



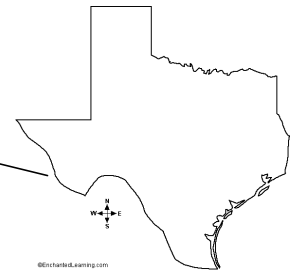
SIERRA CLUB

FOUNDED 1892

CAHABA GROUP GREATER BIRMINGHAM AREA

Very Interesting Meeting!!!

Our very own David Freeman will share pictures and stories about his trip to Big Bend National Park.



Caution: David is an excellent photographer and coupled with the stunning scenery of Big Bend you may be infected with "Big Bend" Fever!

AN OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER OF THE SIERRA CLUB, THE CAHABA GROUP, GREATER BIRMINGHAM AREA, ALABAMA

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President Bush's Environmental Record Earns an "F"

As the national Presidential election race begins to heat up, it seems only fitting to look at the incumbent's environmental record. The League of Conservation Voters 2003 Presidential Report Card gave President Bush, at the midpoint of his term in office, an overall grade of "F" for his actions related to the environment. The Executive Summary found, "George W. Bush is well on his way to compiling the worst environmental record in the history of our nation. The Bush Administration's approach to the environment demonstrates a clear bias toward the interests of the oil industry, the utility industry and other corporate contributors at the expense of the health and safety of the public. For President Bush, corporate interests come first—and the public interest in clean air and safe drinking water comes last."

A few of the issues analyzed in the report follow...

The Bush Administration reduced environment and natural resources spending by \$1 billion in his Fiscal Year 2003 budget, while giving billions of dollars of subsidies and incentives to timber, oil, and mining companies. Administration budget cuts have lead to a 12% loss of enforcement staff at the EPA, dropping the total number of EPA staffers conducting inspections and enforcing environmental regulations to the lowest level since the agency's founding. By EPA

estimates, this loss of resources could lead to an increase of U.S. pollution levels by 330 million pounds a year.

Bush's "Healthy Forests" initiative increases logging in national forests, while at the same time limiting public involvement, circumventing environmental review otherwise required by the National Environmental Policy Act, and curtailing the ability of federal courts to halt logging while hearing legal challenges.

The "Clear Skies" initiative would allow electric utilities to increase profits at the expense of environmental protection and public health, by repealing and weakening public health protections of the Clean Air Act. The program would allow individual facilities to increase polluting emissions, raise the amount of coal burned by power companies, generate millions more tons of smog-forming nitrogen oxides, allow three times more mercury emissions than current law, and do nothing to reduce carbon dioxide emissions (a primary cause of global warming).

As a further assault on the nation's air quality, the administration made and proposed regulatory changes that would weaken Clean Air Act "new source review." Under new source review, the Clean Air Act required older, more polluting, industrial plants to upgrade their pollution controls if they make significant renovations or expansions that would increase emissions of harmful pollutants. The Bush administration's rules would allow plants to significantly expand their operations and polluting emissions without upgrading emission control equipment.

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Cornelius Falls & Common Grounds Tour and Day Hike

SAT 5/29 * CALL 256-287-1652

This our annual joint hike with Friends of the Locust Fork from the Common Grounds Community, in Blount County, to beautiful Cornelius Falls on the Locust Fork River. The total distance of the hike is less than 4-miles with some off trail sections. At the falls, we will have a leisurely lunch and just lie on the rocks and sun, or sun and swim. After lunch, we will return to Common Grounds for a tour of some of the environmentally friendly dwellings there including a yurt that has solar power. Our host for the hike and tour is Stephen Guesman, who with his wife Martha Hunter, own the solar yurt. This is a no dog outing. Meet at the Golden Rule BBQ on Highway 79 (near Jefferson State College) at 9:00 a.m. Trip leader Joe Copeland 256-287-1652 or Stephen Guesman 205-429-4120

Pinhoti Trail Day Hike

SAT 6/5 * CALL 205-221-6196

Come and join us for a moderate to strenuous hike on a section of the Pinhoti Trail near Cheaha State Park. This will be a joint outing with the Alabama Trails Association. Optional dinner after hike. Meet at 8:00 a.m. at the Office Max at Village East. For more info contact Carroll Wilson at 205-221-6196.

ExCom Meeting

MON 6/7 * CALL 205-795-2043

Executive Committee meeting at the Sierra Club SE Office at 6:30 pm. All members welcome and encouraged to attend and participate. Paul Perret 205-795-2043.

ICO Team Meeting

TUE 6/8 * CALL 205-970-6500

ICO Team Meeting 6:30 p.m. at Alabama Outdoors in Homewood. Everyone welcome! If you are interested in working with inner city youths on occasional Saturdays, please join us at our meeting or contact Margo Rebar at 205-970-6500 e-mail, no expertise required.

mrebar@earthlink.net

Very Interesting Meeting

TUE 6/15, 6:30 PM @ BIRMINGHAM ZOO AUDITORIUM CALL 205-795-2043 BIG BEND NATIONAL PARK, TEXAS

Our very own David Freeman will share pictures and stories about his trip to Big Bend National Park. Never heard about Big Bend? Here is what the National Park Site has to say...

"Big Bend National Park is a land of borders. Situated on the boundary with Mexico along the Rio Grande, it is a place where

Big Bend Natl Park



countries and cultures meet. It is also a place that merges natural environments, from desert to mountains. It is a place where south meets north and east meets west, creating a great diversity of plants and animals. The park covers over 801,000 acres of west Texas in the place where the Rio Grande makes a sharp turn - the Big Bend."

Let me tell you something folks, having been to Big Bend on a National Outing in November, 2002, this place is desert and mountains and blue sky and ever so much more!!! ***DON'T MISS THIS ONE!***

Hiwassee, Canoe/Kayak

FRI THRU SUN (6/11, 12, 13) * CALL 205-647-6961

Car Camp and canoe the scenic Hiwassee River in South-east Tennessee. Participates must have some canoeing, kayaking experience. Participates must also provide their boat, camping gear and transportation. Leave Friday at 5:30 with leader or you may want drive up on your own, will camp Friday, Saturday and return Sunday afternoon. We will paddle the Hiwassee River with class 1 and 2 whitewater on both days. Leader approval required. Call Vicky Wilson 205-647-6961 or vickywilson58@hotmail.com

Day Hike to Dugger Mountain

SAT 6/19 * CALL 205-592-9885

A strenuous 11-mile hike on Dugger Mountain, Alabama's newest designated Wilderness. Dugger Mountain is a 19,200-acre Wilderness in the Talladega National Forest, near Piedmont Alabama, and is the State's 2nd tallest peak at 2,140-feet. We will be hiking on the Pinhoti Trail, which traverses the Wilderness. Bring plenty of water. Rated strenuous due to distance and elevation gain. We will meet at 8 am at the Office Max at Village East. Call Carl Sloan at 205-592-9885

Bear Creek Canoe/Kayak Section 1

Sun 6/ 27 * Call 205-854-7090

Section 1 of Bear Creek has an abundance of swift shoals sandy beaches, and rock formations. Water is released from a TVA dam on weekends to accommodate paddlers and, although the water has a good flow, the trip is suitable for beginners. TVA has acquired a 50-ft corridor on each side of the creek, therefore we can have lunch and explore without being concerned about infringing on private property. The trip is 6.7 miles with one short but mandatory portage. We will meet at 9 am at the McDonalds on the east side of Highway 78 in Jasper. (The McDonalds is located at the entrance of a shopping center that includes a Goodys Clothing Store). Call Jim Temple 205-854-7090

An ICO Outing / Saturday May 8, 2004

Weather: Sunny & Warm.

Destination: Turkey Creek Nature Preserve.

Participants: 11 kids, aged 8 to 14 years, from the Kingston Projects area and from the Interfaith Hospitality House and 4 volunteer adults.

Activity: clean up of trash along trail and creek and whatever else struck our fancy.

Outings with ICO have a way of turning out differently than planned and usually involve unanticipated discoveries. Our participants had been told to prepare for getting dirty (maybe wet) since we would be picking up trash in an area not yet officially open to the public. The Black Warrior-Cahaba River Land Trust has recently acquired Turkey Creek Nature Preserve and is still preparing it for public use. We were finding the usual plastic bottles, beer cans, tires, and other non-biodegradable litter as we walked along the roadbed toward the waterfall-slide area of Turkey Creek. Everyone was actively involved in clean-up activities, until we reached the area which has easy access to the water with shallow areas for wading...water tumbling over large flat rocks, rocks to climb that overlook the creek and falls, and a deeper area used as a swimming hole by locals. Forget those black plastic bags!

"Are we allowed to touch the water?" was the query of one girl who had never before been to a stream, let alone one as gorgeous as Turkey Creek. Within a short time, she and her friends were fully immersed, giggling, splashing, and discovering tiny fishes and snails that shared the water with them. Each participant soon found a special place to enjoy this nature preserve - high on the rocks sharing companionship, exploring the shallows, sliding on the slick algal covered rocks, watching the great blue heron survey the water for food, while a few continued with removal of sneakers, underwear, and plastic bottles from the shore.

Amidst the other litter, one boy discovered a dead hawk (probably red-shouldered) entangled in monofilament. What to do? Without special permission, it is illegal to be in possession of a bird of prey or any of its parts. After lunch, we adults presented the youth participants with this dilemma of what to do now. Can we bury the dead bird? Will others get entangled, if we leave the fishing line attached, even if buried? Should we take it with us? How can we avoid unintentional killing of wildlife? Why

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In early 2003, the administration announced it might use its regulatory powers to limit the scope of the Clean Water Act. Under this proposal, an estimated 60 percent of the nation's rivers, lakes and streams would no longer be protected by the Clean Water Act. Breaking with the policy of Bush's father and President Reagan, the administration failed to renew the "polluter pays" tax to fund Superfund cleanups. Dwindling resources for the Superfund have resulted in fewer cleanups, and increasing reliance on taxpayer money to fund cleanups.

Further, Bush's administration facilitated the destructive practice of mountaintop removal coal mining by rewriting the rules to allow coal and mining companies to deposit mine waste in the nation's waters.

To read the full report, see the League of Conservation Voters website at

www.lcv.org

Wanted!!! Presenters for General Interest Mtgs.

Hey, why not? You're an interesting person with a story to tell. Present your environmental story and rally other members to the cause or share your outdoor adventure with those of us who had to stay at home and work!
Contact Lisa Harris

harrisalisa@charter.net

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isn't monofilament biodegradable? The final decision was to remove and dispose of the hawk with regrets that we had no way to preserve it as a demonstration of the hazards of non-judicious disposal of plastic products.

"This was the best day of my life! I am going to tell my mom everything!" was heard in the car ride home. And the words heard as she burst open the door at home were "Mama! I went swimming!" And, surely, later the sad tale of the hawk was heard and remembered.

Friends of Moss Creek Preserve Trail Crew

Hats off to Ken Wills and volunteers from a variety of environmental and outdoor groups (and Jody Patterson, Councilman, City of Hoover) for completing another 1/4 mile of trails at the Moss Creek Preserve in Hoover. It is great to see so many folks involved in environmental and outdoor groups, including SE Climbing Coalition, Nature Conservancy, Sierra Club, UAB Circle K, AL Outdoor Club.



Just a reminder that every time the media or anti-environmental politicians try to portray those of us who care about the environment as a bunch of "whacko extremist" how truly wrong they are.

We are mainstream, everyday people who are not going to surrender clean air, clean water and safe food for their profit without a fight. Sometimes, with all the bad news about the pollution and degradation of the land, it is really nice to know that there are a lot of us who still care about environmental quality, locally, nationally and globally.

Outings Notes

In the interest of facilitating the logistics of some outings, it is customary that participants make carpooling arrangements. The Sierra Club does not have insurance for carpooling arrangements and assumes no liability for them. Carpooling, ride sharing, or anything similar, is strictly a private arrangement among the participants. Participants assume the risks associated with this travel.

Anyone is welcome on outings, but if you make repeated trips, please join the Club. (See details in this newsletter.) Join us for optional dinner if you'd like. Check difficulty rating and children/age requirements. Questions? Contact trip leader.

National Sierra Club Liability Waiver

In order to participate on one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms/> or call 415-977-5630. **Canoe Trips:** All canoe outings are suitable for beginner/novice canoeists unless otherwise noted in the trip description. Life jackets are required and must be worn. You are responsible for finding your own canoe. Borrow one, paddle with a friend, or rent from Alabama Outdoors, 870-1919, or another outfitter. Bring your picnic lunch and something to drink while on the water. If you have further questions, please call the trip leader.

Directions to Meeting Places

- Alabama Outdoors, Homewood**—3054 Independence Drive on Hwy 31.
- Birmingham Zoo Auditorium**—2630 Cahaba Road, near Botanical Gardens.
- Days Inn, Hoover**—At the Intersection of Hwy 31 and Lorna Road, adjacent to I-65.
- Golden Rule BBQ, Hwy 79**—Right side of Alabama Hwy. 79 (as you're driving away from Birmingham). Past Tarrant City, just past traffic light at intersection of AL Hwy 79 and Sunhill Road. Before Carson Road intersection, near Jefferson State Community College.
- Hayden/Corner Park and Ride**—Hayden/Corner exit 284 off I-65 North. Turn right off exit ramp, then first right, then enter parking lot on right.
- Jack's, Double Springs**—On U.S. Hwy. 278 in Double Springs just east of stoplight at intersection of Hwys 278 and AL 33 and AL 195.
- McDonald's, Trussville**—I-59 North to exit # 141 (Chalkville Road exit). Turn right at end of exit ramp and see McDonald's on immediate left.
- McRaes, Roebuck**—9110 Parkway East, just off I-59 at 4th Avenue South exit.
- Oak Mountain State Park**—I-65 South from Birmingham to Hwy 119/Cahaba Valley Road exit. Right off exit ramp, then left at first traffic light. Follow road 2 miles, then left at stop sign. Go 2 miles past the fee gate, then right onto Terrace Drive. Go to park office parking lot between boat parking and beach parking.
- Office Max, Village East**—7523 Crestwood Blvd. Across Crestwood Blvd. from Sears, Century Plaza.
- Piccadilly, Palisades**—Piccadilly Cafeteria parking lot in the Palisades Shopping Center on Palisades Pkwy, just off Greensprings Hwy.
- Ruffner Mountain Nature Center**—I-20 to Oporto-Madrid exit. Head away from mall area. Go 1.5 miles, then turn right on Rugby Avenue. Go 1 mile, then turn right on 81st Street South Follow signs to the Center.
- Shoney's, Oxford**—I-20 East to Oxford exit 185. Left at end of ramp on AL 21. Go under interstate and see Shoney's on right.
- Sierra Club S.E. Office**—1330 21st Way South, near Five Points South, one block south of Highland Police Station. Turn onto 21st Way S. at Temple Beth-El. Go to end of block to last building on right.

At a Glance – Sierra Club Events – June 2004

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
5/23	5/24	5/25	5/26	5/27 Newsletter Mailout Party	5/28	5/29 Day Hike Cornelius Falls
5/30	5/31	6/1	6/2	6/3	6/4	6/5 Day Hike Pinhoti Trail
6/6	6/7 ExCom Mtg	6/8 ICO Mtg	6/9	6/10	6/11 Canoe Hiwassee River	6/12 Canoe Hiwassee River
6/13 Canoe Hiwassee River	6/14	6/15 Very Interesting Mtg @ B-Ham Zoo Auditorium	6/16	6/17	6/18	6/19 Hike Dugger Mtn
6/20	6/21	6/22	6/23	6/24 Newsletter Mailout Party	6/25	6/26
6/27 Canoe Bear Creek	6/28	6/29	6/30	7/1	7/2	7/3

Volunteer volunteer volunteer volunteer volunteer volunteer volunteer volunteer volunteer volunteer
 No subliminal advertising volunteer has been used in the creation of this volunteer newsletter!
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1330 21ST WAY

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contacts and more!!
<http://alabama.sierraclub.org/cahaba.html>

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To join or renew your membership, send coupon with a check for \$25 made out to the Sierra Club. Mail to John Walker, 2833 21st Street, Ensley, Birmingham, AL 35208-2217 or call John at 786-0622.
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