

August 2006

Sierra

North Alabama Group



Visit our website
<http://alabama.sierraclub.org/na.html>

General Meeting and Picnic Thursday, Aug 17, 5:30 p.m.

Pool Party at Monte Sano Pool. \$2.00
and bring a covered dish.

Tuesday Night Hikes

Meet at 6:00pm at the Monte Sano
Hiker's Parking lot.

Pool Party at Monte Sano Pool

Bring a covered dish to share. Drinks, ice, paper plates, and plastic forks will be provided. We'll start eating at 6:30 but you can arrive and relax or swim as early as 5:30pm. At the entrance window, explain that you are with the Sierra Club; YOU MUST SIGN IN AND PAY \$2, even if you don't plan to swim. Please do not bring any glass bottles. Beer cans must have koozies or brown bags. Directions from Bankhead Pkwy: At top of mountain, continue straight ahead on Fearn at 4-way stop. Turn left onto Nolen Ave at next stop sign. After one block turn right onto Cooper. After two blocks turn left onto unnamed street. From Governor's Dr.: Turn onto Monte Sano Blvd. After passing the school and fire station on right, turn right on Mae Dr. then turn left on Georgette.

- the Editor

Honeycomb Creek Slated for More Development

Concerned homeowners of the Honeycomb community on Lake Guntersville in Grant, Alabama are working to preserve a pristine waterway from over-development. Honeycomb Creek (a.k.a. Jagger Creek) is home to a host of wild life including bullfrogs, turtles, beaver, egrets and many more birds and marine-life. Bald eagles have even been spotted crossing the waterway. This area is the first body of water on the left when traveling on Hwy 431 from Huntsville toward Guntersville.

Jagger Branch is currently one of the highest density boating activity areas on Lake Guntersville. TVA and The Corp of Engineers are considering issuing a permit to a developer wishing to build a community boathouse to house 20 boats in this already congested area. Construction and everyday operation of this boat house will further add to fuel and oil spill pollution risk and greatly increase potential environmental contamination of this very delicate area endangering active wetlands and wildlife in the North and East end and elsewhere in Jagger Branch.

The additional concern is the precedence this permit sets for future oversized boathouses on an already congested small waterway. There is a large group of concerned citizens opposing the permit and they are currently soliciting input from environmental experts to help prove the danger to the wildlife and the wetlands. If you have expertise in this area, wish to know more about the situation or have questions or comments feel free to contact Kathy Leberte at 256-505-0515 or David Nast at 256-682-6181.

- the Editor

Four Steps to Become a Cool City

Getting your city to become part of the fight against global warming is as simple as the four steps outlined below. These steps are modeled on the Cities for Climate Protection program, a successful initiative run by the International Council for Local Environmental Initiatives (ICLEI) to help cities reduce global warming pollution. Encouraging your city to join ICLEI's Cities for Climate Protection program is an excellent way to fulfill the Cool Cities pledge. But any city can start making a difference by putting existing smart energy solutions to work today. Visit iclei.org for more information on the Cities for Climate Protection program.

Step 1: Take the "Cool Cities" Pledge

The first step towards curbing global warming pollution in your community is to ask your mayor to sign the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement. This agreement sets the goal of reducing citywide global warming carbon dioxide (CO2) pollution to 7 percent below 1990 levels by 2012. See seattle.gov/mayor/climate

Step 2: Conduct a Global Warming Emissions Inventory

The next step is to conduct an inventory of your city's current global warming emissions. This information will identify the city's major CO2 sources (and the greatest opportunities for reductions), and will provide a baseline to judge the city's progress towards its goal. Cities can receive technical assistance to conduct a global warming emissions inventory from a variety of sources including state and federal agencies as well as ICLEI through its Cities for Climate Protection program.

Step 3: Create a Solutions Plan

After completing its global warming inventory, your city will be ready to develop a solutions plan that can reduce emissions while lowering energy costs for the city. While every city's energy solutions plan will be unique, there are three important strategies: Green Vehicle Fleets, Energy Efficiency, and Renewable Energy. In some combination, these solutions, which are illustrated with specific success stories later in this guide, will form the foundation of your city's comprehensive energy-saving plan. For examples of Cool City Solutions Plans, visit sierraclub.org/coolcities

Step 4: Implement and Monitor Progress

Of course, a plan alone cannot cut global warming pollution. It is essential that your city put the plan into action and monitor its progress periodically. With a strong commitment, a sound plan, and real action, your city will be on its way toward meeting the goals of the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.

- The Sierra Club

Huntsville Utilities wins State Water System Award

Huntsville Utilities has been recognized as having the best operated surface water system in Alabama. The Alabama Department of Environmental Management (ADEM) recently presented Huntsville Utilities with the "Safe Drinking Water Act Excellence Award" in recognition of outstanding effort in implementing the Safe Drinking Water Program.

Huntsville Utilities competed with other large water systems for this award including Birmingham, Mobile, and Montgomery among others. The recognition by ADEM qualifies Huntsville Utilities to represent Alabama in the Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Safe Drinking Water Excellence Award program for the entire EPA Region 4, which consists of 7 southeastern states.

Huntsville Utilities operates two surface water treatment plants that treat water from the Tennessee River, and combined these two plants can treat up to 80 million gallons of water each day. The Huntsville Utilities Water System also includes four groundwater wells and two ground water treatment plants.

- Currents, The FRCA newsletter, July 2006

Coca-Cola Supports Alabama-Georgia Trail

A recent grant of \$100,000 from Coca-Cola North America will help close the 8 mile gap in the Silver Comet-Chief Ladiga trail. The Silver Comet to Chief Ladiga gift is just part of a larger \$500,000 grant made by Coca-Cola North America to the Rails to Trails Conservancy, a national nonprofit organization that works with local communities across the United States to transform unused railroad corridors into trails and greenways. For more information about this project and Rails to Trails Conservancy and the Chief Ladiga Trail go to <http://www.railstrails.org> and <http://epic.jsu.edu/clt/index.html>

- BEN <http://www.bamanews.com/>

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

July - August 2006

2006 ExCom Members

Chair	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Vice-Chair and Treasurer	Sam Denham	539-1033
Conservation chairs		
	Brenda Cummings	881-7447
	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Fund Raising	Judy Jones	852-6179
	and Freddie DiPlacido	533-0651
Membership	Dave Kostowny	325-2296
Newsletter	Jack Drost	880-2644
Outings	Lee Hollingsworth	461-3060
Publicity	Sandy Kiplinger	256/498-1023
Programs	Tom Burley	883-4267
Prgm Logistics Coordinator		
	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Secretary	Judy Burley	883-4267
Tuesday Hikes	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

General Meeting

Thursday July 20, 6:00pm. Hays

Nature Preserve. Bring your own food and drink and a chair. Optional hike of the Preserve afterwards.

Saturday, Aug 12 - Landtrust Hike.

Moderate. Meet at the Landtrust parking lot on Bankhead Parkway at 9:00am. Approximately 5 miles, bring water and hiking boots. For more info contact: Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net

Sunday, Aug 13 - Spider Lily walk.

Easy. Meet at 1:00pm at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. Cost \$3.00. This is a long outing for a Sunday afternoon but well worth it. We will look for spider lilies everywhere they have been reported. Bring water and sturdy hiking boots. Call Doug Horacek 772-6788 for more information.

Tuesday, Aug 15, 6:00pm - Mountain

Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. State Park fee. Leader: Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

Thursday, Aug 17 - Pool Party at Monte Sano Pool. 6:30pm. \$2.00 entry, bring a dish to share.

Tuesday, Aug 22, 6:00pm - Mountain

Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. State Park fee. Leader: Judy Burley, 883-4267.

Sunday, Aug 27 - Blevins Gap hike.

Easy. Hike on the new Land Trust Trail between the bottom of Huntsville Mountain and Blevins Gap, and maybe to the top of Green Mountain depending on our whims. This trail to the gap was built recently by Bill and Louise Varnedoe and

Land Trust volunteers, and permission was given by the church to use its parking lot as a trail head. The trail will eventually extend all the way around the east side of Huntsville Mt (just beneath the Ledges Golf Course) to meet up with the Old Spacewalk Trail going towards Governor's Drive. Meet at 3:00pm behind the Church of the Nazarene on the north side of Cecil Ashburn Drive just as it starts up the mountain, about 0.2 miles from Bailey Cove Road. Gelato afterwards (Italian ice cream). Sam Denham 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

Tuesday, Aug 29, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. State Park fee. Leader: Nancy Dudney, 882-9408.

Thursday, Aug 31- Providence Greenway hike. Easy. Optional dinner on the square afterwards. Meet 6:00pm at the bridge by the parking lot in the square at Providence. Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net.

Thu, Aug 31-Mon, Sept 4 - Devils Fork Gap to Hot Springs Backpack.

Strenuous. This is a 35 mile self sufficient backpack with significant elevation changes over three days. We will depart Thursday at 7:30am arriving in Hot Springs around 3:30pm and take a shuttle to Devils Fork Gap. The descent into Hot Springs on Saturday overlooking the French Broad River is magnificent. We will spend Saturday night at the Hot Springs Campground on the French Broad River with an hour soak in the mineral hot springs. Cost will be approximately \$30 per person to cover shuttle, campsite, and hot tub. Group size will be limited to a maximum of ten and participants must commit by August 25th. For further info contact Tom Burley, 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Tuesday, Sept 5, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. State Park fee. Leader: Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819.

Saturday, Sept 9 - Privet roundup Hayes Preserve. This time we'll be working on the northern trails where the privet is big. You'll get a feeling of accomplishment every time you slice through one of those big privet trunks! Bring water, work gloves, loppers, chain saws, brush cutters. Meet at the Hayes Preserve Parking lot off 431 South, (turn left just south of mile marker 324). Rated easy because you can take a rest whenever you get tired! Sam Denham 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w).

Sat-Sun, Sept 9-10 - Hobbs Cabin Backpack. Moderate. This is a 17-mile backpack mostly on level terrain in the South Cumberland area. We will depart Saturday morning and have dinner on the way back Sunday. For more information

contact Judy Burley at 883-4267 or jcburley@knology.net

Tuesday, Sept 12, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. State Park fee. Leader: Helga Sowa, 534-5656.

Newsletter Labeling

Wednesday, Sept 13, 5:30pm. Down South Condominiums clubhouse. South Mem Parkway. Entrance on right between Big Ten Tires and Schlotzsky's. Judy Burley, 883-4267.

Saturday, Sept 16 - Dugger Mountain hike. Strenuous. Enjoy this section of the Pinhoti Trail running from Forest Service Road 500, near Piedmont, AL, to County Road 55 (Rabbittown Road). Dugger Mountain, the state's second highest point, lies on the trail between these two points. We'll start around 850 feet, ascend to 2,100 feet, then descend back to 850 feet. The elevation gain and constant changes in the nature of the trail gain this 7.7 mile section a rating of strenuous. Bring plenty of water and a picnic lunch. Optional dinner afterwards. Meet Hampton Cove McDonalds, 7:30 am. Lee Hollingsworth, 256.461.3060.

Tuesday, Sept 19, 6:00pm - Mountain Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Monte Sano Hiker's parking lot. State Park fee. Leader: Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

Saturday, Sept 23 - Cloudland Canyon hike. Moderate. Located on the western edge of Lookout Mountain, this is one of the most scenic parks in Georgia. The park straddles a deep gorge cut into the mountain by Sitton Gulch Creek with an elevation change of 800 to 1980 feet. We will hike to the bottom of the gorge where there are two waterfalls cascading into pools below and then hike the rim trail which should provide spectacular vistas. Bring lunch and we will have dinner at a local restaurant. Meet at the Publix in Hampton Cove at 9:00 a.m. Contact Judy Burley at 883-4267 or jcburley@knology.net for more info.

Excom Meeting

Thursday, Sept 28 - Outings 5:15, Excom 5:45.

Thu-Sun, Oct 12-15 - Fontana Dam to Nantahala Backpack. Strenuous. This is a 29 mile self sufficient backpack with significant elevation changes over three days. We will depart on Thursday at noon arriving at Fontana Dam around 6:30 p.m. We will shuttle the vehicles and drivers to Nantahala Outdoor Center. Fontana Dam is the highest dam east of the Mississippi. The variety of forest growth along with the many spectacular views, make this entire section of trail memorable and hopefully we will see some fall color. The cost of the shuttle will be divided among the participants.

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

July - August 2006

Group size will be limited to a maximum of eight. For more information contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Other Outings / Events

The following activities not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning of these activities and makes no representations or warranties about the quality, safety, supervision or management of such activities. They are published only as a reader service.

Hayes Nature Preserve

Saturday, Aug 12 - Midnight Perseid Shower viewing. The Hays Nature Preserve and Von Braun Astronomical Society will have a viewing of the Perseid Meteor Shower on August 12-13 (midnight to 3 a.m.). Lawn Chairs, picnic suppers, sleeping bags are welcome. Scopes will be set up to view stationary celestial bodies. Meet in the Hays Preserve Parking lot between Midnight and 12:30am to be escorted to the viewing area. For info: 427-5116 or www.huntsvillepreserves.com

Water Management in the Alabama Urban Environment

This one-day seminar will be held in Huntsville on August 22nd and will present many critical issues about which many land developers need to know, particularly in Madison County where our streams are already degraded by stormwater runoff. Soos Weber will be one of the three faculty members, along with Gil Rogers of the Southern Environmental Law Center and Bill Deutsch founder of Alabama Water Watch. To find out more about the seminar, visit www.lorman.com or call 866-352-9539.

Save the Date – Saturday Sept 30

National Public Lands Day – Cleanup on the Flint River Please set aside this day to come out and help make a difference in the environment. We all talk about it, how about spending just one day out of the year doing something about it? More details next month.

Nature Wanderers

Saturday, Aug 26 - Sipsey Wilderness/Bankhead Forest Hike. **Moderate.** Join Ted as he leads the group from Wild South for an easy to moderate hike in the Sipsey Wilderness

/Bankhead Forest. Meet at Trading Post in Wren at 9:00 am. Bring lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. Call Ted Kuzma 256-974-7771 for more information.

Sunday, Sept 10 - Sipsey Wilderness Adventure. Easy. There is no better way to spend a leisurely day than exploring the Sipsey Wilderness/Bankhead Forest. Remember to bring your lunch and plenty of water. Meet at the Trading Post in Wren at 9:00 am. Call Ted Kuzma 256-974-7771.

SIERRA CHAPTER RETREAT

Nov 3 - 5, 2006

Join fellow Sierrans for a celebration of fall and the return of cool weather! Enjoy canoeing, hiking, fishing, owl calling, and campfire. Speakers on Longleaf Pine Restoration (Red Cockaded Woodpecker), TVA Land Stewardship and Sierra's "Cool Cities" program.

When: Friday, Nov 3 at 4:00 PM to Sunday, Nov 5 at noon

Where: Bear Creek Education center, Hodges, AL (in northwest Alabama)

Cost: \$85/person includes bunk house, food, meeting lodge, canoes, ropes course and all activities
Scholarships: \$40 subsidy for students or limited income (please indicate how you qualify: e.g., student ID and include documentation)

Mail registration to:
Alabama Sierra Club Retreat
c/o Bruce Martin
150 Paige Place
New Hope, AL 35760
Email: bruce@barbmartin.com

Registration Form for Sierra Chapter Retreat

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone(s): _____

Subsidy requested? No ___

Yes ___ Reason: _____

Regular Meals? _____

Vegetarian? _____

Make check payable to Alabama Sierra Club. Bring a sleeping bag,

pillow, and towels. Map, itinerary, and additional information will be sent after we receive your registration.