

Having trouble viewing this email? [Click here](#)



Winter 2012

## Delta E Zine

Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club protecting people and the environment in Louisiana for 40 years



## Delta Chapter Newsletter The Environment and the 2012 Election

### **In This Issue**

[View from the Chair](#)

[Electoral Issues](#)

[PSC](#)

[Endorse Wright](#)

[Ranking the Representatives](#)

Welcome to the fourth edition of the Delta Chapter Electronic Newsletter. We hope that you will continue to comment on the content and style as we work to make this newsletter: informative, entertaining and useful for our members. After all, without your continued support, we wouldn't be able to accomplish our mission in Louisiana.

[Endorse Richmond](#)

[Presidential Race](#)

[Endorse Obama](#)

[Earl's Pearls: Remembering Pete](#)

[Rachel Carson](#)

[No Place for Coal Exports](#)

[Coal Political Shenanigans](#)

## Chapter Contacts

Delta Chapter

Chair: Haywood (Woody) Martin

hrmartin2sc@gmail.com

Vice Chair: Charlie Fryling

cfryling@me.com

Secretary: Open

Treasurer: John Westra

John.v.westra@gmail.com

Conservation Chair Willie Fontenet

wafont@cox.net

Stacey Scarce

naturehiker@bellsouth.net

Barry Kohl bkohl40@cs.com

Dean Wilson ENAPAY3@aol.com

Jeff Wellborn jwellborn@seaber.com

Nancy Grushnancygrush@gmail.com

Harvey Stern hstern@bellsouth.net

Chapter Organizer:

Devin Martin (985) 209-5454

Devin.Martin@sierraclub.org

Newsletter

and Bookkeeping Support:

Leslie March

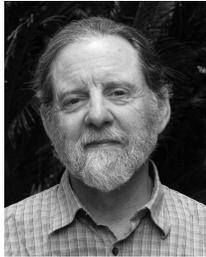
lesliemarch@hotmail.com

[www.louisiana.sierraclub.org](http://www.louisiana.sierraclub.org)

Like us on Facebook 

## Group Contacts

### View from the Chair



#### Ron Curry, the new Administrator, USEPA Region 6

Ron Curry was Deputy Secretary for Environment in Bruce King's (D) last term as governor of New Mexico 1991 to 1995. I think he stayed on through eight years of Gary Johnson (R) and then was Environment Secretary for eight years under governor Bill Richardson (D) (2003 to 2011). Ron Left the NM Environment Department two years ago when Republican governor Susanna Martinez came into office with an anti-environmental agenda.

I worked for the New Mexico Environment Department for many of those years under Ron Curry's stewardship. We knew Ron Curry as a problem solver, mediator, fair, not afraid to do enforcement, and a guy who listens to and supports his staff. Ron was an administrator who would tell us to "Do the right thing." Under Ron's administration we would always work for voluntary compliance with the environmental laws but we did a lot of enforcement when attempts at voluntary compliance were not working.

Ron was good at getting resources out to our often neglected field offices and was good at getting



Acadian Group  
Chair: Harold Schoeffler  
cadistyle@aol.com  
Vice Chair and Group  
representative to the Delta Chapter Excom:  
Woody Martin  
hrmartin2sc@gmail.com  
Treasurer: Billy Fortier  
billyfortier@yahoo.com

Baton Rouge Group  
Chair (acting chair):  
Nancy Grush,  
nancygrush@gmail.com  
Vice-Chair: vacant  
Member: Ann Vail Shaneyfelt,  
Newsletter Co-Editor,  
Delta Chapter  
Recycling Chair  
ashaneyfelt@gmail.com  
John Westra,  
Group Representative  
to the Delta Chapter,  
jwestra@agctr.lsu.edu  
Treasurer: Gwen Pine,  
gpine716@bellsouth.net

Honey Island Group

Chapter Delegate Frank Neelis  
bucktree@bellsouth.net  
Jim Long  
jlong24@bellsouth.net  
Caryn Schoeffler  
cschoeffler54@gmail.com

Kisatchee Group  
Jeff Wellborn group rep  
jwellborn@seaber.com

New Orleans Group  
Vance Levesque, Chair,  
Membership Chair  
mrkahuna@juno.com  
Natasha Noordhoff, Vice Chair  
nnoordhoff@gmail.com  
Wendy King, Secretary  
wking@tulane.edu  
James Guilbeau, Treasurer  
guilbea@attglobal.net  
Barry Kohl, Conserv Chair  
Bkohl40@cs.com  
Rene' Maggio, Webmaster  
tonirene@bellsouth.net  
Charles Pfeifer, Program Chair  
cptragopan@aol.com



appropriations from the state legislature to fund environmental programs while at the same time moving programs to more fee based support.

The professionals I worked with think Ron Curry is a good guy who will be good for USEPA Region 6. I think he is an excellent choice for the job. USEPA Region 6 covers Arkansas, Louisiana, Oklahoma, Texas and New Mexico. It will be to our benefit at the Delta Chapter to have an accessible administrator watching over the environment.

I thought that it was appropriate to talk about an appointed official that may be beneficial to Louisiana in this electoral issue. Who we elect does influence the kind of agency people we have to work with.

Since we won't be having another newsletter before the holidays, I wish you and your families a good holiday season. If you are in need of a tax deduction for 2012, the Delta Chapter would appreciate your donation to our foundation account. Contact me for details.

Woody Martin, Chair  
[hrmartin2sc@gmail.com](mailto:hrmartin2sc@gmail.com)

## **A Special Edition: The Environment and the 2012 Election**

This edition of the Delta Sierran focuses on the November 2012 election. Like all national elections, this one has tremendous implications for environmental protection in America. The national Sierra Club, as well as its state chapters and local groups, continues to be highly engaged in this vital electoral process.

### **Elections in Louisiana**

## Regional Club Office

Sierra Club Regional Office  
716 Adams St.,  
New Orleans, LA 70118  
Office phone - (504) 861-4835

Jill Mastrototaro, Senior Regional  
Representative Manager  
jill.mastrototaro@sierraclub.org.  
Cell: (504) 481-3659  
Jordan Macha, Associate Organizing  
Representative,  
Jordan.macha@sierraclub.org,  
cell: (713) 299-4300  
Darryl Malek-Wiley, Organizing  
Representative EJ,  
darryl.malek-wiley@sierraclub.org.,  
Cell: (504) 427-1885

## GroupChapter Calendar

### Upcoming Events



### Group Events

The Acadian Group meets the second and third Wednesday of the month. Check out their [web page](#) for current information and to find out about outings.

The Baton Rouge BR Group meets on third Thursdays of the month at 7 p.m. At the Backpacker at 7656 Jefferson

In Louisiana, the races with clear impacts on the environment are those for President and the U.S. House of Representatives. There is also a race for District 2 of the Louisiana Public Service Commission. (For more information on these and other state races, go to the [Louisiana Sec of State](#).)

We open by looking at some key issues at stake in the election, then examine some candidates, their positions and records, and how they are ranked by the Club and other national conservation and environmental organizations. In each case, we attempt to provide sources of background information to help voters become better informed about the candidates and issues.

### Issues at Stake

The issues at stake include energy, the economy, and the basic role of government in protecting the environment and public health. Within those are the specific (but large) issues that include clean air and water, public lands, protected natural areas, wildlife, and global warming. They all have state and local implications, such as the quality of our air and waterways, ongoing impacts of the BP oil disaster, and the restoration of Louisiana's coast.

The Club is a strong supporter of development of clean energy sources and a clean, efficient energy system. While these were formerly somewhat non-controversial positions, they have become flashpoints for attacks in Congress and the media. Similarly, the laws that protect our environment - and the legal mandate they provide for rules and regulations - have also been under attack in Congress and on the campaign trail.

The 2010 mid-term elections were a critical point in this process - following the GOP's majority in the House of Representatives, a concentrated attack on laws, rules,

Hwy in Baton Rouge every other month. On alternate months, there's usually an outing. Call Nancy Grush at (225) 938-9353 for more info.

Issues include: protecting the rapidly disappearing wetlands; ensuring the UDC is followed; urging that Future BR is implemented; & advocating transit & more amenities for pedestrians & cyclists. We are also bringing recycling to Ascension Parish.

New Orleans Group meets monthly at the Audubon Zoo. Click on this [link](#) for more information or find them on facebook.



[www.louisiana.sierraclub.org](http://www.louisiana.sierraclub.org)

#### About Us

The Delta Sierran is published four times a year by the Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club. Articles and editing by local volunteers. Production by Penguin Platitudes. Text of articles may be reprinted if duly acknowledged. Artwork and photos may not be reproduced without permission. The Delta Chapter is 3,000 of your neighbors supporting the work of the Sierra Club in

regulations, and funding for environmental protection began.

An article in the New York Times from July 25, 2011 vividly captures one instance of this ongoing attack: "The House of Representatives began heated debate on Monday on an appropriations bill for the Department of Interior and Environmental Protection Agency that pits Republican critics of environmental regulation against Democrats who fear that landmark protections could be gutted.

"The legislation, which could come to a floor vote this week, would cut Interior's funds by \$750 million, or about 7 percent, and the E.P.A.'s budget by \$1.5 billion, or 18 percent. (The latter cut would bring reductions in the E.P.A.'s budget to 34 percent over two years.)

"Yet the fiercest debate seemed to center on 39 riders attached to the bill that would hobble the regulation of big polluters and direct an additional \$55 million in subsidies to oil and gas companies.

"Among the 39 riders are measures that would open up uranium mining in lands next to to the Grand Canyon, limit the E.P.A.'s oversight powers over mountaintop removal mining and free oil companies from meeting Clean Air Act standards for offshore drilling projects. "Perhaps one of the most striking measures is a rider that would prevent the Fish and Wildlife Service from adding new species to the endangered species list, upgrading species listings or protecting vital habitat by eliminating all funds for those activities."

It is important to look at the records of our congressional representatives to see which side they take in the war on the Environment.

"Volleys Fly in House Debate on EPA and Interior," New York Times, July 25, 2011, [volleys](#)

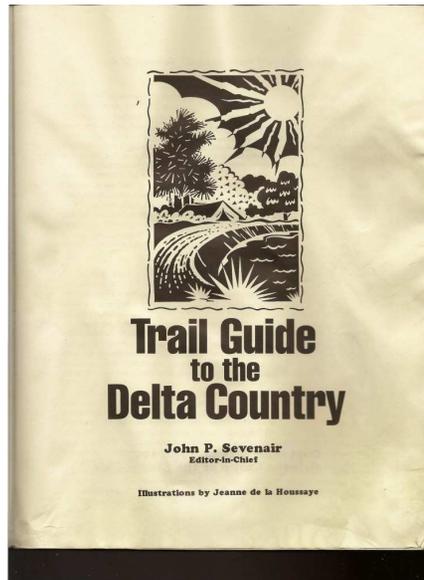
Louisiana. We advance the cause of protecting Louisiana's environment in a variety of ways, including lobbying the state legislature in Baton Rouge to create clean jobs, develop renewable resources like wind and solar and most important to protect our natural heritage for our families and future generations.

We work to save the Cypress, keep the Atchafalaya Wet and Wild and promote restoring our wetlands, the natural coastal barriers. We also go outside and enjoy our beautiful planet with canoe trips, hikes and camp outs.

Contributions and Announcements for the next issue of the Delta Sierran should be sent no later than December 15, 2012. Please forward material via email to [lesliemarch@hotmail.com](mailto:lesliemarch@hotmail.com).

## Trail Guide Guidelines

The Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club was in its infancy when Byron Almquist put together some mimeographed sheets and leaflets in envelopes and sold this under the name Outings Kit. By 1992, it was a highly popular guide edited by John Sevenair and illustrated by the late Jeanne De la Houssaye.



## Electoral Issues: A Fact Sheet

For every environmental issue, numerous political myths have been disseminated during the campaigns. Here are the facts on several:

### Climate

From NOAA's "State of the Climate" National Overview from June 2012:

The January-June period was the warmest first half of any year on record for the contiguous United States. The national temperature of 52.9°F was 4.5°F above average. Most of the contiguous U.S. was record and near-record warm for the six-month period, except the Pacific Northwest. Twenty-eight states east of the Rockies were record warm and an additional 15 states were top ten warm.

The average temperature for the contiguous U.S. during June was 71.2°F, which is 2.0°F above the 20th century average. The June temperatures contributed to a record-warm first half of the year and the warmest 12-month period the nation has experienced since record-keeping began in 1895. Scorching temperatures during the second half of the month led many cities to set all-time temperature records.

Record-breaking temperatures occurred across a large portion of the nation during the second half of June. Over 170 all-time warm temperature records were broken or tied during the month. [NOAA](#)

### Energy

U.S. domestic oil production is at its highest levels in decades, up 60% over the past two years. This "drilling boom" is being driven largely by high oil prices, in contrast

With the aftermath of Katrina changing the landscape in innumerable ways, and with a reemphasis to get people outdoors, the decision was made to enroll people to update as many of the 100 hiking, biking and canoe trails as possible, and add any new ones since 1992.

#### Scouting and Writing Procedure

Step 1: Email Vance Levesque (mrkahuna@juno.com) to get the map of trails in the old Trail Guide.  
Step 2: After you have seen the pdfs, decide which trails you would like to scout  
Step 3: Get out there! Take lots of notes, take some pictures, use the categories on the checklist below to get started. Have Fun!  
Step 4: Condense your notes into a brief article that you noted while on the trail. Make sure to include fun flora/fauna details and perhaps anecdotes to illustrate the experience. Email this first draft to Devin Martin (devin.martin.sc@gmail.com) AND Colleen Morgan ([tcolleen526@gmail.com](mailto:tcolleen526@gmail.com)).

#### CHECKLIST:

Type of Trail:  
Region:  
Name of Trail:  
Site Scoper:  
Parking (suggested v. unsafe):  
Level of difficulty:  
Type of ecosystem:  
Length of trail:  
Normal duration of trip:  
Cover (i.e. closed canopy, full sun):  
Typical wildlife sightings:  
Camping along the route?:  
Getting there (directions to trailhead/put-in):  
Suggested route with landmarks:  
Interesting notes:  
Resources:  
Contact information for conditions:  
Map:  
Weather (bad weather for trail?):  
Supply list (make sure enough water):  
Safety information:  
Dangers/important information:  
Construction on the route (signage? Duration?):

With your help we can get people outdoors again!! Isn't that one of the main reasons you joined the Sierra Club in the FIRST place. And you will finally be given credit for your trail!!!!

to natural gas production, which is depressed due to low prices. [Number of operating rigs.](#)

Installation of solar panels in the U.S. surged as much as 67 percent in the fourth quarter of 2011 as developers raced to qualify for an expiring federal incentive program and panel prices fell 16 percent. Solar developers installed 700 megawatts to 750 megawatts of rooftop and ground-mounted systems in the quarter, compared with 450 megawatts in the third quarter. Installations this year may grow by 3,000 megawatts to 4,000 megawatts, up from about 1,800 megawatts in 2011. [Bloomberg](#)

#### Jobs and the Environment

A concentrated p.r. campaign has painted environmental protection as harmful to the economy. The Center for American Progress found that the phrase 'Job Killing Regulations' in American newspapers had increased by 17,550% between 2007 and 2011. [job killing](#). The actual evidence points in the opposite direction, and a growing number of studies are showing that effective regulation actually fuels economic growth and creates jobs (in addition to protecting the health of people and the natural systems they depend on).

Among them are the following:

The Economic Policy Institute ([reports](#)); the Chesapeake Bay Foundation ([reports](#)); and the University of Massachusetts Political Economy Research Institute ([reports](#)).

The University of Massachusetts study found that meeting the new EPA standards to limit mercury and other pollutants will create 'a wide array of skilled construction and professional jobs' - nearly 1.5 million jobs, or an average of 300,000 jobs a year over the next five years.



Photos from original Trail Guide

### **Conservation, Wildlife, and Health Groups Seek Dispersant Rulemaking**

Washington, D.C. -- A coalition of conservation, wildlife and public health groups in the Gulf region and in Alaska filed a citizen suit under the provisions of the Federal Clean Water Act on August 6 to compel the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to issue a rule on chemical oil dispersants. EPA's current rules --which during the 2010 Gulf oil disaster failed to ensure that dispersants would be used safely --do not fulfill the requirements mandated by the Clean Water Act.

"We're disappointed that the agency doesn't seem to understand the widespread public urgency to initiate this rulemaking process," said Jill Mastrototaro, Sierra Club Gulf Coast Protection Campaign Director. "If a spill or blowout happened tomorrow in the Gulf of Mexico, or any U.S. water for that matter, any dispersant that is used would not necessarily be safe for the waters, ecosystems, response workers, or nearby communities."

## **Public Service Commission**

Race for Louisiana Public Service Commission District 2

The Louisiana Public Service Commission is an independent regulatory agency charged with enabling utilities "to provide customers with safe, adequate and reliable service, at rates that are just and reasonable, equitable and economically efficient, and that allow utilities an opportunity to earn a fair rate of return on their investment." The PSC plays a major role in energy policy in the state.

The position of Commissioner for PSC District 2 will be on the November 6 ballot. This district includes parts of 12 parishes (East Baton Rouge\*, East Feliciana, Iberia, Iberville\*, Lafayette, Lafourche, Livingston\*, St. Martin\*, St. Mary, Terrebonne, West Baton Rouge\*, West Feliciana).



### **Delta Chapter Endorses Forest Wright Public Service Commissioner District 2**

Mr. Wright is a seasoned energy policy professional who brings expertise, independence, and a proven commitment to protecting the interests of all Louisiana ratepayers. Wright is recognized locally and nationally as an energy policy leader and is credited with spearheading major advancements in rules that increase transparency and accountability in utility planning, as well as groundbreaking renewable energy and energy efficiency programs in Louisiana. For more than a decade, he has been developing business strategies and regulatory policies for a sustainable energy future

During the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster in 2010, nearly 2 million gallons of chemical dispersants were dumped into Gulf waters with little knowledge or research into the chemicals' toxic impacts. Currently, regulations dictating dispersants eligible for use in oil spills require minimal toxicity testing and no threshold for safety.

Over 5,000 petitions have been sent by residents across the Gulf Coast region urging EPA to use its authority to initiate comprehensive testing of oil dispersants and to create regulations that include safety criteria and identify acceptable waters and quantities for use. But EPA still has not created a new rule that will ensure that dispersants will be used safely in the next disaster.

"We sent EPA a notice of intent to sue in October 2010 following the debacle of the BP Deepwater Horizon disaster and the unprecedented use of dispersants during that response," said Earthjustice attorney Hannah Chang, who is representing the groups in court. "Our filing today will push EPA to take further action to follow through on its promise to get a much-needed rule in place."

"The Clean Water Act requirements have been in place for decades, but administration after administration has failed to comply with the law,"

- first for Shell International Exploration and Production Company and more recently with the Alliance for Affordable Energy. Forest is a graduate of Tulane University, where he studied sustainable development and tourism.

Spearheading projects such as the Energy Smart NOLA program, energy rater and solar certification courses, the LA Green Corps home weatherization training program, Forest has helped to lower the cost of utility bills and promoted energy efficient technologies in South Louisiana, while increasing business growth and job creation.

In addition to his extensive energy policy work, he has also tackled community problems and developed effective solutions for neighborhood development needs through his work with The Urban Conservancy, Groundwork New Orleans, the Alliance for Affordable Energy, and his own business, The Building Block. He understands that local communities and businesses can grow together when supported by forward-looking policies from the Public Service Commission.

Mr. Wright believes that the development of sound energy policies and programs can return money to families and to businesses, and that such policies and programs can succeed with the right person in the PSC. He has direct experience with a wide array of utility regulation issues currently before the Public Service Commission and understands the process through which the work is done.

The Delta Chapter endorses Forest Wright because we support developing energy efficiency and renewables in Louisiana.

## Ranking the Representatives

The League of Conservation Voters (LCV) publishes an annual National Environmental Scorecard to assess the votes of members of Congress. LCV compiles a list of crucial votes on environmental bills, both positive and negative, so that voters can see how their representative is performing. While not all bills may have equal weight, the scores are

said Cyn Sarthou, Executive Director of Gulf Restoration Network.

"Consequently there was little data available to EPA officials when they were confronted with the devastating BP oil disaster."

The Clean Water Act requires EPA to identify the waters in which dispersants and other spill mitigating devices and substances may be used, and what quantities can be used safely in the identified waters, as part of EPA's responsibilities for preparing and publishing the National Contingency Plan. The Plan governs responses to discharges of oil and hazardous substances. But the use of toxic dispersants in response to the Gulf oil disaster was implemented without prior understanding of the effect on the Gulf of Mexico marine ecosystems and human health. Groups in oil producing regions, represented by Earthjustice, claim that EPA's current rules do not follow Clean Water Act guidelines, and as a result they are taking action to force EPA to carry out its legal responsibility.

Check out this map at our friends and allies', the Louisiana Bucket Brigade. The map is interactive and reports polluted areas of the gulf. [map](#)

Lack of Preparedness =

helpful in showing the trend in a representative's voting record.

Louisiana's Representatives had the following scores (out of 100) for 1st Session of the 112th Congress in 2011:

Alexander	11
Boustany	11
Cassidy	11
Fleming	6
Landry	6
Richmond	86
Scalise	9

Among the few positive votes for the entire Louisiana delegation were support for the RESTORE Act (H.R. 2354) and the Upper Mississippi River (H.R. 3671). Support for many negative bills such as H.R. 10, which would allow the House to block enforcement of existing statutory protections ranging from clean air to worker safety, split along party lines.

LCV National Environmental Scorecard available at [Scorecard](#)

LCV released a special scorecard in February 2011 for the Continuing Resolution Spending Bill that the new GOP-led House put forward, because of the range of anti-environmental provisions it contained:

Alexander	4
Boustany	4
Cassidy	8
Fleming	0

## 93 Oil Industry Accidents during Hurricane Isaac

### Coal Terminals have Problems, Too

A press conference was held on September 6 by the Sierra Club, Gulf Restoration Network and the Louisiana Bucket Brigade to point out the lack of preparation and safety protocols on the part of the oil industry.

More than 90 accidents have exposed the oil industry's negligence in preparing for Hurricane Isaac, demonstrating once again that the oil industry harms Louisiana's economy and environment, and that the Gulf is America's Energy Sacrifice Zone.

"Hurricanes and tropical storms like Isaac are common to the Gulf Coast, and just as residents prepared for the storm, industry should have been ramping up their efforts," said Jill Mastrototaro, Sierra Club Gulf Coast Campaign Director. "Proper planning and equipment go a long way to prevent industrial accidents, but these disturbing reports of oil sheens, overturned tanks, and chemical releases following Isaac show that industry is ill-prepared and ill-equipped to handle these storms."

Reports filed with the National Response Center (NRC), the federal point of contact for reporting oil spills, and air surveillance conducted by the Gulf Restoration Network have brought the accidents to light. An examination of NRC reports reveal that every facet of the oil sector - from exploration to transport to refining - had serious, likely preventable accidents during the storm. Some of these problems were confirmed by flyovers conducted by the Gulf Restoration Network.

"From oil spills to coal runoff, the mess we've seen from the air should have never

Landry 0  
Richmond 92  
Scalise 4

The Louisiana delegation's vote on the Continuing Resolution, which LCV termed "the greatest legislative assault on the environment in decades", split along party lines, with only Richmond (D-New Orleans) opposing. [Special edition.](#)

The National Wildlife Federation highlighted a Congressional minority report showing that 1 in 5 House GOP votes aimed at weakening environmental protection, averaging more than one anti-environmental vote a day during 2011 [Report.](#)

A major target of anti-environmental attacks in Congress has been the Clean Water Act. The Clean Water Network compiled a summary of bills attacking the Clean Water Act in May 2012. [Clean water network.](#)

Information provided by the LCV and other organizations on representatives' voting records can be used in conjunction with the National Sierra Club Voter's Guide. [Sierra Club Voter's Guide](#)

Louisiana's Delegation: Some high points and low points since 2010

High point: Representatives Richmond (D-Orleans) and Scalise (R-Jefferson) team up to get \$1 million in coastal restoration funds put back in an appropriations bill (but this is \$1 million of \$35.8 million that President Obama had requested, showing what a Tea Party future would promise for Louisiana's coast. [Scalise and Richmond.](#)

Low point: In opposing the President's request, Representative John Fleming (R-Shreveport) becomes the

occurred. Industry has got to held accountable, and we need a Regional Citizens' Advisory Council to allow the communities who suffer from spills like this to have a role in making sure they don't happen again," said Aaron Viles, Deputy Director of the Gulf Restoration Network.

The total reported amount of pollution from the accidents is 4.9 million pounds and 171,000 gallons. Both figures are, in reality, much higher given that the quantity of oil spilled is unknown for many of the reports and oil sightings. Accidents range from a sunken barge with petroleum coke dust to thousands of pounds dumped by Exxon's Chalmette Refining. "The oil industry is ruining our economy, our environment, and our health," said Anne Rolfes, Founding Director of the Louisiana Bucket Brigade. "The failure to prepare for Hurricane Isaac shows very clearly the calculations they make: it's cheaper to dump on Louisiana than it is to take the proper precautions."

Also at issue during the hurricane were two coal terminals in Plaquemines Parish that flooded, pouring coal-polluted runoff into surrounding waters, wetlands, and farmland. "These accidents should clearly halt the current plans to expand the two flooded terminals and build a new RAM terminal in the region," Viles said.

The groups are calling for the following:

Oil industry and other responsible parties:

1. Clean up the mess
2. Improve preparedness
3. Hire more workers to adequately maintain and operate facilities

Relevant agencies (Department of Natural Resources, Coast Guard or Environmental Protection Agency, Department of Environmental Quality):

1. Make the offending companies pay the fines
2. Halt plans to build the RAM terminal in such a vulnerable zone; halt expansions at the two other terminals in the region
3. Creation of the Regional Citizens' Advisory Council

The groups are highlighting the accidents during Hurricane Isaac with the intention of

first Louisiana Congressman to vote against coastal restoration for his state. [Amendment](#).

High point: Almost all members of Louisiana's delegation (two missed the vote) support legislation to coordinate national action on harmful algal blooms and hypoxia like the "Dead Zone" off our coast (H.R. 3650). [Dead Zone](#).

Low point: Representative Steve Scalise (R-Jefferson) demonstrates a frightening degree of scientific illiteracy by asserting that the earth is actually cooling. [Climate change](#).

Low point: Representative Jeff Landry (R-New Iberia) insults the co-chairs of the President's Oil Spill Commission in frustration over the temporary moratorium on deepwater drilling, even though both men had opposed the moratorium. [Landry](#).

Low point: Congressman Bill Cassidy repeats false numbers on jobs projected to be created by Keystone Pipeline ("20,000 immediate" and "100,000 long-term"), [Keystone Report](#). See report from Cornell University Global Labor Institute. [Report](#).

## **The Sierra Club Endorses Cedric Richmond, Congressman 2nd District**

making the industries accountable and preventing future accidents.

**National Sierra Club - Alerts and Editorials on the 2012 Election**  
**For more background try these links.**

Executive Director Michael Brune: "COMMON GROUND: America's Most Endangered Habitat", Sept/Oct 2012, [Michael Brune](#).  
Sierra Club COMPASS, "New Report Follows Money Trail Behind Attacks on Clean Energy," August 2012, [Clean energy under siege](#)

Sierra Club 2012 Endorsements, [Sierra Club endorsements](#)

Sierra Club President Robin Mann, "Election Protection: Sierra Club Commits to Fight Voter Suppression," March 2012, [Fight voter suppression](#)

Sierra Club Statement on President Obama's Convention Address, [Obama](#)

Sierra Club Statement on Governor Romney's Convention Address, [Romney](#)

Sierra Club Statement on Governor Romney's selection of Representative Paul Ryan, [Ryan](#)

Sierra Club, NCLR, "2012 National Latinos and the Environment Survey," [Latino voter survey](#).

National Catholic Reporter, "Sierra Club Warns: Biggest Assault on the EPA in History," February 22, 2011, [Assault on the EPA](#)



The Sierra Club is happy to endorse Representative Cedric Richmond for election to another term in Louisiana's second congressional district. Rep. Cedric Richmond has been serving in the US House since 2011. Before that he served 11 years in the Louisiana legislature. He has a bachelor's degree in business management and accounting from Morehouse College and a law degree from Tulane University. Rep Richmond has been a big supporter of coastal restoration, full funding of Corps of Engineers dredging in the Mississippi, full support for education and a leader in efforts to ensure the fines from BP's drilling disaster are used to address the Mississippi River Delta's wetlands crisis. Since being elected he has had a great working relationship with Sierra Club national and chapter staff and volunteers. Rep. Richmond holds a League of Conservation Voters score of 86% since being elected. Rep Richmond is a rising star in Congress and within the Congressional Black Caucus.

## The Presidential Race

Contrary to some opinions, the environment has actually been front and center as an issue in the Presidential race - but it has been discussed primarily in terms of energy, jobs, and the regulatory role of government.

The positions of the two major Presidential candidates offer a stark contrast.

Governor Mitt Romney has reversed earlier more moderate positions on climate change, fuel mileage, coal plants, and alternative energy to embrace the anti environment GOP platform. That platform opposes all cap and trade legislation, EPA regulation of carbon dioxide, and further tax credits for alternative energy sources like solar and wind.

Romney's energy policy calls for immediate approval of the Keystone Pipeline, opening all federal lands and waters for drilling, including the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, as well as giving leasing and permitting authority to states for federal lands within their borders.

The most recent budget crafted by Representative Paul Ryan called for selling off millions of acres of public lands, overturning the current government system for more controlled sale of public lands to willing buyers. His budget also proposed cutting the budget for national forests by up to \$678 million, and cutting funds for national parks by up to \$380 million starting in 2014.

President Barack Obama has pursued an "all of the above" energy strategy that has seen a significant increase in domestic oil and gas production that has cut oil imports by 10 percent in just the past year. His major environmental setback was the failure of Congress to pass a climate bill, but he has supported the EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gases (as well as mercury and other toxins) in the face of fierce GOP opposition. He also supports the EPA in its development of regulations for "fracking" of natural gas.

Since 2008, the U.S. has doubled generation of electricity from renewable sources, and invested \$48 billion in clean energy in 2011. A major accomplishment of the Obama

administration was the much-maligned 2009 Stimulus Bill. Journalist Michael Grunwald has called the Stimulus Bill "the most ambitious energy legislation in history" for investment in alternative, clean, efficient energy systems.

Another major step is the requirement that the U.S. vehicle fleet attain an average of 54.5 miles per gallon by 2025, which when enacted will reduce American oil consumption by 2.2 million barrels per day and save consumers an estimated \$1.7 trillion at the pump, in addition to cutting 6 billion metric tons of carbon pollution.

A further area of contrast involves the "green jobs" sector, which now totals in the millions. While oil and gas jobs have also increased under President Obama, due to expanded domestic production, this has not lessened the hostility of many on the right to green jobs. Governor Romney has joined them in denigrating the importance of green jobs and the success of their growth.

The Sierra Club Delta Chapter has concerns that the Obama administration has been weak on environmental enforcement, has allowed drilling in the arctic before safety can be assured, and removed federal endangered species protection for wolves. Depending on the outcome of the election, these are policies that the chapter will continue to work with the national club to strengthen in the future.

More Information:

"Obama vs. Romney: A Stark Contrast on the Environment," Yale environment 360, 9/17/12, [Energy policies](#).

"Obama vs. Romney: Where their energy policies differ," Washington Post, 9/11/12, [Contrast on the environment](#).

"Gov. Romney and Rep. Ryan Want to Drill, Slash, and Sell Our Public Lands," Climate Progress, 9/10/12, [Drill Slash et al.](#)

"How the Stimulus is Changing America," Michael Grunwald, TIME Magazine, 8/26/10, [Stimulus](#).

"Romney Implies that Colorado Doesn't Have Clean Energy Jobs, Despite the State Having 70,000 of Them," Climate Progress, 5/9/12, [Clean energy jobs](#).

## The National Sierra Club endorses Barack Obama for President

Michael Brune, Executive Director, Sierra Club:

"The Sierra Club and our 1.4 million members and supporters share the same vision for America as the President for a prosperous and innovative economy that protects the air we breathe, the water we drink, and the health of our families. Together, we can build upon the historic successes of the last four years, including landmark fuel efficiency standards and the first-ever protections against toxic mercury pollution, to build a clean energy economy that creates thousands of new jobs and works for every American."

[click here for audio announcement](#)

[Sierra Club Voter's Guide](#)

Earl's Pearls



Bringing his unique slant to the war against the environment for over 30 years.

## REMEMBERING PETE VAN DUYM

Pete Van Duym died September 14, 2012, in Wisconsin. Many current Delta Sierrans may never have known or heard of Pete, but he was a stalwart of the beginning days of the Sierra Club in Louisiana. He developed a reputation as one of the finest, most knowledgeable, most reliable outdoor outings leaders ever.

I first met Pete at one of the earliest outings, even before there was a Delta Chapter. It was 1969, and organizers were trying to establish a Sierra presence in the New Orleans metropolitan area. I was intrigued by a newspaper announcement that there would be a day hike in [sic] the Little Bogue Falaya River near Covington. While sloshing along the stream, I encountered Pete. I remember him holding a thermos of coffee under his arm and sipping while we proceeded on our aqueous stroll. His soft Dutch accent and pleasant demeanor caught my attention; I knew I had a new friend.

Once I started canoeing with the local Sierrans, I was hooked, and Pete and his wife Barbara were often fellow paddlers on the Tangipahoa and Bogue Chitto rivers. For Pete, primitive, sandbar camping was easy. He seemed always to have the right gear when needed. When a rain shower came up, Pete could

produce a light tarp and rig it on improvised stakes and branches so that we could sit on the sand and not get rain in our Sierra cups as we quaffed libations. He could plan a three-day canoe trek with multiple-course meals, complete with wine. Once he prepared a meal that specifically included everything from soup to nuts, as goes the cliché. Although he led many trips, even when he wasn't the designated trip leader he was a leader. Even on winter canoe trips, Pete always took his obligatory (to him) morning plunge and bath. I remember watching his splash in the stream on a dreary, 35-degree morning while I was shivering in my heavy jacket and long johns.

Pete's dry good humor and calm demeanor never slacked. He was an assuring friend to be out in the woods with, when the weather deteriorated and threatened. After what he'd been through in World War II, what was a lightning storm when we were in aluminum canoes?

Pete was a magnificent storyteller, especially when he was sitting in a stream and having a drink. His life story, not fiction, was fascinating, better than fiction. Born and raised on the island of Java in what was then the Dutch East Indies, he was in The Netherlands at college when the Germans invaded. With Rotterdam burning behind him, he and a few others made their way through the chaos of Europe to Spain, where Generalissimo Franco's police threw them in jail for several weeks until they were released and made their way to a neutral port and then to the United States. He never went back to Java. I never heard him speak of his family there or what happened to them after the Japanese invasion.

Pete was a geologist, spending his career working for Shell, a Dutch company. When he retired in the early 1980s, he and Barbara established a blueberry and Christmas tree farm in Tangipahoa Parish west of their home in Covington. Always generous and supportive of the Sierra Club, Pete and Barbara every June held a camp-out and blueberry-picking outing on the farm. Campers had a campfire and sing-along on Saturday night with generous amounts of wine and picked berries on Sunday. Pete and Barbara donated a percentage of the crop's profits to the

Sierra Club. After a few years, the farm became more work than it was worth, and the Van Duym's sold it. Those of us who attended the camp-outs/pickings still have fine memories.

Pete also led one of the longest, most complex outings for the national Sierra Club. For three weeks the participants backpacked and rode trains and ferries through Alaska. Pete's energy and attention to detail were phenomenal and became legendary.

Pete introduced me and local Sierrans to Red Creek, a beautiful stream in southern Mississippi. I don't know how he found it, but in July 1972 on a rainy weekend he led us along dirt roads to a bronze-colored stream with sugar-white sandbars every few hundred yards. It was almost wilderness. For the next 30 years I regularly led canoe treks on the stream that seemed to get more lush and beautiful every trip. Pete and Barbara were regulars on those trips, and we convened meetings of "The Hippopotamus Society" every evening by sitting in the running water for the day's cocktails. Primitive camping at its best. Sometimes Pete would use a heavy, decked canoe that he had built himself, but I remember that he came on a couple of treks in the 1970s in a kayak, then a curiosity. No one was as comfortable in the outdoors as Pete Van Duym. When one of our regular canoeists died many years ago, it was Pete who spread the ashes on Red Creek.

Pete and Barbara were charter members of the North Shore Unitarian Universalist Church in Lacombe, and Pete also became an excellent photographer. He helped develop what became the Northlake Nature Center trail off Highway 190 near Bayou Castine in St. Tammany Parish long before the Tammany Trace was created.

The years took a toll on Barbara's knees. After the physical and psychological trauma of Hurricane Katrina, they moved to Madison, Wisconsin, near one of their sons. Therapy improved Barbara's knees, but they never returned to Louisiana. Barbara died almost exactly a year before Pete, August 31, 2011.

I cannot canoe on Red Creek without thinking of Pete.

Thanks, Pete.

--Earl Higgins

This is the 50th Anniversary of Rachel Carson's *Silent Spring*



We can't talk about environmental laws and citizen lobbying without honoring Rachel Carson, who wrote about the dangers of pesticides and documented the loss of birds

to DDT. For many of us, this is the book that influenced our dedication to saving the environment.

Click below for an inspiring article about Ms. Carson.

[Article by Joseph J. Mangano and Janette D. Sherman](#)



**Southern Louisiana is  
No Place for Coal Exports  
In Isaac's Wake, Communities Struggle  
for Self Preservation and Continue Their  
Fight Against RAM Coal Terminal**



People in South Louisiana are well aware of the risk that hurricanes bring. We prepare ourselves as best we can, and when storms come our way, we batten down the hatches and evacuate, if necessary. From time to time, we face destruction and flooding, and return home to pick up the pieces and attempt to move on. Such was the case on August 28, 2012, on the seventh anniversary of Katrina, when Hurricane Isaac slammed into the Louisiana coast.

Most people in the storm's track were relatively lucky and suffered only minor damage and the inconvenience of power outages. But for many people in rural Plaquemines Parish, along the last meandering stretches of the Mississippi River, the true power of this Category 1 storm was keenly felt when some of the non-federal back levees were overtopped and breached, leading to the inundation of nearly 800 homes. As if this were not enough, many residents now face an environmental disaster from polluting industries that failed to properly prepare for a routine storm.

According to our friends at the Louisiana Bucket Brigade, there were nearly 100 reports of toxic coal, oil, gas, and other chemical spills in Louisiana as a result of Hurricane Isaac. One of the worst was from the Stolthaven oil and chemical storage facility near the small town of Braithwaite, which ultimately spilled 191,000 gallons of chemicals into the surrounding environment, some of

which are carcinogenic. You can read more about the releases here, and about Stolthaven here.

Another disaster was the flooding of two coal export facilities in southeastern Plaquemines Parish, the International Marine Terminal (IMT) and United Bulk Terminal. The coal piles experienced overtopping and breaching of their inadequate containment levees from the high rainfall and storm surge. Recent photos taken by our allies show the flooded coal piles at these facilities spilling acidic, heavy metal laden runoff into surrounding farm land, marsh, and communities. The resulting damage demonstrates that the Gulf Coast is no place for giant, open piles of coal. Regulators need to recognize the unique and risk-prone environment of South Louisiana when making decisions about where to allow disaster-prone industry to operate, and where not to.

To add insult to injury, the Louisiana Dept. of Environmental Quality (LDEQ) has just granted an Air Pollution Permit to the proposed RAM Coal terminal, just a few miles upriver from the two flooded coal piles. Instead of reconsidering the wisdom of having open piles of coal in an area regularly beaten and inundated with hurricanes, RAM Terminals, LLC is planning to build in a spot that the state has already designated as the prime location for a major restoration project in its Coastal Master Plan for Restoration. Since wetlands serve as a critical storm buffer for surrounding communities-and industry-it's inconceivable why the state would even consider RAM Terminals as a legitimate project in area known for its vulnerability to storms.

The state's Coastal Master Plan recognizes that sea level rise is a major threat to its low-lying coastal areas and includes such in its models for restoration and protection, yet no mention is made of how these proposed export terminals severely threaten restoration projects that are vital to recovery and future disaster prevention. Then again, no mention is made of the fact that sea level rise is mainly a result of climate change and greenhouse gas emissions, of which extracting, refining, shipping, and ultimately burning coal, oil, and natural gas are the primary cause.

When state and local government fail to protect the best interests

of the public, it's up to us to stand up for what is right. To that end, the Sierra Club has partnered with LEAN and the Christian Missionary Baptist Minister's Association of Plaquemines Parish in a lawsuit to challenge the recently granted Air permit for RAM Terminals. It's one more step in the fight against this incredibly short-sighted and detrimental project, one that the people of Ironton, Myrtle Grove, Oak Park, and other Plaquemines residents are fighting right along with us. But these beleaguered communities need our help in order to secure a clean and swift recovery.

Lend a hand by getting involved in this important campaign. Contact me, Devin Martin at [devin.martin@sierraclub.org](mailto:devin.martin@sierraclub.org), for more information on how to take action.

Photo credit: Gulf Restoration Network

## Coal's Political Shenanigans

Forcing employees to support a political candidate is not only outrageous, it is against the law. It's even more outrageous when the company doing so is a dirty, climate-change inducing coal company trying to keep the US locked into a 19th Century energy source. Recently, the organization CREW filed a complaint with the Federal Election Commission (FEC) against coal company Murray Energy Corporation, the Murray Energy Corporation PAC, and the company's Chairman, President, and CEO, Robert E. Murray. The complaint alleges Mr. Murray threatened employees, including the loss of their jobs, to coerce them into making contributions to the company's Political Action Committee.

Mr. Murray is a prominent Republican donor. In August, Mitt Romney spoke at Mr. Murray's Century Mine in Ohio. Coal-smudged miners who worked for Mr. Murray were forced to take time off work without pay to stand behind Mr. Romney as he attacked President Obama as anti-coal. Mr. Murray has also held fundraisers for Senators Scott Brown (R-MA), Jim DeMint (R-SC), Roger Wicker (R-MS), and our very own David Vitter (R-LA), among others.

This is a classic example of money corrupting our political system. According to two managers at Murray Energy and internal company

documents, employees were under constant threat of losing their jobs if they failed to contribute to the company PAC. The complaint also alleges that the company reimbursed employees for contributions to the PAC by giving them monthly bonuses personally approved by Mr. Murray. Campaign finance law prohibits corporate PACs from using coercion to extort contributions from company employees and prohibits companies from using corporate funds to reimburse employees for contributions to a company PAC.

Whether coercing company executives to make campaign contributions or insisting coal miners take time off without pay so that a candidate can stage pretty pictures - it is all illegal: [click here to read CREW's complaint against Murray Energy.](#)

## Leave an Environmental Legacy



Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

# Create a Lasting Legacy

By creating a charitable bequest to benefit Sierra Club or your favorite Sierra Club Chapter, you remain in control of your assets during your lifetime and help protect the environment in years to come.

For more info and confidential assistance, contact:

## Plan your own legacy

You can make a lasting difference for Louisiana's fragile environment. Whether you have a large or modest estate, the people and causes in your life are honored by your remembrance. We'll invest your bequest or memorial gift in the work you care most about-protecting Louisiana. Working with Sierra Club's gift planning team, you can create a legacy that has meaning for you and saves taxes for your heirs. Drafting or updating your will is easier than you think. Sierra Club can help. Go to [www.sierraclub.org/giftplanning](http://www.sierraclub.org/giftplanning) for more info, or call our Chapter Chair Woody Martin at 337-298-8380.

[Forward this email](#)



This email was sent to lovebks2@msn.com by [lovebks2@msn.com](mailto:lovebks2@msn.com) | [Update Profile/Email Address](#) | Instant removal with [SafeUnsubscribe™](#) | [Privacy Policy](#).

| PO Box 52503 | Lafayette | Louisiana | 70505-2503

