

January 2009

# Sierra

North Alabama Group



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

**No January Meeting**

**Tuesday Night Hikes**

Meet at 6:00pm at the Land Trust parking lot, 907 Franklin St.

## First Green Gauge Report Issued for Alabama

The first-ever "Green Gauge" report was released December 29 by the nonprofit Green Resource Center for Alabama (GRCA). It captures some of the most significant events in 2008 related to protecting and improving Alabama's environment, reducing energy use and waste, and preserving the state's natural beauty and resources. Developments outlined in the report include:

- Tougher state standard for cancer-causing pollutants
- Successful park fundraising initiative in Birmingham
- Thousands of additional acres of important habitat lands secured for preservation
- Expanded biking and birding trails
- New scenic river canoe trail

The full report can be downloaded from the GRCA site: [Green Gauge 2008 report.pdf](#)

The GRCA helps people make sense of the growing spectrum of "green" options by serving as a clearinghouse for people and businesses looking for information about energy efficiency; creating healthier homes, offices and landscapes; and reducing their environmental impact. The center offers programs and events that bring together people interested in sustainable living, development and design.

The GRCA is housed in a historic building in downtown Homewood that has been restored to LEED (Leadership in Energy and Environmental Design) standards. The building has a green roof that uses vegetation to reduce heat and lower cooling costs; a cistern that collects rainwater for reuse; recycled wood flooring; and insulation made from recycled denim, among other energy-saving features. The Green Resource Center for Alabama is located at 2564 18th St. South, Homewood, AL 35209. For more information, or to become a member, visit the organization's Web site at [www.greenalabama.org](http://www.greenalabama.org).

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## 2009 Watershed Leadership Conference Set

The 11th Annual Watershed Leadership Conference, the largest river protection conference in the state, will be held at Camp McDowell on March 20-22, 2009. The 2009 conference will feature:

- Keynote Speakers Elberta Reid and John Randolph- on The Battle for Alabama's Wilderness: establishing the Sipsey Wilderness
- Nature Hiking in the Sipsey Wilderness within the Bankhead National Forest, the 2nd largest wilderness area East of the Mississippi
- An update on the 1st year of the Joint Legislative Committee on Water Policy and Management
- An entire track devoted to storm water and the new statewide urban storm water partnership
- Open "Mike" Night—Share your environmental activism stories of victory and perseverance, an idea inspired by our Choctawhatchee Riverkeeper, Mike Mullen.

More information, and a summary and pictures of last year's conference can be found at <http://www.alabamarivers.org>

You can also contact [Elizbeth Salter](mailto:Elizbeth.Salter@alabamarivers.org) at [esalter@alabamarivers.org](mailto:esalter@alabamarivers.org) or 205-322-6395 ext 100.

- The Editor

## Be an Alabama Environmental Watchdog

Since 1994, the 1-800 Watchdog helpline has been assisting people with their environmental concerns and helping them find solutions to environmental problems. The Alabama Environmental Council will provide you with information, advice, and helpful contacts. Common watchdog issues are:

### Non-Point Source Water Pollution

Non-point source water pollution is the most commonly

reported problem to the Watchdog Helpline. Non-point sources of water pollution are those that are spread across the land and are washed by the rain into creeks, rivers, lakes and bays.

Non-point source pollution from large-scale concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) is an issue that the Watchdog Campaign has been watching closely. There is a trend in animal agricultural that is moving from small family farms to large, corporate owned, factory farms. This method of concentrating large numbers of animals (and their waste) in one place is causing severe water pollution across the country. Alabama has very weak regulations on factory farms and the corporate hog industry is moving into our state.

### Illegal Dumping

Illegal dumps are the second most commonly reported call to the Watchdog helpline. Illegal dumps pose a serious threat to our environment and public health. Alabama has no comprehensive program to address illegal dumps and no clean-up funds have been established. Only 7 counties have mandatory garbage pick-up, giving the "dumpers" the freedom to decide where to dispose their trash.

### How you can get involved...

Be a Watchdog for your environment, become a volunteer for the Watchdog Campaign.

The Alabama Environmental Council depends upon people like you to help protect Alabama's natural environment. Alabama is ranked 2<sup>nd</sup> in the country for biodiversity, yet we are ranked last for environmental protection. Help us ensure that your children and grandchildren will be able to enjoy our state's natural heritage.

Get involved! Any amount of time you can give is appreciated. Opportunities available are:

Watchdog investigator - Investigate an environmental problem that is reported to the helpline. Contact local media to provide coverage of problem.

Marketing Manager - Help develop press releases and provide local publications with Watchdog PSAs to help publicize the 1-800 helpline. Help update the Watchdog website.

Issues Coordinator - Work on one of the following environmental issues: Illegal dumps, erosion and sediment control, concentrated animal feeding operations.

Speakers Bureau Coordinator

Data Coordinator - Assist the Watchdog Coordinator in gathering data about environmental problems.

Illegal Dumps Project - Investigate illegal dumps by taking pictures, reporting dump, writing elected officials.

For more information or to report a problem, call the AEC at 1-800-982-3464 or go to <http://www.aeconline.ws/index.php?sn=446>

## New Members Wanted!

Checks (\$25.00) should be mailed to:

David Kostowny

116 Pebblebrook Circle, Madison, AL 35758.

Phone: 325-2296. E-mail: [daverave@knology.net](mailto:daverave@knology.net)

### 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.



# North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

## January - February 2009

### 2008 ExCom Members

|                 |                 |          |
|-----------------|-----------------|----------|
| Chair           | Mirko Rakigijja | 772-8548 |
| Vice-Chair      | Liz Poleretzky  | 461-5819 |
| Treasurer       | Sam Denham      | 539-1033 |
| Conservation    | Doug Horacek    | 772-6788 |
| Fundraising     | Judy Burley     | 883-4207 |
| Membership      | Dave Kostowny   | 682-1233 |
| Outings         | Tom Burley      | 883-4267 |
| Political chair | Joe Imhof       | 858-3626 |
| Publicity       | Sandy Kiplinger | 498-1023 |
| Secretary       | Linda Griffin   | 772-8653 |
| Tuesday Hikes   | Nancy Dudney    | 882-9408 |
| Newsletter      | Jack Drost      | 880-2644 |
| Web Page        | Steven Baty     | 489-0990 |

### No Meeting in January

#### Hike Ratings

**General Note:** Saturday outings may take all day and last into early evening. The Sierra Club encourages carpooling to save fuel, but you should be prepared to drive your own car on club outings.

**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.

#### Saturday, Jan 10 - 3rd Annual

##### Mountain Mist half marathon hike,

**Part 1. Strenuous.** Follow the trails of the runners but at a hiker's pace. The Monte Sano side is 14 miles and the Land Trust 15. Weather dictates which side we hike first. Meet at the Monte Sano State Park Hikers' parking lot at 7:30am sharp (we don't want to finish this in the dark!). Bring lunch, water, good hiking boots and a few bucks for the entrance fee. Charlie Cohen, 837-3622 (home), 961-7901 (office)

#### Tuesday, Jan 13, 6:00pm - Downtown

**Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Ken Shrider, 772-9442.

#### Saturday, Jan 17 - 3rd Annual

##### Mountain Mist half marathon hike.

**Part II. Strenuous.** More of the above! See Jan 10 entry for details. Meet at the Monte Sano State Park Hikers' parking lot at 7:30am sharp (we don't want to finish this in the dark!). Bring lunch,

water, good hiking boots and a few bucks for the entrance fee. Charlie Cohen, 837-3622 (home), 961-7901 (office)

#### Tuesday, Jan 20, 6:00pm - Downtown

**Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Michael Stewart, 656-5836.

#### Saturday, Jan 24 - Stone Door Hike.

**Strenuous.** 8 to 10 mile hike. The Great Stone Door is a 150-foot deep crevice at the crest of the plateau by which we will enter Savage Gulf. We will follow the Big Creek Gulf trail with a side trip to Ranger Falls and return by way of the Big Creek Rim trail that promises spectacular vistas. Bring lunch and water. We will eat at a local restaurant on the way back. Meet at the Publix on Winchester Road at 8:00am. Contact Tom Burley at 883-4267 or [tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net](mailto:tdburleyhiker@bellsouth.net)

#### Sunday, Jan 25 - Land Trust hike.

**Easy.** Meet at the Wildflower Trail head on Cleermont at 1:00pm. Rated easy. One elevation change, not bad. Bring water. Should be done in 3 or 4 hours. Call Doug Horacek at 772-6788 for more information.

#### Tuesday, Jan 27, 6:00pm - Downtown

**Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Judy Burley, 883-4267.

#### Saturday, Jan 31 - Savage Gulf (TN) backpack. Moderate. (Re-scheduled)

Take a scenic hike along the rim of Savage Gulf as you make your way to Dinky Line Campsite. Dinky Line Campsite is located in a remote area and offers a primitive toilet (privy). Keep your eyes open for turkey and deer along the way. Be prepared for cold weather and pack your gear for an overnight stay.

Saturday, we'll hike six miles to camp, and then Sunday we'll hike a different four mile route back to where we started.

If interested in this hike then please contact Michael Stewart for more details at 256-656-5836 or [athikerstew@yahoo.com](mailto:athikerstew@yahoo.com)

#### Tuesday, Feb 3, 6:00pm - Downtown

**Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Virgil DeStefano, 539-0348.

#### Saturday, Feb 7 - Little River Canyon

**Rock Hop/day hike. Strenuous.** (Re-scheduled after being rained out in December and January). The section between the Powell Trail and Eberhard Point. Even though this is the easiest section of Little River Canyon, it is rated strenuous, because of some bush whacking and rock hopping, and one creek crossing. Meet at the Publix at Hampton Cove. 8:30am. Sam Denham 539-1033(h), 961-0436(w). If the weather is questionable please call ahead.

**Tuesday, Feb 10, 6:00pm - Downtown Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Alan Greene, 534-7849.

#### Newsletter Labeling

**Wednesday, Feb 11, 5:30pm.** Stanlieo's Sub Villa, corner of Monroe St. and Governor's Dr. Liz, 461-5819.

#### Tuesday, Feb 17, 6:00pm - Downtown

**Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Gerdi Keyser, 922-2261.

#### Saturday, Feb 21 - Bankhead NF, Soudaohogdee Falls hike. Moderate.

5 miles round trip. We will hike to the falls on a trail with varied obstacles. Bring lunch and water for a picnic at the falls. We will meet at 10:00am in Wren at the Warrior Mountain Trading Post, junction of Highways 33 & 36, south of Moulton. Contact Michael Stewart at 256-656-5836 or [athikerstew@yahoo.com](mailto:athikerstew@yahoo.com)

#### Tuesday, Feb 24, 6:00pm - Downtown

**Evening Hike. Easy.** Meet at the Land Trust parking lot at 907 Franklin St. Nancy Dudney, 882-9408.

**Thursday, Feb 26 - Excom meeting 5:30pm.** Mirko Rakigijja, 772-8548.

#### Other Outings / Events

The following are not sponsored or administered by the Sierra Club. The Sierra Club has no information about the planning 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 our readers.

#### South Cumberland State Park

##### Saturday, January 10, 2009

##### 1:30 pm

##### Greeter Falls Hike

Join Ranger Jamie at Greeter Falls parking area for this difficult 1.5 mile hike to the beautiful Greeter Falls. If the temperature is cold enough, we could see some spectacular ice formations.

##### Sunday, January 11, 2009

##### 12:00 pm

##### Natural Bridge Geology Talk

Meet Ranger Jason at the Sewanee Natural Bridge to discuss the history and geology of the bridge and the drainage it sets above...the Lost Cove.

##### 1:30 pm

##### Stone Door Hike

Join Ranger Jamie at Stone Door Ranger Station for this easy 2-mile round trip hike to the panoramic Great Stone Door.

##### 3:00 pm

##### Suter Falls Hike

Meet Ranger George at Collins West

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## North Alabama Sierra Club - Outings and Events Calendar

### January - February 2009

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around our Meadow Trail.

access for a short, but strenuous 1-mile hike down to the base of Suter Falls to view the cold beauty of winter ice.

#### **Saturday, February 7, 2009**

**9:00 a.m.**

##### **Hawkins Cove Hike**

Take a hike through history in this lesser known but important natural area. Call Ranger Jason for information on this moderate 5 mile hike.

#### **Sunday, February 8, 2009**

**1:30 p.m.**

##### **Winter Tree Hike**

Join Ranger Jamie to see the beauty and diversity of the Cumberland Plateau forest on this short 3/4 mile hike. Meet at the Stone Door Ranger Station.

**3:00 p.m.**

##### **Stone Door Hike**

Join Ranger Jamie at the Stone Door Ranger Station for this easy 2 mile round trip hike to the Great Stone Door. We will see some awesome views and learn a little about the Savage Gulf State Natural Area.

#### **Saturday, February 14, 2009**

**11:00 a.m.**

##### **Amour Hike**

Forget the chocolates, give the gift of a hike for Valentine's Day. Sure to make your heart pound and your face flush, this 4 mile hike will take you to beautiful overlooks and lovely waterfalls. Meet Ranger Jason at the Foster Falls parking lot.

#### **Sunday, February 15, 2009**

**3:00 p.m.**

##### **Informative Slideshow**

Meet Ranger George at Savage Gulf Ranger Station for an informative slideshow on Savage Gulf/Stone Door Area.

#### **Friday, February 20, 2009**

**3:00 p.m.**

##### **Pioneer Fire Starting**

Think you can start a campfire without matches? Meet Ranger Jason at the Grundy Forest parking lot to learn fire starting techniques of old. After the talk, you'll have a chance to test your newly acquired skill.

#### **Sunday, February 22, 2009**

**2:00 p.m.**

##### **Meadow Trail Hike**

Meet Ranger Brent at the Visitor Center parking lot for an easy 2-mile stroll

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 Brent will be your guide for this cave trip.