provide a variety of other benefits: they filter pollutants from our drinking water, and provide habitat for fish, shellfish and wildlife. Wetlands are crucial for clean water, serving as a natural filter absorbing water-borne pollutants and

"THE PRESIDENT AND HIS APPOINTEES PROMISED NOT TO CHANGE THE CLEAN WATER ACT'S RULES, BUT THEY ARE SHIRKING THAT RESPONSIBILITY BY JUST IGNORING THOSE RULES."

—JOAN MULHERN, SENIOR LEGISLATIVE COUNSEL FOR EARTHJUSTICE.

damaging contaminants before the water enters our rivers, lakes and streams.

"Losses of wetlands in many areas of the U.S. are unprecedented, yet the Corps is allowing many of the remaining wetlands to be destroyed in violation of its Clean Water Act obligations without even bothering to figure out why," said Christy Leavitt, Clean Water Advocate for U.S. PIRG.

Link to report at: <http://www.gao.gov/new.items/d05870.pdf>



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2006 Sierra Club ExCom Nominees

Stephen Williams

Native Floridian, graduated Florida International University, BA Environmental Studies. Moved to White Springs in 1978 to operate Suwannee River's canoe livery and guide service. In 1982, met Frank Sedmera and Judy Hancock of Four Rivers Audubon. Worked on river and forest issues for the last 22 years as member of its board of directors, serving as president for three years. Founded the Florida Panther Society (FPS). As president of FPS for 10 yrs and now as its vice-president, serves as FPS representative on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Panther Recovery Team working to complete Florida panther recovery plan since 2001.

Sherry Steiner

Special education teacher for Levy County homebound handicapped students. Worked on campaign against the Newberry cement plant and on Charter One Amendment to allow Alachua County to have stricter environmental regulations than the state. Worked to elect environmental candidates to the Alachua County Commission, including Newport, Hutch, and Byerly. Worked on City of Alachua campaigns to prevent major industrial development, including those of Robbins and Kosman-Rothseiden. Served on EXCOM for three years: on the Political, Newsletter Folding and Nominating committees, and helped to edit the newsletter. For the past two years, serving as Events Coordinator.

Paula Huessy Stahmer

Attorney, civil rights advocate; former member of several city and county advisory boards. I participated in local campaigns, including the preservation of the Hogtown Creek and Gainesville's wetlands. I opposed the relaxation of environmental protection rules in the County and City Comprehensive Plans. The Sierra Club needs to maintain its credibility as a source of sound scientific information and responsible policies for the preservation of the nat-

ural world. We must remain a reliable public forum where all ideas can be examined and all of the community is welcomed.

Rudy Rothseiden

As a 24 year-old native, growing up in the Gainesville area has spurred many outdoor experiences and fostered my love and care for nature. I grew up swimming in the springs, fishing the Gulf, canoeing the Santa Fe River, and exploring state parks. I want these simple pleasures accessible not only today but tomorrow. It seems nature is no longer a "quality of life" issue, but a "source of income." The Sierra Club can play an influential role in preserving our non-renewable resources and I would greatly enjoy contributing to the future of our home.

Bill Radunovich

I feel that Gainesville needs to plan its future development recognizing the importance of sound environmental management, and I see the Sierra Club as a key component in reaching that future. As a way to reach that goal, I have been a member, for almost three years, of the MTPO Bicycle Pedestrian Advisory Board, working to further alternative transportation in Alachua County. In the past I have worked in politics as both a volunteer and a paid professional. Currently, I am a UF graduate student in political science, a member of the Florida Trail Association, and an active scuba diver.

Richard "Whitey" Markle

Jacksonville native, 61 years old. B.S. in Industrial Arts Education from FSU. Masters in Urban and Regional Planning from UF. Teaching Laboratory Specialist (Woodshop), UF's College of Architecture, since 1982. Leader of Whitey Markle and the Swamprooters band. Author of several environment tunes: East Florida Blues (growth), Creosote Cemeteries (horse farms), The Song of the Lake (airboats' environmental destruction). Leading the charge against airboat noise in Alachua County since 1995. (Master's Project:

Airboat Noise Around Orange Lake, Florida as a Community Planning Issue). Alachua County Water Use Zoning Team, 2001-2003. Accomplished policy recommendations limiting airboat noise and activity in county waters.

Karen Garren

Teacher, a seeker, a student, and a voice for environmental and social justice issues. Husband Rob is self-employed environmental consultant, specializing in wetland delineation. As a biologist, Karen enjoys sharing outdoors experiences with other enthusiasts. She has been a resident of North Central Florida for 25 years, living in Gainesville for 15 years. We are blessed with some of Florida's loveliest wild places. We hope future generations will be as fortunate. Karen has served as SSJ Outing Chair for the last few years.

Kenneth L. Clark

I have been a member of the Sierra Club since 1989 and webmaster for the Suwannee-St. Johns Group (see GatorSierra.org) for 5 years. I am a sole proprietor of a small business in Gainesville. My interests include hiking, camping, wildlife identification. I'd like to make the website a better resource of information on local and regional outdoor activities, hikes, ecology, as well as political issues.

Dwight Adams

Joined in 1982, motivated by James Watt's appointment as Secretary of Interior. Conservation Committee first year, chair of CC next year, then Group Chair for two years, Excom member through present. Worked on solid waste/recycling at local, state, and national level (chair of national committee for two years) and growth management. Playing a lead role in Alachua County comp plan "battles" for 20 years, Liaison in various cases. Florida Wildlife Federation "Land Conservationist of Year" award for stopping a massive RV camping site on Suwannee.

SUWANNEE ST. JOHNS GROUP SIERRA CLUB ELECTION FOR 2005 EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE MEMBERS and REFERENDUM ON BYLAWS AMENDMENT

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

Each year, the Suwannee-St. Johns Group Sierra Club holds elections for Executive Committee (ExCom) members. The ExCom makes decisions concerning the Group's policy and direction and it represents the Group on a local level. We have a total of 15 ExCom officers serving staggered 2-year terms. This year we will be electing 8 officers. We do not elect members for particular positions, only as members at-large. Then the new executive committee appoints its members to the various positions (eg Chair, Conservation Chair, Secretary, etc.).

Voting Instructions: Indicate your choices by checking the line in front of the names of the candidates. Each member may cast one ballot, voting for no more than eight (8) persons. Joint memberships (as indicated by a "J" after the 3305 on the top line of your address label on the back of this page) are entitled to 2 votes. The second column on the ballot is provided for this. Do not vote twice if you do not have a joint membership.

Mailing Instructions: Remove this page from the newsletter and fold the ballot so that your membership number appears on the outside. Place the ballot in an envelope and mail to: Joan Adams, Elections Committee Chair, 2507 NW 24 Terrace, 32605.

Ballots must be received by December 1st, 2005. Please be sure to mail your ballot in time to allow delivery by that date. If you have any questions about this procedure, call Roberta Gastmeyer at 352-336-2404.

To protect your confidentiality, after confirming your membership, election committee members will remove the label portion before opening the rest of the ballot.

Ballots will be counted on Sunday December 4th, at 1 p.m. at Joan Adams' house (address above). The counting is open to Sierra Club members.

Use this column for single memberships or the 1st voter in joint membership households.

Vote for up to, but no more than, 8 candidates

<input type="checkbox"/> Dwight Adams	<input type="checkbox"/> Rudy Rothseiden
<input type="checkbox"/> Kenneth Clark	<input type="checkbox"/> Paula Stahmer
<input type="checkbox"/> Karen Garren	<input type="checkbox"/> Sherry Steiner
<input type="checkbox"/> Richard Markle	<input type="checkbox"/> Stephen Williams
<input type="checkbox"/> Bill Radunovich	

Use this column for the 2nd voter in joint membership households.

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NOVEMBER 2005 CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Nov. 3, Thursday, 7:30 p.m. General meeting: Go to Alaska, Now! By Dwight Adams. Details on page 1.

Nov. 9, Wednesday. Note the early deadline for submissions for December newsletter. Holidays coming, get your articles & ads in ASAP!

Nov. 10, Thursday, 7 p.m. Executive committee meeting at Santa Fe Comm. College Downtown Gainesville Campus.

Nov. 12 & 13, weekend. Downtown Arts Festival Gainesville. Stop by the Sierra Club table and say "Hi", 10 a.m. to 5 p.m.

Nov. 18, Friday, 7:30 p.m. Folding party for the December newsletter. At Scott Camil & Sherry Steiner's house, call 375-2563.

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MEMBERSHIP CATEGORIES

	INDIVIDUAL	JOINT
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SUPPORTING	\$25	\$50
CONTRIBUTING	\$25	\$50
LIFE	\$2500	\$5000
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STUDENT	\$25	\$50
LIMITED MEMBER	\$25	\$50

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