

January 2007

Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

**General Meeting Wednesday,
January 17, 6:30 p.m.**

Soos Weber will talk about invasive plants in the North Alabama area.

Tuesday Night Downtown Hikes

Join us at 6 p.m. at the Land Trust Office Parking lot, 907 Franklin St. for a hike around downtown Huntsville.

Exotic Plant Invasion

"Alien Invasion" --no this is not a SciFi movie, but something to truly fear if you like the great outdoors. How many of you know that all across the nation, the invasion of exotic (non-native) plants and animals is rapidly becoming the biggest land management headache of natural lands, next to people management? Soos Weber, Ecologist for the City of Huntsville, will present a program at the next meeting on the exotic invasive plants of North Alabama, and how to report them to "Bugwood". You can become an IFO spotter (Identified Foreign Object) with the North Alabama Chapter of the Alabama Invasive Plant Council.

The Huntsville Chapter of the Sierra Club meets on the third Wednesday evening of each month at 6:30 in the auditorium of the Huntsville Public Library at 915 Monroe St. in downtown Huntsville.

- the Editor

Meetings Move to Wednesday Nights in 2007

Due to conflicts in the library meeting room schedule, general meetings will be the third Wednesday evening of the month in 2007 instead of Thursday. Please make a note of this and let other Sierra members know as well.

- the Editor

Lights! Camera! Energy!

Interested in Global Warming and what we can do about it? Come join the discussion about alternative energy on Saturday, January 27 at the Sierra Club Energy Film Fest, in the Flying Monkey Arts Center.

The Alabama Filmmakers Co-op and the North Alabama Sierra Club are hosting a film festival about global warming, alternative energy and what you can do to help the climate. There will be shorts, documentaries, animated features and comedy specials, all with the message that there is a problem with the Earth's climate but that there is plenty we can do about it. It's a serious subject but there will be plenty of humor mixed in. We will have representatives from local environmental groups at the festival as well as demonstrations of alternative energy (maybe even a biodiesel-powered truck!).

And admission is free!

There will be three showings at the festival - 4:00, 7:00 and 9:00pm. Here are just a few of the films we will show:

French Fries to Go is a short film that documents the origins of Telluride, Colorado's Biodiesel project, which resulted in the launching of the first city bus in the nation to run on 100% pure biodiesel. This funny and hopeful piece features cameos by Daryl Hannah, Dennis Weaver and Dr. Andrew Weil.

Animated shorts on global warming by Mark Fiore, a San Francisco cartoonist and animator whose work appears in the Washington Post, L.A. Times and other publications.

The Vineyard Energy Project portrays a community's successful effort to implement sustainable energy solutions through the use of solar power. It is an inspiring portrait of a community encouraging increased energy conservation and sustainable energy use on the island of Martha's Vineyard.

7:00pm

Kilowatt Ours opens with Vice President Dick Cheney's energy policy speech in which Cheney makes the claim that America needs nearly 1900 new power plants in the next 20 years to meet projected electricity demands. From here, filmmaker Jeff Barrie takes viewers on a journey from the coal mines of West Virginia to the solar panel fields of Florida, as he discovers solutions to America's energy related problems.

SUV City is a short satirical animated film about the absurdity of big SUVs. Some people might find it funnier than others as the underlying message about four common types of big-SUV buyers may ring true.

9:00pm

Earth to America! is a two-hour comedy special that celebrates life on Earth by taking aim at one of our planet's most serious problems: global warming. It features comedy luminaries such as Steve Martin, Robin Williams, Ray Romano, Martin Short, Ben Stiller and Jack Black, as well as Tom Hanks, Robert Kennedy, Jr., and nearly a dozen others.

And there are plenty more. Come join the festival and the discussion about what we can all do to help curb our country's energy appetite.

The Film Fest will be held at the Flying Monkey Arts Center in the old Lowe Mill at 2211 Seminole Drive. Seminole Drive crosses Governor's Drive just west of Memorial Parkway. The historic Lowe Mill is at Seminole and 8th Street with parking at the rear of the building. Look for the big red brick smokestack of the old mill.

<http://www.filmcoop.org/lowemill.html>

the Editor

New TVA Land Policy Protects Public Land

Last month, the Tennessee Valley Authority's (TVA) Board approved a new land policy that protects and preserves undeveloped public lands managed by TVA along reservoirs throughout the Tennessee Valley.

The final policy was recommended by the Board's Community Relations Committee after receiving more than 5000 comments from the public. Overwhelmingly, the majority of the comments supported the draft policy which proposed no residential or retail development on TVA managed land. To view the elements of the plan and obtain a copy of the final plan document, go to:

<http://www.tva.gov/news/releases/octdec06/landpolicy2.htm>

River Guardians Needed

The Flint River Conservation Association is planning a workshop to train people to find signs of nonpoint source pollution and report violations. NPS violations are the number one cause of water pollution in this country. The workshop is free and will be held at the City Engineering Building 1st floor conference room beginning at 9:0am on Saturday, Feb. 24th. It will include a 2 hour field trip so please bring a bagged lunch. The Engineering Building is on Fountain Circle, across from the Bicentennial Fountain. For more detailed information call Soos Weber at 256-427-5116 or visit <http://www.huntsvillepreserves.com>

New Members Wanted!

Mail checks for \$25.00 to:

David Kostowny

116 Pebblebrook Circle, Madison, AL 35758.

Phone: 325-2296. E-mail: divadlk@msn.com

Join the Sierra Club or Renew your Membership for \$25

Name _____
Address _____
City/State _____ Zip _____
Phone _____ Email _____

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.

Enclose check and mail to:

David Kostowny
116 Pebblebrook Circle
Madison, AL 35758.



North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

January – February 2007

2007 ExCom Members

Chair	Liz Poleretzky	461-5819
Vice-Chair and Treasurer	Sam Denham	539-1033
Conservation chair	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Fund Raising	Helga Sowa	534-5656
Membership	Dave Kostowny	325-2296
Newsletter	Jack Drost	880-2644
Outings	Lee Hollingsworth	461-3060
And Tom Burley	883-4267	
Publicity	Sandy Kiplinger	256/498-1023
Programs	Judy Burley	883-4267
Prgm Logistics Coordinator	Doug Horacek	772-6788
Secretary	Judy Burley	883-4267
Tuesday Hikes	Nancy Dudley	882-9408
Web Page	Steven Baty	489-0990

General Meeting

Wednesday, Jan 17, 6:30pm.

Downtown Library auditorium

Soos Weber, Director of the Hays Nature Preserve will talk about invasive plants.

Hike Ratings

General Note: Most Saturday outings take all day and last into early evening. Please allow for this in your schedule

Easy-Less than 5 miles, no serious elevation changes, no trail obstacles.

Moderate-5 to 10 miles, some elevation changes or rough trail (rock hopping), or trail obstacles such as creek crossings.

Strenuous- Over 10 miles, substantial elevation change (1000 ft or more), trail may be rocky, obstructed or nonexistent.

Exploratory- event the leader has not experienced before, may fit any class.

Sat-Sun, Jan 13-14 - Big Hill Pond

carcamp. Easy. We will drive to this state park in West Tennessee Saturday and camp out Saturday night at the park campground. An optional 5-mile dayhike will be planned for Saturday afternoon. Park highlights include an eight-tenths of a mile long boardwalk through the Dismal Swamp; a 70 foot refurbished fire tower that offers a panoramic view of Travis McNatt Lake and the swamp; Civil War Earthworks - a railroad guardpost built by Union Soldiers. Return to Huntsville Sunday. For more information and meeting time/location contact Liz, 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net.

Saturday, Jan 13 - Mountain Mist

Marathon Hike Part I. Strenuous. Hike where thousands of running shoes have gone before and gain a new perspective. The Mountain Mist is a 50K (31 mile) run on the Monte Sano and Land Trust trails. We'll hike it in two parts, beginning and ending at the Monte Sano Hikers parking lot. This is an early bird special for strong hikers who can keep up a moderate pace. The week's weather will determine which side we'll hike first, Monte Sano (14 miles) or the Land Trust (15 miles). Lightening strikes, tornados on the ground and torrential rains will reschedule. Layer down, wear good hiking boots, bring plenty of food and water and a few bucks for the Park's entrance fee. We start our hike at 7:30am sharp. Sandy Kiplinger, slkip@mindspring.com.

Tuesday, Jan 16, 6:00pm - Downtown

Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Leader: Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819.

Wednesday, Jan 17 – General meeting at the downtown library auditorium, 915 Monroe St.

Saturday, Jan 20 – Cave and Wolf Coves hike, Carter Mt, TN. Strenuous. Meet at 8:00am at the old Winn/Dixie parking lot on Winchester Rd (approx 1 mile north of Moores Mill on the right on Winchester Rd). We will hike 8 miles, some off-trail, through two coves on Carter Mountain, TN, passing waterfalls, caves, and some wonderful views. Bring lunch and water. Joette 776-355.

Saturday, January 20. Mountain Mist Marathon Hike Part II. Strenuous. This is part two of the Mountain Mist hike scheduled for Jan 13 (see above). This is an early bird special for strong hikers who can keep up a moderate pace. We will hike either Monte Sano (14 miles) or the Land Trust (15 miles). Layer down, wear good hiking boots, and bring plenty of food and water and a few bucks for the Park's entrance fee. We start our hike at 7:30am sharp. Contact Sandy Kiplinger, slkip@mindspring.com.

Sunday, Jan 21 – Landtrust

Honeysuckle Elimination. Meet at 1:00pm at the Landtrust property across from Fagan Springs Apartments. Bring loppers, pruners, saws, work gloves and water. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for more information.

Tuesday, Jan 23, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Leader: Helga Sowa, 534-5656.

Saturday, Jan 27 - Quillan Canyon-Parker Canyon hike. Strenuous. We will hike two of the most scenic gorges in the Sipsey Wilderness. This is an off trail 8-mile strenuous hike. Be prepared for MANY creek crossings (waterproof your boots). Meet at 7:30am at Madison Cracker Barrel (or earlier for breakfast), or 8:30am at the Trading Post at Wren. Lee Hollingsworth, 256.520.6659 or 256.461.3060.

Excom Meeting

Thursday, Jan 25, 5:30. Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819.

Saturday, Jan 27 – Sierra Film Festival Showings at 4:00, 7:00 and 9:00pm at the Flying Monkey Arts Center, in the old Lowe Mill at 2211 Seminole Dr. www.flyingmonkeyarts.org/lowemill.html

Sunday, Jan 28 - Fagan Springs hike. Easy. Meet at 1:00pm at the Cleermont trail head. Call Doug Horacek for more information at 772-6788.

Tuesday, Jan 30, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Leader: Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

Saturday, Feb 3 - Monte Sano dayhike. Easy. For more information call Helga Sowa at 534-5656.

Tuesday, Feb 6, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St.

Saturday, Feb 10 – Outings Leader Training. The Cahaba Group, in conjunction with the Alabama Chapter of the Sierra Club, will hold a one-day workshop which will give you the information you need to lead groups to the outdoors for the Sierra Club. Registration, lunch and all training materials will be provided free. Space is limited, and you must be a Sierra Club member in good standing to participate. Leader: Bruce Martin, 256-725-2168.

Fri-Sun, Feb 9-11 – Mt. Rogers backpack. Strenuous. Travel to Virginia's Mt. Rogers NRA for some high elevation backpacking among the East's most scenic grassy balds. Encounters with wild ponies are likely as we

backpack approx. 12 miles. Drive time approx 6 hours. Departure Friday 8:00am. For details Lee Hollingsworth, 461-3060 or 520-6659.

Sunday, Feb 11 - Honeysuckle Elimination. Bring loppers, pruning saw, gloves and other equipment to eliminate honeysuckle. Meet at 1:00pm at the Landtrust across from Fagan Springs Apartments. Contact Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for more information.

Tuesday, Feb 13, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Leader: Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819.

Newsletter Labeling

Wednesday, Feb 14, 5:30pm. South Mem Parkway. Entrance on right between Big Ten Tires and Schlotzsky's. Judy Burley, 883-4267.

Sat-Sun, Feb 17-18 - Backpack to Hobbs Cabin. Moderate. Approximately 17 total miles. Call for meeting location & time. Liz Poleretzky, 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net.

Tuesday, Feb 20, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Leader: Helga Sowa, 534-5656.

Saturday, Feb 24 – Flat Rock hike. Moderate. Meet at Monte Sano Hikers parking lot at 8:00am. We will hike 8.4 miles to the Flat Rock. Bring lunch, water and \$3.00 for entrance to the park. Call Doug Horacek for details at 772-6788.

Tuesday, Feb 27, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Leader: Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

Saturday, March 3 - Fiery Gizzard hike. Strenuous. Perhaps one of the most diverse and beautiful trails in Tennessee the terrain is steep and extremely rocky. We will follow the Fiery Gizzard passing the 500-year-old hemlock, Blue Hole Falls, Sycamore Falls, and the Fruit Bowl rock formation before beginning our arduous climb to Raven Point, a spectacular overlook and return via the Doghole Trail. The hike is about ten miles and definitely strenuous. Bring lunch and water; we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at 8:00am at the Publix on Winchester Road. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Saturday, March 17 - Borden Creek/Big Tree hike. Strenuous. We will hike in the Sipsey Wilderness beginning at the Borden Creek bridge, hiking up the old logging road and down to the Big Tree. We continue along the Sipsey River to Borden Creek and return to the trailhead. Bring lunch and we will dine afterwards at a local restaurant. Meet at the Cracker Barrel in Madison at 8:00am or at 7:00am for breakfast. Optional meeting place at the Warrior Mountain Trading Post in Wren at 9:00am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Saturday, March 10 - Beginners Backpacking Class. This is a class to introduce people to backpacking basics. Learn how to select tents, backpacks, stoves, sleeping bags, water purification, and clothing. The class will start at 9:00am and run about eight hours. No equipment needed to take the class. The class will include a backpack on March 24 to test your new skills. There is a \$20 fee payable to the North Alabama Sierra Club. Pre-register with Tom Burley at 883-4267, tdburleyhiker@knology.net or Liz Poleretzky at 461-5819 or hiker@knology.net

North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

January – February 2007

Saturday, March 24 - Reuben Creek hike. Moderate. Reuben Creek is a beautiful area with numerous waterfalls near Sherwood, TN. Some of the hike will be off trail and there will be numerous creek crossings. Meet at old Winn/Dixie parking lot on Winchester Rd. (1 mile north of Moores Mill and Winchester Rd intersection). Bring lunch and water. Joette 776-3551

Sat-Sun, March 24-25 - Savage Gulf Backpack. Moderate. Although this is the backpack for the backpacking class everyone is welcome. We will follow the Big Creek Gulf rim trail that promises spectacular vistas to Alum Gap campground. After setting up camp there will be an optional side trip to Greeter Falls. We return the next day by way of the Laurel trail. We will eat at a local restaurant on the way back Sunday. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 9:00am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or tdburleyhiker@knology.net

Saturday, March 31 - Bucks Pocket car camp. Easy. Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. at 8:00am. At Buck's Pocket we will hike from the overview to Saute Creek, have lunch at Highfalls and walk along the slide rapid. Overnight car camp optional. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for information.

Other Outings / Events

The following activities are 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 because they might be of interest to the readers of our newsletter.

Hays Nature Preserve

Privet Round-Ups. We are really making a dent in the privet at the Hays Preserve, but we also have a lot of field borders that need whacking. Please join us Saturday, January 13 and 27, February 10 and March 3 from 1-4 p.m. for a Privet Roundup. Bring tools and gloves—chainsaws if you know how to use them. The March 3 Roundup will be followed by a bonfire and Weenie Roast with chili. Call Soos at 427-5116 for more information. Or go to www.huntsvillepreserves.com

Saturday, Feb 24 - River Guardian Workshop. Learn the techniques to spot non-point source (NPS) violations and how to report them. NPS violations are the number one cause of water pollution in this country. The workshop is free and is sponsored by the Hays Nature Preserve and the Flint River Conservation Association. It will be held at the City Engineering Building 1st floor conference room beginning at 9:00am on Saturday, Feb. 24th. It will include a 2 hour field trip so please bring a bagged lunch. The Engineering Building is on Fountain Circle, across from the Bicentennial Fountain. For more info, contact Soos Weber at 427-5116.

Nature Wanderers

Sunday, Jan 14 - Sipsey Wilderness or Bankhead Forest Exploration. Join Ted on an easy-to-moderate hike in the Sipsey Wilderness and/or Bankhead Forest. Destination to be determined by Ted and participants on day of hike. Remember to bring your lunch and water. Meet at the Trading Post in Wren at 9:00am. Ted Kuzma 256-974-7771.

Saturday, Jan 20 - Big Tree Sipsey Wilderness hike. A favorite hike - Ted leads us on a moderate hike to see the largest poplar tree in the State of Alabama. 5-6 miles along established trail for the most part. Bring lunch, water, and you will want to bring your camera along to photograph the tree as well as the canyon where it lives. Call Ted Kuzma 256-974-7771.

Saturday, Jan 27 - Sipsey Wilderness or Bankhead Forest hike. Join Ted and a group from Wild South as Ted leads them on an easy-to-moderate hike in the Sipsey Wilderness and/ or Bankhead Forest. Destination to be announced at the time of the hike. Remember to bring lunch, snacks, and water. Meet at Trading Post in Wren at 9:00 am. Call Ted Kuzma 256-974-7771.

Monday, Jan 29 - Natures Wanderers meeting. We will meet at Gibson's Barbecue on Sixth Avenue in Decatur at 6:00pm for the quarterly meeting of Natures Wanderers. Call Teresa Young 256-773-1945.

South Cumberland State Recreation Area

<http://www.friendsofscsra.org>

Saturday, Jan 13, 12:00 PM - Trail Maintenance Clinic. Meet Ranger's Jason and Anthony at the Grundy Forest for an informal clinic on trail maintenance basics. We will provide gloves and tools.

Sunday, Jan 14, 2:30 PM - Hike to Suter Falls. Meet Ranger George at Collins West access for a strenuous 2-mile hike round-trip to the base of Suter Falls. Dress Warm and wear sturdy shoes.

Thursday, Jan 18, 10:00 AM - Hike to Small Wild Campground. Meet Ranger Anthony at Foster Falls parking lot for a 4-mile round trip hike to Small Wild campground and overlooks.

Sunday, Jan 21, 9:00 AM - Cave Program. Discover the strange but beautiful world below the surface of the park. Come to the Carter State Natural Area parking lot for this strenuous five-mile round trip hike. Bring two sources of light, long pants, boots, water and a light snack. Ranger Jason will be your interpreter on this informative nature program.

Wild South Hike

Saturday, Jan 27 – Bankhead Forest or Sipsey Wilderness hike.

Wild South staff and volunteers lead hikes to beautiful places in the Bankhead National Forest or Sipsey Wilderness on the last Saturday of each month.

We meet at the Warrior Mountains Trading Company in Wren at 9:00am. We normally return to Wren by mid-afternoon. Since we hike to canyons, waterfalls, cascades and other neat stuff, we usually cross streams and climb some pretty steep slopes. Be Prepared for slippery rocks and wet crossings. Wear comfortable hiking boots or sneakers with good tread.

Bring a lunch, snacks, and plenty of water. Field guides for trees, wildflowers or birds, binoculars, raincoat, and a camera may be needed and help resolve arguments. Contact Janice, 256-974-6166 or janice@wildsouth.org to sign up or if you have questions.

Alabama Rivers Alliance

<http://www.alabamarivers.org/>

Saturday, Jan 27 – Salamander Festival. Location: Shades Valley

Community Church (old Oxmoor Alpine Ice Lodge) Details: Admission is free. There will be a small charge for food, drinks and to purchase novelty items including t-shirts. There will be fun, music, crafts, stories, and of course salamanders!

This year we will also learn about some of the fish in Shades Creek. And see how the Alpine Ice Lodge has been transformed to a cool looking church! Time: 3:00-6:00 pm. Sponsoring Group: Friends of Shades Creek

Saturday, Jan 27 – Pinhoti Trail hike. Details: This will be a 6.5 mile hike beginning at Adam's Gap and ending at Clairmont Gap. This section of the Pinhoti is rated "easy to moderate" and travels through rocky terrain along the ridge of Talladega Mountain.

Pack a lunch with something to drink, wear sturdy footwear suitable for rocky terrain, and dress appropriately for the forecasted weather conditions. Departure time: 8:00 am from the Foodmax of Anniston parking lot. Contact: Larry Warren at 256-835-0870 Sponsoring Group: Anniston Outdoor Association

Saturday, Feb 3 - Locust Fork Invitational Canoe/Kayak Races

Details: Canoe/kayaking racing begins at 09:00 and usually last until 4:00 or so. It's an event the entire family can enjoy. Bring a cushion or chair for use while sitting on the banks of the Locust Fork River enjoying the sunshine and paddling action. A local Boy Scout troop will be selling burgers, hotdogs and soft drinks. More info at www.flfr.org

If you want to get more involved in the action and fun, event volunteers are needed for a 4 hour shifts available in the AM or PM.

Admission is \$2.00 per car load. Camping is allowed for \$5.00 if you want to stay on the river the entire weekend.

Location: up river from the highway 79/231 bridge over the Locust at King's Bend north of Cleveland, AL. Contact: Sam Howell 205-681-4751 or showell@brescoinc.com Sponsoring Group: Friends of the Locust Fork River and Alabama Outdoors

Fri-Mon, Feb 9-12 – Tentative - Manatee Trip to Florida

Details: Contact Keith Hudson at 256-231-7675 or 256-452-3223 Sponsoring Group: Anniston Outdoor Association