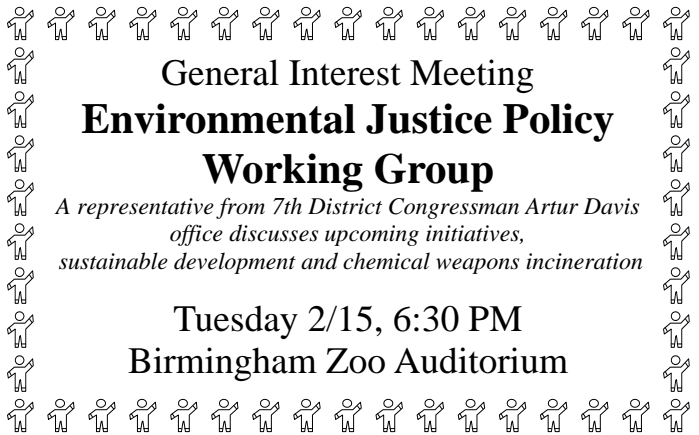




**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

CAHABA GROUP
GREATER BIRMINGHAM AREA



**General Interest Meeting
Environmental Justice Policy
Working Group**

A representative from 7th District Congressman Artur Davis office discusses upcoming initiatives, sustainable development and chemical weapons incineration

**Tuesday 2/15, 6:30 PM
Birmingham Zoo Auditorium**

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

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Committee And
Other Contacts**

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Vacant

Vice Chair
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Supersewer: the Sequel

If you haven't already heard, Jefferson County is running full-steam ahead with plans to buy Birmingham Water Works & Sewer Board lines and connect them to the supersewer by means of either a pipeline over the Cahaba River or a tunnel under it. This would effectively open up 1,000s of acres of land in the heart of the watershed for commercial development. Both Cahaba Group, and the state chapter of Sierra Club opposed the supersewer, as did 22 other groups. To us, this plan appears to be a scheme to provide sewer service to the same few developers what would have profited from the supersewer. And ratepayers will pick up the tab for the purchase of the BWWSB lines, for the "connection" by whatever means, and for whatever other costs pop out of the wood work. The County Commission is expected to act on this purchase VERY soon!

For more on this issue, stay tuned to our website

www.alabama.sierraclub.org/cahaba.html

**Alabama Environmental Council's
Recycling Center...by Keith Johns**

It's possible that some of you kind readers have stopped bringing materials downtown because you heard glass was no longer collected at the AEC Environmental Recycling Center. Well, kick up your heels because glass is being collected again!

In September, the AEC had to stop collecting glass. While AEC staff and volunteers were searching for new and innovative markets for glass, it was one of the Center's regular patrons who was the catalyst for getting glass recycled again. Because one passionate recycler sparked a series of conversations, the AEC is now working

(Continued on page 3)

Letter to the Editor

**Proposed Buyout of Sewer Lines by
County Smells Like a Ruse**

With apologies to Shakespeare, a ruse by any other name would stink as bad. I refer to the proposed buyout of the Birmingham Water Works and Sewer Board's sewer lines by Jefferson County.

The official reason given by the county's Environmental Services Department is that adding customers will help hold down the rate increases for current users. This "economy of scale" argument doesn't pass the smell test with me, since I've never seen it work in government. Also, the 11th-hour surprise option proposed at the Dec. 14 public hearing by Hendon Engineering appears to be "Supersewer: the Sequel."

Given that Hendon recommended the supersewer and got the general contract on the project, I'm not surprised that the company once again proposes the most expensive option, which also happens to be a tunnel under the Cahaba River. Shucks, if you offer up the costliest and most reprehensible option, two things can happen: 1) You get away with it because nobody's noticing during the holidays, or 2) people complain so bitterly about the tunnel that the other bad option — a pipeline over the river — wins by default.

Is this sewer buyout for the benefit of the current ratepayers? Or is it really for the benefit of a handful of over-the-mountain landowners whose property will be easier to market if sewer service is available? And why should Jefferson County ratepayers facilitate development in Shelby County?

Smells like a ruse and a ratepayer ripoff to me.

Joseph Cooper, Cahaba Heights

Canoe and Kayak Race Locust Fork Invitational

SAT 2/5 * CALL 205-681-4751

Come as a spectator or volunteer with
The Friends of the Locust Fork River,
coordinator of the Locust Fork River
events.

There's always plenty of action on the river for the whole family to enjoy, plus food and drinks for sale by Boy Scouts. If it's chilly, there's a bonfire; if it's mild, you can dangle your toes in the river. The canoe/kayak races are very "kid friendly". We encourage you to bring the kids: they'll witness world-class white-water paddling and racing skills, get to see "how to" competition.

We need volunteers as race starters, judges, timekeepers, scorers, etc. We'll train you properly and pair you with an experienced volunteer. The volunteer shifts for the Locust Fork Races are 9:00 AM to 1:00 PM and 1:00 PM to 5:00 PM. Consider coming out for the day: volunteer one half and play and lollygag for the other. In case you just can't leave, pack your camping gear so you can enjoy the awards ceremony, the after party, and sleeping under the stars to the river's music.

TO VOLUNTEER: call Sam Howell at 205-681-4751 or e-mail at

showell@brescoinc.com

For more information about either race, check out either of the following:

www.flfr.org

www.birminghamcanooclub.org

Day Hike Sipsey Wilderness—Parker Branch and Hubbard Creek

SUN 2/6 * CALL 205-854-7090

A strenuous off trail 5 mile out and back hike from 201/202 trailhead to Parker/Hubbard confluence. Stream crossings may be necessary. Negotiation of deadfall, briars, and uneven ground necessary. Meet at Golden Rule BBQ, Hwy 79 at 8 am. Trip leader Jim Temple 205-854-7090

ExCom Meeting

MON 2/7 * 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. Call 205-795-2043.

ICO Team Meeting

TUE 2/8, 6:30 PM * CALL 205-970-6500

ICO Team meeting at Alabama Outdoors in Homewood. We have an exciting set of places to go this season:

- Birmingham Southern Environmental Center
- Anniston Museum of Natural History
- Meeting with Mr. Compost
- Earth Day at the Botanical Gardens and more.

Please join us if you are interested in helping youth learn more about the natural world. Contact Margo Rebar at (205) 970-6500 or

mrebar@earthlink.net

Day Hike Pinhoti Trail

SAT 2/12 * CALL 205-792-3847

This is the Pinhoiti Trail north of Cheaha State Park on parts of sections 6 and 7. It begins on a 2.5-mile stretch of CCC road and then ascends Blue Mountain and travels south past Bald Rock into Cheaha State Park. It concludes at the Cave Creek intersection and parking. There 1000 feet of elevation change (uphill) for a moderate to strenuous 7 miles through the hollers of Talladega National Forest. Bring water, lunch, sturdy boots. Meet at 8:30 a.m. at the Kmart Parking Lot at the corner of Crestwood Blvd and Montclair Rd. Just off exit 132B on 1-20. Leader, Tammy Cooper 205-792-3847.

General Interest Meeting

TUE 2/15, 6:30PM

BIRMINGHAM ZOO AUDITORIUM

Last year, 7th District Congressman Artur Davis formed the Environmental Justice Policy Working Group to look at practical solutions to some of our most pressing environmental issues on which environmental activists, scien-

tists and businesspeople are working together.

We'll have a representative from Rep. Davis' office to discuss the group's work and upcoming initiatives on sustainable development in Alabama's Black Belt region. We have invited an attorney working with communities in Anniston who remain in harm's way as chemical weapons incineration continues.

Slide Presentation by Jim Lacefield

THU 2/17 * CALL 205-647-6961

Back by popular demand, Alabama geologist and author will present a slide show on the ancient story of the Locust Fork River at the Frank Green Building in Oneonta Alabama at 6:30 pm. For more details contact Vicky Wilson at 205-647-6961.

Canoe Duck River

SAT 2/19/05 * CALL 205-795-2043

Come and canoe the Duck River in Cullman County before the dam is built. Leader approval required. Leader, Paul Perret 205-795-2043

Newsletter Mailing Party & Potluck

THU 2/24, 6:30 PM * CALL 205-871-1981

Potluck supper at Dick Echols' home, 4032 Montevallo Road. Bring a dish and plan to make new friends and visit old ones. 6:30 pm. Dick Echols, 205-871-1981.

Parking Note: Please park on Glencoe Drive Across Montevallo Road from Dick's house. Please do not park in Dick's driveway. This will avoid "driveway accidents".

Day Hike Collier Creek Canyon

SUN 3/6 * CALL 256-287-1652

Collier Creek is located in the north east of the Bankhead National Forest, and it is a tributary of Brushy Creek. Since the creek is not located in the Wilderness, the number of participants is not an issue. This will be an off trail hike. Great scenery is a given. Meet at the Hayden/Corner Park and Ride at 8:00 am. Trip Leader, Joe Copeland 256-287-1652

Dogwood Alliance

By Joshua Low

Dogwood Alliance, a regional network of 70 organizations protecting southern forests and communities from the impacts of unsustainable industrial forestry practices, is launching a new campaign to protect the Cumberland Plateau.

The Cumberland Plateau and Southern Appalachian region is a place of beauty, diversity, and awe. This area is home to the South's largest remaining intact hardwood forests, is the global center of freshwater aquatic diversity, and a virtual "Salamander kingdom", with the richest concentration of salamanders of any temperate region of the world. It also home to hundreds of traditional, family-owned sawmills and hardwood businesses and a hotspot of tourism and whitewater recreation. Yet the forests and way of life in this area is being destroyed for the production of disposable paper products. Bowater is the largest paper company logging the Cumberland Plateau. Bowater is destroying the land and stripping away history in the Cumberland Plateau and Southern Appalachian region by logging endangered hardwood forests and replacing them with lifeless pine farms. Large scale clear cutting scars the region. Chemical fertilizers and herbicides are being sprayed from airplanes to make sure only the pines grow back. Many of the chemicals are linked to making people sick and degrading water quality.

We have the opportunity to protect the environment and quality of life in this region by convincing Bowater to end unsustainable forestry practices and increase the use of post-consumer recycled fiber in its paper products—which would take pressure off of our intact forests.

If you would like to get involved, now is the time. The Dogwood Alliance has an organizer working to build the group in Alabama. There will be an organizer working in Alabama. For more information on the Dogwood Alliance and the campaign, go to our website at

www.dogwoodalliance.org

or contact either Joshua at

jlow@greencorps.org

or Naomi at 828.251.2525.

(Continued from page 1)

with Lafarge Cement on a project to use recycled glass in cement. Now, all the glass collected at the AEC's downtown Center is hauled to Lafarge's plant near Calera. There it is crushed and mixed with other raw materials for cement. The AEC is ecstatic to be able to offer this service (again).

Any kind and any color of glass is acceptable. This includes window panes, pyrex™, drinking glasses and, of course, bottles. Sorting is no longer required. Safety glass, or glass with metal embedded, is not recyclable.

Other materials collected at the Center are steel and aluminum cans, newspaper, corrugated cardboard, plastics #1 and #2 (bottles only!), and mixed paper. The Center is located on the corner of 2nd Avenue North and 25th Street, and is open 24/7. The Center is staffed Mon-Fri from 9 am to 4pm, and early on weekend afternoons. , call the AEC at 322-3126. The AEC is always looking for people who would like to help a few hours every month or two at the Recycling Center.

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

Birmingham Zoo Auditorium—2630 Cahaba Road, near Botanical Gardens.

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.

Cracker Barrel, Trussville—I-59 North to exit # 141 (Chalkville Road exit). Turn right at end of exit ramp and look for Cracker Barrel Sign to left.

Cracker Barrel, Pelham—I-65 South, exit #248. (Cahaba Valley Rd) Turn right, Cracker Barrel on right.

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.

Kmart Parking Lot—corner of Crestwood Blvd and Montclair Road. From I-20 East exit 132B, cross Crestwood Blvd, see Kmart on right.

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 — February 2005

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
1/30	1/31	2/1	2/2	2/3	2/4	2/5 Canoe & Kayak Races—Locust Fork
2/6 Day Hike Sipsey Wilder- ness	2/7 Ex Comm Meeting	2/8 Inner City Out- ings Meeting	2/9	2/10	2/11	2/12 Day Hike Pinhoti Trail
2/13	2/14	2/15 General Interest Meeting	2/16	2/17 Slide Presentation Jim Lacefield	2/18	2/19 Canoe Duck River
2/20	2/21	2/22	2/23	2/24 Newsletter Mail- ing / Pot Luck	2/25	2/26
2/27	2/28	3/1	3/2	3/3	3/4	3/5
3/6 Day Hike Collier Creek Canyon	3/7	3/8	3/9	3/10	3/11	3/12



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Visit us online for newsletters, issues,
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.

(Dues include a subscription to *Sierra* magazine and newsletter and are **not** tax deduct.)

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