

Delta Sierran is Home and Open for Biz



Delta Sierran

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Delta Chapter Newsletter www.louisiana.sierraclub.org December 2006

New Ballot

We are trying a new method of voting for chapter positions this year. The candidate statements and the ballot are in the Delta Sierran. We ask that you cut or tear out your ballot and return it by mail to the Sierra Club office in Baton Rouge, 4521 Jamestown Ave. Suite 12-13, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, no later than Feb 1. The ballots will be counted at the Baton Rouge office. Any interested party may attend. Contact Sandra Thompson, election chair at sandrathompson@cox.net for further information.



Sierra Club Responds to Disaster

The Gulf Coast Environmental Restoration Project and Task Force were created to administer donations that were given to the Sierra Club to help rebuild those communities hardest hit by hurricanes Katrina and Rita and support environmental and public health protections that will safeguard the Gulf Coast in the future. Members of the Task Force include volunteers Barbara Coman and Leslie March and staffers Maura Wood and Darryl Malek-Wiley representing Louisiana, as well as volunteers and staff from Mississippi and Alabama, the national Director of Communications, and national entities such as the EJ Committee and the Sierra Student Coalition.

In the face of the monumental problems and issues created and left behind by the hurricanes, members of the Gulf Coast Task Force have undertaken to educate

citizens about reducing sources of toxic pollution in their communities, rebuilding with energy-efficiency and safety in mind, and protecting the coastal wetlands and landforms that protect communities. They have worked with communities to clean up, aid recovery, and advocate for safe, environmentally sound solutions to problems.

In Louisiana, volunteers and staff co-hosted the New Orleans Smart Build, a Green Rebuilding Products expo and workshop; published a brochure titled "Build Back Green, Clean, and Safe – a Sierra Club Guide to Green Building Principles, Practices, and Materials"; brought media attention to the issue of debris disposal; filed lawsuits challenging locations for landfills that threaten nearby communities; worked to bring

resources and planning assistance to flooded communities in New Orleans; published "The School of Big Storms: The High Cost of Compromising our Natural Defenses and the Benefits of Protecting Them"; helped to clean up the Holy Cross neighborhood; and advocated for protecting cypress forests by avoiding the use of cypress mulch.

In Mississippi, Sierra Club Gulf Coast Task Force volunteers provided formaldehyde test kits to people living in FEMA trailers, and identified levels of formaldehyde in many trailers that exceed the residential standard. In Coden, Alabama, volunteers have initiated a hands-on rebuilding project, working to restore a flooded home using energy-efficient materials.

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Editor's Viewpoint

(editor's note. I intended to have this out before Christmas but there is a serious illness in my family that has taken most of my time lately) Seems like it has been years since I sat down to lay this paper out. A lot of water under the bridge, over the bridge and sitting for weeks in houses. How did you do? A frequent question asked by people you meet in line at the check out stand, at planning meetings, at church and well just about everywhere you go that you might meet people. Personally, I did fine, new roof, fence damage, replaced some flooring and lost a few trees. I am almost embarrassed that we didn't fair worse. My heart goes out to every one of our members whether they live in Shreveport or Grand Isle. This storm effected all of us mentally and physically. Fortunately most of us are very resilient and we will survive to rebuild our lives, our neighborhoods and our greater communities.

Along with being your newsletter editor, I became the chair of th Delta Chapter in February. This one of the reason that there hasn't been a newsletter for over a year. There have been so many issues that I barely have time to keep up with them. Hopefully as our members become resettled after the storm, we will have volunteers that are interested in taking a leadership role again. Those of us who have remained active are all approaching the burn out phase and reinforcements are needed.

How did the environment do? Before the storms, we talked about losing our

coastline 24 square miles a year, after Katrina, they think we lost 100 square miles of coastline. Coastal marsh and forest helped to dampen the storm surge in places. Most Louisianans have woken up to the fact that coastal forest is important as part of our hurricane protection. However they still don't see the connection between bags of cypress mulch at Home Depot and hurricane protection. It is our responsibility to get the news out.

The EPA, the parishes and the state have joined together to circumvent environmental protections in the name of 'emergency powers.' The results have been a disregard for the future health and safety of our region. We must call for a comprehensive long term debris plan that includes recycling and reusing materials. We need to have hazardous materials disposed of safely so we don't have problems in the future.

Global warming is the primary focus of the national club's campaign. We know about it first hand. We need to help educate people to develop new habits and conserve on energy. We need to help people rebuilding to make wise decisions that will reduce their energy usage and in the future reduce their household utility costs.

People often like to start their new year making resolutions. Mine is generally not to put my head in a lion's mouth. It is a resolution that I can always keep. Why not make some commitments instead.. Think about doing something

with an environmental bent, take a child for a walk in the woods, change your lightbulbs for compact flourescents , donate some regular time to The Delta Chapter. There are many more things we can do out there. I am grateful for the volunteers and staff that we have who sometimes are on duty 24/7 trying to improve this place we call home.

Thank you for caring.

Happy Holidays and a prosperous New Year to you and your families,

Taskforce

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All of this great activity on the part of the Gulf Coast Task Force has been assisted by Media Coordinator Chris Smith. Based in New Orleans, Chris has helped to bring national media attention to Sierra Club issues in Louisiana and on the Gulf Coast. To see some of Chris' great work, and other information on the Gulf Coast Task Force, please check out the Delta Chapter website at www.louisiana.sierraclub.org.

There is much left to be done in hurricane-impacted areas, and if you have ideas for solutions and projects, would you consider becoming a member of the Gulf Coast Task Force? There are currently several openings. To apply, please contact Task Force Chair Barbara Coman at bcv23@aol.com.

The taskforce will be meeting in New Orleans in January.

This article contributed by Maura Wood, Regional Staff Sierra Club

The Delta Sierran is a bi-monthly publication of the Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club. Members of the Delta Chapter receive the publication as a membership benefit. Non-members may subscribe by sending a check for \$12.00 for one annual membership to the Delta Chapter at P. O. Box 19469, New Orleans, LA 70179-0469. Back issues of the Delta Sierran can be viewed on our website at <http://louisiana.sierraclub.org>.

Address Changes: To change your address, send your name, old and new addresses and member number to:
Sierra Club Member Services
PO Box 52968
Boulder, Colorado 80322-2968
or email the information to:
address.changes@sierraclub.org

Submissions: Article and photograph submissions are always welcome. Please send submissions to the newsletter editor at lesliemarch@hotmail.com or mail to Leslie March, 67017 Dolan St., Mandeville, LA 70471

Save the date
Chapter Retreat
March 16-18
Lake Fosse Point
State Park



Cypress Campaign News

The following press release was released on November 15th. The Delta Chapter along with its coalition partners is calling for the major retailers, Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Lowes to stop selling cypress mulch. Despite their statements to the contrary we have evidence that they are selling product that comes from Louisiana coastal swamps. Please join us in this campaign to save our coastal forests.

The Cypress Mulch Industry Threatens Coastal Protection in Louisiana

Coalition Calls on Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Lowe's to Stop Selling Cypress Mulch

New Orleans, LA- The Save Our Cypress Coalition, a group of local and regional environmental groups in Louisiana, is publicly requesting Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Lowe's immediately cease all sales of cypress mulch products. Louisiana's endangered cypress-tupelo swamps are being clear-cut to feed an unsustainable and unnecessary cypress mulch industry.

"As the nation's largest retailers, Wal-Mart, Home Depot and Lowe's have the power to dramatically reduce needless destruction of our cypress forests," said Leslie March, Chair of the Delta (Louisiana) Chapter of the Sierra Club, "We are calling on these three retailers to live up to their corporate policies of sustainability to help save Louisiana's coast."

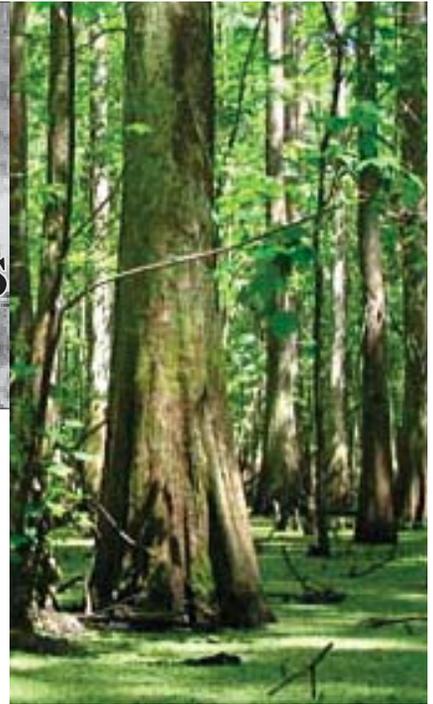
The Save Our Cypress Coalition is asking the retailers to stop selling all cypress mulch products until a credible, third-party certification system is operating to ensure that no cypress mulch products are being sourced from non-renewable cypress swamps.

"Cypress forests are an important barrier to hurricane storm surge," explained Gary Shaffer, PhD., from Southeastern Louisiana University, "Satellite imagery shows that most trees in Katrina's path were downed while contiguous cypress forests stood strong and actually protected the rest of the ecosystem."

Cypress mulch does not provide any superior attributes, and alternatives, such as pine straw, pine bark nuggets, and eucalyptus mulch all provide the benefits of mulch without destroying coastal wetlands. Despite sustainable options, entire swamps are being clear-cut to produce mulch.

"I have been following trucks from clear-cuts in the Atchafalaya Basin to a facility in West Baton Rouge Parish that is solely producing cypress mulch from whole trees. Our pictures show thousands of bags of cypress mulch being filled there, and those same bags end up in the gardening departments of Wal-Mart, Home Depot, and Lowe's," said Dean Wilson, Atchafalaya Basinkeeper. "Subsequent investigation with flyovers also have confirmed the cypress mulch operation."

Even without the threat of a wholesale mulch industry, cypress-tupelo forests throughout the Gulf are already stressed, and the sustainability of cypress harvesting has been questioned.



Referencing the Governor's Coastal Wetland Conservation and Use Science Working Group Report, Dr. Shaffer, a member of the group, explained, "From saltwater intrusion to increased levels of flooding, cypress forests in Louisiana are already in danger, and there are many swamps that will never grow back once they are cut."

Cypress forests in Louisiana and throughout the Gulf region also provide important habitat for wildlife, including threatened and endangered species like the Louisiana black bear, and forty percent of the migratory birds that fly through North America.

What can I do about Cypress logging?

- 1. Don't use Cypress Mulch**
- 2. Take action on www.saveourcypress.org**
- 3. Talk to your Friends, Family and Neighbors. Demand that your Garden Retailer stop selling Cypress Mulch.**

Chapter News

Have you ever considered getting involved with the Sierra Club on a state level? Do you live in an area where there isn't an active group? Here is your chance to get more involved with the club. We are looking for volunteers in a variety of roles.

We need activists to serve on all of the chapter issue committees. A list of committees and contact information is on the back of the newsletter.

In particular, we are looking for three positions,

Chapter Outings Leader

Would you like to share your love of the outdoors with other Sierrans? Work with the group outings leaders to revitalize our state-wide outings program. We will provide all necessary training you will need, both leadership and medical.

Newsletter Editor

We need someone to layout, edit and do some writing for a quarterly mailed newsletter. The newsletter is mailed out by a mailhouse so no mailing parties. This person will work with the chapter's webmasters to put out a short e-newsletter bimonthly. Desktop publishing experience is useful but not necessary. We will be glad to train you.

Treasurer

This position requires only a few hours per month. The candidate should be a reliable detail oriented person. Familiarity with Quicken or Quickbooks would be helpful. The current treasurer can help answer most questions and training is available by the national club.

If you are interested in any of these positions or want to get more involved in another capacity with the club, please contact Leslie March, 985-871-6695 or lesliemarch@hotmail.com.



Chapter Meetings for 2007

Chapter meetings are open to the interested public and to all members. They are usually once a quarter on a Saturday and Sunday. The Saturday is an open discussion and exchange of information about issues around the state. It usually lasts from 10:00 AM to 5:00 PM. The state conservation committee usually meets in the afternoon. The draft meeting agenda is on the chapter website about two weeks in advance. Please feel welcome to come to any meeting. If there is a topic that you would like to present or would like more information about, please let the chair know at least a week ahead of time. The Sunday meeting is reserved for the chapter's business. It usually lasts from 9:30-12:00. Feel free to come for the whole meeting or a few hours.

Next meeting is January 13, 14 meeting in Lafayette. Contact Woody Martin for location. hmartin44@cox.net or check the chapter website.

April 21, 22 Baton Rouge

July 21, 22 Honey Island

Oct 20, 21 New Orleans.

Chapter Social Events

Tree Hugger Happy Hours

Monthly get togethers with kindred spirits at fun New Orleans locations. Contact aaron@healthygulf.org to get on listserve

February 8 *Save the date*

Green Tie Awards

Opportunity to honor fellow Sierrans and individuals from our state who protect the environment. Contact Aaron Viles at aaron@healthygulf.org or Paula Cannon paulaocannon@gmail.com to help organizing committee.

Chapter Outings

March 16-18 *Save the date*

Chapter Retreat at Lake Fausse Point

Four cabins reserved. Tent camping available. canoeing, hiking, birding and just getting away. Each cabin sleeps up to 8 people. Lodging will cost \$23.00 per person. Meals to be determined. Email Sandra Thompson for more information and to reserve a spot. sandrasthompson@cox.net.



Acadian Group

ACADIAN GROUP BOARD & CONSERVATION COMMITTEE MEETINGS

The Acadian Group of the Sierra Club holds its' Board and Conservation Committee meetings on the 2nd Wednesday of every month at the Acadiana Symphony Building (412 Travis St., Lafayette, LA) at 6:30 PM.

ACADIAN GROUP GENERAL MEETING & LECTURE SERIES

Acadian Group of the Sierra Club has a general meeting and hosts a guest lecture on the 3rd Wednesday of every month at the Acadiana Symphony Building at 6:30 PM.

The Acadian Group of the Sierra Club is always looking for speakers. Past speakers have talked about wildlife, native plants, invasive species, reforestation, environmental education, the news media, and environmental concerns of local or global nature. If you would like to volunteer or suggest a speaker for the general meeting please contact Harold Schoeffler, Acadian Group Chairman at 337-234-4042.

ACADIAN GROUP OUTINGS

The Acadian Group has an active outing program. As of press date, they didn't have their Jan/Feb schedule set. Check their website at <http://louisiana.sierraclub.org/acadian/> or call Harold Schoeffler at 337-234-4042 for more information.



Sierra Club Outings
Hiking, Canoeing,
Campfires great
Company and Good Food.
Come join us!



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Civil War Battlefield Threatened by Strip Mine

The Dolet Hills lignite coal strip mine continues to devastate the environment and to tear into a historic Civil War battlefield just southeast of Mansfield in Desoto Parish Louisiana. The mine site looks like a lifeless moonscape. Wastewater from the active mine area is acidic with elevated levels of iron, manganese, and suspended solids. Wastewater draining from the mine site under state highway 175 at Chapman Bayou runs brown and lifeless. The company has paid a fine for water quality violations but the effects on local



Historical Marker overlooks strip mine



Chapman Bayou, brown and murky water



Dragline at Dolet Hills Lignite Mine

streams from large scale deforestation and mining excavation continue.

This area used to be rolling pine-covered hills. A civil war battle that occurred here on April 8, 1864 was the turning point in the Union army's Red River Campaign. It was at the battle of Mansfield that Union forces advancing on Shreveport were stopped and forced into retreat back down the Red River. Several thousand soldiers on each side died in the battle, and there is substantial historical evidence indicating numerous unmarked battlefield burials.

Dolet Hills Lignite Company (DHLC) will soon file an operating plan for years 2007 to 2011. We will be checking the plan to see if it will include further strip

mining of historically significant areas of the battlefield. The current protection of 177 acres at the Mansfield State Historic Site out of a total 6,000-acre battlefield is sadly deficient.

The Acadian group and the Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club is working with the Friends of the Mansfield Battlefield www.mansfieldbattlefield.org to bring attention to the devastation and to persuade DHLC to preserve more acreage in the core area of the battlefield, conduct additional cultural resource study, and to contain or treat runoff of wastewater into the natural environment. If you would like to see for

yourself the next time you are driving to Shreveport you can take state road 84 west from I-49 at an exit approximately 20 miles south of Shreveport. Turn south on state road 522, then turn north on state road 175. You will see the mine site on your left and the state historic site on your right.

Let your elected officials know what a travesty, you think this is, Help preserve our historical past and natural future.

For further information you can contact Haywood Martin, Acadian Group,



Greetings from the Baton Rouge Group

We are an active group located in our State Capital. Join us for monthly meetings and activities. Check out our website at <http://batonrouge.sierraclub.org> or call co-chair Jeffrey Dubinsky at 225-262-0460.



Dwight Brashear addresses Sierrans

2006 Countdown

Co-chairs Jeffrey Dubinsky and Sandra Thompson

2006 has been quite a busy year for our 650 member group. We have once again become involved in the hot subject of transportation. Since Katrina/Rita we have experienced incredible growth. This growth has been both positive and negative. The positive part is that B.R. has new opportunities to attract small clean businesses and now operates with a larger budget, hopefully with more money for "Green Projects". One major draw back is the increased sprawl (loss of green space) and traffic congestion set on by the sprawl.

On Thursday July 27th, we sponsored a meeting public meeting featuring the ever captivating, Dwight Brashear, the now former CEO of The Capital Area Transit System (CATS). He spoke on both the history and future of CATS. While CEO Dwight had some grand ideas that we hope (with effort) will come to fruition. His main goal was to bring in a Bus Rapid Transit system. This is very popular in parts of Europe, Australia and S. America. Think of it as taking the best parts of light rail (subway) and the go anywhere bus systems that we

are all familiar with. The system operates on clean, energy efficient modern buses running in dedicated lanes on street level. Some cities have seen a reduction in traffic by as much as 30% when a comprehensive BRT system is implemented.

The system is not only economical; it is also feasible and can be quickly implemented in comparison to a rail system.

We hope with progressive leadership and our support, that Baton Rouge will have viable transportation alternatives for all members of our city.

Act Now and Save the Environment!

Make a commitment to the next generation by remembering the Sierra Club in your will. Your support will help others preserve the intricate balance of nature

For more information and confidential assistance Please complete the form and send it to:
John Calaway, Director, Gift Planning
#5 Second Street, 2nd Floor, San Francisco, CA 94105
(435) 973-5639
Email: planned.giving@sierraclub.org

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone _____



Earth Day



Sierrans at BR Earth Day Events

We participated in two Earth Day events. One being the main stream Baton Rouge Earth Day. We had lots of information, volunteers and action items. The kids loved the temporary tattoos. The other was organized by the Environmental Conservation Organization at LSU (ECO). The event was known as Alternative Earth Day

and featured bands, games, tabling, petitions, make your own tie-die t-shirts (organic cotton of course) and more. We shared a table with our good friends from the Atchafalaya Basin Keeper/LEAN

Cypress Forum

We continued our involvement with the ongoing issue of saving Louisiana's cypress and protecting the forests from unsustainable logging practices. On August 23, 2006, we sponsored a meeting in partnership with Louisiana Wildlife Federation on this subject. Our guests included Dr. Richard Goyer; Professor of Entomology; Adjunct Professor of Forestry, Dr. Paul Kemp; Professor LSU School of the Coast and Environment, and Dean Wilson; Atchafalaya Basinkeeper. As you may know the Cypress Swamps and forests serve several vital functions to the health of our state. They purify our water,



Cypress topped by eagle. Jeffery Dubinsky

absorb storm surges and are havens for all creatures big and small.

The speakers complimented each other wonderfully each providing scientific documentation and narratives on their involvement with Coastal Louisiana and our threatened cypress swamps. You can get more information about the state-wide Cypress Coalition on Cypress Mulch at www.saveourcypress.org.

Monthly Bag Lunch

4521 Jamestowne Ave

Suite 12-13 in Baton Rouge

Call Maura Wood

For Details

225-925-8650



St. Tammany Hazardous Waste Day

Serving St. Tammany, Washington, Tangipahoa and Livingston Parishes.

Meets on the third Thursday of the month, alternating between Excom meeting and General meetings. All members welcome at all meetings.

Next meeting on January 18th @ 7PM, Mandeville Community Center, 3090 East Causeway Approach,

Eric Baka, a Biologist Manager with the LDWF Avian Non-game Program will give us a slide presentation about the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker and the search for the Ivory-billed Woodpecker.

Mr. Baka is passionate about protecting Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. He inserts nest boxes into live pine trees to provide homes for these birds.

St. Tammany Parish has two locations where Red-cockaded Woodpeckers are monitored: Big Branch Marsh NWR in Lacombe and the grounds of SE Louisiana State Hospital.



Piles of E-Waste Collected from St. Tammany residents

Fighting to protect our local streams and habitats has long been a major focus for the Honey Island Group, and finding ways to keep some of the worst offending materials out of our landfills has always been front-burner. Of course, Hurricane Katrina just multiplied the need many times over.

As the most serious recovery from the storm wound down, Honey Islander Diane Casteel came up with the idea of a Household Hazardous-Waste Collection Day as a joint effort between Group volunteers and the Parish Department of Environmental Services. Saturday, October 28th, 2006 was the result: A cool clear crystal-bright we-have-'em-only-a-couple-times-a-year morning, and in three hours 500 cars, trucks, and trailers passed through the Koop-Drive parking lot!

From quiet beginnings when the idea was brought up at a Group meeting, the event unfolded like this: Diane proposed the event to the Group Executive Committee in April and met the following month with Parish officials who were very enthusiastic. Diane and Environmental Specialist Brett Henry immediately set up a series of meetings, and Sierrans Therese Kwicien and Linda Beall came on board. They quickly settled on the

parking lot of the Parish Administrative Complex on Koop Drive as a location and began to line up vendors and plan a publicity campaign.

The biggest problem was a balancing act. On the one hand, it was critically important to insure that every single item dropped off would be properly processed and disposed of; on the other, no one had any idea what the public response would be like. How to insure proper logistics without any idea of what the volume would be?

Early on, our Delta Chapter threw its support behind the project, and that was essential, because we quickly outstripped our Group's resources, especially to generate the necessary publicity. Soon, we had a page up on our web site, and fliers were, well, flying out in groups of hundreds to library counters, retail stores, tabling events, schools, and the Girl Scouts (and they even went door to door). The New Orleans Times Picayune ran several stories including Diane Casteel being named St. Tammany Outstanding Volunteer.

Still, as the sun rose on Collection Day, no one had any idea what to expect.

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**Kisatchie Group
Needs Volunteers
Contact**
**Jeff Wellborn at
318-868-5243**
or
**jwellborn@sport.
rr.com**



Volunteers from the Group, the Kiwanis Club, and Southeastern Louisiana University received tee shirts, donuts and coffee (courtesy of the Parish), and a safety briefing from the Fire Department. Shortly before 9:00am the gates opened. Within minutes, the line of cars snaked out of the parking lot, up Koop Drive, and north and south on LA59, even out on to Interstate 12 a half mile away.

Cars pulled forward in groups of three or four, and volunteers sprinted to each, unloading rusty paint cans, computers and monitors, televisions, and automobile tires, batteries, engine oil, and antifreeze – first out of the vehicles, then off to the staging areas where each item could be evaluated, sorted, and finally loaded into trucks for hauling away. Very quickly the sheer volume began to overwhelm everyone, and the evaluating and sorting gave way to “Find some place for this! Any place!!” People driving through reported waiting in line for an hour and that the line stretched north to Dog Pound Road and east along the Interstate almost to Lacombe, four and ten miles away! Still, with almost no exceptions, the drivers’ moods were wonderful. People who had been forced to devote virtually their entire Saturday morning to this project bubbled with enthusiasm and gratitude, even those with items we couldn’t accept.

There was one caged trailer just for tires, and it was filled! (1)But, as the volunteers unloaded, everyone kept looking at the growing piles of materials that still had to be organized and cleared away. As the scheduled

cutoff time of 12:00noon approached, it became obvious that some folks would be turned away. When that happened, we were told by Sheriff’s personnel as many as 250 vehicles were still in line! Everyone felt terrible but that was the situation and we couldn’t stay open any longer.

The volume of e-waste was. . . overwhelming!

All the paint cans had to be loaded onto pallets and then into tractor trailers -- a huge job!

The volunteers spent the entire afternoon and into the evening sorting and stacking onto pallets and loading into trucks. Some of the sorer backs called it a day starting at 5:30, and some heartier souls made it through to 8:00 and a little later. Some of the Parish employees couldn’t get away until 10:00pm!

To give a benchmark to the day, Greg Gorden, the Director of the Parish’s Department of Environmental Services, said they had allowed for ten barrels of paint; by mid to late afternoon, there were eighty! LEI had originally brought in one trailer; during the afternoon they brought in two more, both larger than the first!

By anyone and everyone’s definitions, St. Tammany’s First Annual Household Hazardous-Waste Collection Day was an off-the-scale success. The cloud over the silver lining is that we had to turn away so many vehicles. Now it seems certain that we need to do this once every six months or so, and the

Group is already collecting what we learned this first time.

The Honey Island Group is only beginning to thank all the volunteers and participants, and we still have some apologizing to make to the faithful who were turned away. It was so gratifying to see how many people in our area care about the landfills and the environment. After all, they could have just tossed all that stuff into the trash. We learned a lot that will help us with our next event, and we’re already scheduling the next one

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New Orleans Group

The New Orleans Group is the largest group of the Delta Chapter. It's membership area includes the greater New Orleans region and Jefferson Parish. The group has been very involved in the recovery efforts in New Orleans. Members of other groups and concerned nonmembers are welcome at all of our meetings. The meeting dates listed below are for the monthly programs. The Sierra Club New Orleans Group meetings are now held at the Carrollton United Methodist Church 921 S. Carrollton Ave, (Corner of Carrollton and Freret) use door on Freret St. side. Doors open at 6:30, program begins at 7 p.m. The programs are open to the public and are free of charge. To get the latest details, call 1-504-836-3062.

January 14, 2007

February 11, 2007

March 11, 2007

Cypress & Our Coast Mulching our natural defenses

Go Take A Hike! – Outings and opportunities

Brain food? Mercury in the state of Louisiana

New Orleans Where YAT?



What a time we've had in 2005-2006. Between August 27 and September 15 many of us were blown all over the region, and across three or four states by Hurricanes Katrina and Rita. We returned to homes (or slabs and rubble) filled with moldy furniture, personal possessions, walls, and ceilings, and, after removing all of our furniture (or most of it, anyway), either gutted the homes or had someone else do it. We are thankful for volunteers who came in and did this work for free, and for the contractors who did this dirty work for a fair price. We will always be grateful

to friends and family on "high ground" who took us in, fed us, and helped us get through one of our country's worst natural disasters. Many of us (and I'm not one of them) are homeowners who have valiantly fought with stubborn insurance companies, FEMA reps who swear our homes' mud-lines aren't flood-related, but were caused by winds depositing leaves and gunk, and the US Army Corps of Engineers, who swear their "strong" levee system couldn't have failed, and caused homes next to the 17th Street Canal, the London Avenue Canal, the Orleans Avenue

Canal, and other places, to crumble. Then, there's the Road Home plan. Where's that money? The various rebuilding plans have interesting ideas for incorporating green design concepts. Some plans incorporate our city's and region's older home designs: raised cottages and shotgun homes, but in newer models, which are perfect for our area's subtropical climate. Other plans show us more green space and parks, integrating mass transit systems, bike lanes, and better use of urban buildings. In the recent expo for

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International Day of Action



The New Orleans Group of the Sierra Club, Alliance for Affordable Energy and Gulf Restoration Network joined forces to mark the 2nd annual International Day of Action on Global Warming on November 4th.

On this date, events were held all over the world to draw attention to the November 6th-17th United Nations Climate Change Conference taking place in Nairobi, Kenya. Leaders from all over the world gathered to discuss growing concerns and potential solutions to what has been called the greatest threat to humanity of our time: global warming.

NOLA Parties for Global Warming

On Saturday, Nov. 4th, approximately 100 people took part in a "Save New Orleans, Stop Global Warming Frenchmen Street Block Party" in New Orleans because New Orleans is the city in North America most vulnerable to the impacts of global warming. This event was hosted by five local music venues and the Alliance for Affordable Energy, the New Orleans Group of the Sierra Club, and the Gulf Restoration Network. Block party goers who donated \$10 to the cause received a wristband for free admission to Snug Harbor, the Spotted Cat, Dragon's Den, DBA, and Café Brazil. The groups distributed global warming buttons, DVDs, t-shirts, global warming facts and tips sheets and collected postcards urging Louisiana Senators Mary Landrieu and David Vitter to support action to reduce emissions by 65-80% by 2050.

The Block Party began with statements from the Mayor's office of Environmental Affairs at Snug Harbor on Frenchmen Street in the Faubourg Marigny. Participants continued on to the other venues with music by Washboard Chaz and John Boutte and statements by

Events reportedly took place in 48 countries—more than doubled from last year, with hundreds of thousands of participants. Many events in the U.S. focused on the need for America to get serious about doing its part to stop global warming, considering that the U.S. contributes 25% of the world's global warming pollution with only 5% of the world's population.

The Bush administration backed out of talks around the Kyoto Protocol, an international agreement in which each participating country agrees to limit its global warming pollution, citing concerns about economic harm.

local organizations, business and community leaders.

"New Orleans is considered the most vulnerable city in North America to the effects of global warming because of rising seas and increasingly destructive hurricanes," says Micah Walker Parkin, Program Director of the Alliance for Affordable Energy and Energy Chair of the Sierra Club Delta (Louisiana) Chapter. "Solutions exist, but we must act quickly to reduce global warming emissions 60-85% by 2050, the amount scientist predict is needed to prevent the most catastrophic impacts."

The goal of the event was to raise awareness that the wonderful atmosphere and culture of New Orleans are jeopardized by global warming, urge Louisiana leaders to act, and raise money and gather names for future events. The groups raised over \$1,000 to support their energy solutions and global warming campaigns. Visit: www.globalclimatecampaign.org to get a taste of events around the world.

Notably, this conference follows a recent climate change report by former World Bank chief economist Sir Nicholas Stern that produces a catastrophic vision of hundreds of millions fleeing flooding and drought and suggests that the cost of inaction could be a permanent loss of 20 per cent of global output. That equates to a figure of £3.68 trillion - while to act quickly would cost the equivalent of £184bn annually, 1 per cent of world GDP.

LIGHTS! CAMERA! ENERGY! Energy Solutions Film Festival

The organizations continued the theme by sponsoring the city's first film festival devoted to energy solutions - a weeklong "Energy Solutions Film Festival" at Tulane University, with a film showing each night November 6-10th. "The Energy Solutions Film Fest was planned to educate the public about the many solutions that exist to tackle the serious problems of global warming and our society's dependence on fossil fuels," said Parkin.

"We've put together a dynamic mix of films including acclaimed documentaries like Kilowatt Ours, and the HBO special "Too Hot Not to Handle" as well as the TBS global warming comedy "Earth to America" and animated shorts," says Leslie March, chair of the Delta Chapter of the Sierra Club.

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LNG Heats Up Gulf

Delta Chapter and Aaron Viles win Enviro Alliance Award for LNG Work

The national Club recently recognized the work of the Delta (Louisiana) Chapter with the leadership of Aaron Viles fighting off-shore open-loop liquefied natural gas (LNG) terminals in the Gulf, and the unusual coalition that they developed. Formed around an LNG terminal proposed by Shell Gas and Power, the coalition consists of the Louisiana Shrimp Association, the Louisiana Charter Boat Captain's Association, the sportsman website RodNReel.com, the regional conservation group Gulf Restoration Network and the Club.

While the Sierra Club and our allies in the Gumbo Alliance for Safe LNG continue to pressure Shell to abandon their plans for a fish-killing open-loop LNG terminal off the shore of Western Louisiana, another terminal proposal is currently moving forward as well.

Still in the permitting process, ConocoPhillips' Beacon Port terminal would be located 50 miles east-southeast of Galveston Texas and could be the fourth open-loop terminal permitted for the Gulf of Mexico. If all four terminals were operating at the same time, that would mean some 650 million gallons of Gulf seawater would be sucked up, and dumped, chilled, chlorinated and devoid of all sealife back into the Gulf, every single day. Based upon the draft environmental impact study for Beacon Port, the terminal could destroy the equivalent of 16% of Texas' annual redfish catch, and have unknown impacts on important species like shrimp, crab and blue fin tuna.

The Coast Guard will be releasing the final environmental impact statement for Beacon Port in the second week of November, with final public hearings somewhere around the end of November and the beginning of

December. These hearings are critical, as once they are held, the Governors of Texas and Louisiana have a 45 day window to veto the terminal. That is how Freeport McMoRan ended up developing a fish-friendly, closed-loop terminal off the mouth of the Mississippi River. ConocoPhillips withdrew their proposal off Dauphin Island, AL in the face of continued opposition from Alabama's Governor Bob Riley. That makes the Beacon Port terminal their last chance to develop an open-loop terminal in the Gulf.

While the cost of securing 16% of Texas' redfish is estimated to be only 1% of ConocoPhillips' imported LNG (it would be burnt at the terminal to rewarm and recirculate the seawater, minimizing impacts to fisheries) that price seems to be too high for the energy giant.

The Gulf Restoration Network has taken a lead role in our Gumbo Alliance. Watch the Gulf Restoration Network's website, <http://healthygulf.org> for details and opportunities for current information on the status of LNG terminals in the gulf or better yet, join the GRN's e-action list to make sure you get news updates in your in-box

**Chapter Ballot is
on page 14.**

Please Vote Today



Film Fest

Continued from page 12

The Energy Solutions Film Festival included the following films:

"Too Hot Not to Handle"

A primer on global warming, this HBO documentary features contributions from leading scientists in the field and shows how businesses, local governments, and citizens are taking positive actions to reduce global warming emissions. (90 minutes) Website: www.hbo.com/docs/programs/toohot/index.html

"Rising Waters"

Through personal stories of Pacific Islanders, this film puts a human face on the international climate change debate by showing the viewers the physical and cultural impacts caused by global warming. (57 minutes) Website: www.bullfrogfilms.com/catalog/rw.html

"Power Shift"

Narrated by Cameron Diaz. Power Shift explores the remarkable ways energy touches our daily lives. Meet activists from around the world and learn personal action steps you can take to reduce global warming. (26 minutes) Website: <http://www.goworldlink.com/main.html>

"Out of Balance"

This film documents the influence that the largest company in the world has on governments, the media and citizens and what can be done about global warming. Beyond simply critiquing ExxonMobil, the film also offers challenging, large-scale ideas for the global social changes that must take place if there's any chance of having a livable planet for future generations. (60 minutes)

Website: www.worldoutofbalance.org

"Earth to America"

This hilarious special celebrates life on Earth by taking aim at one of our planet's most serious problems: global warming, and features comedy luminaries such as Steve Martin, Robin Williams, Ben Stiller and Jack Black, as well as Tom Hanks, Robert Kennedy, Jr., and nearly a dozen others. (90 minutes) Website: <http://www.lauriedavid.com/press.htm>

Delta Chapter Ballot Statements

The 2007 Chapter Executive Election Ballot is enclosed at the bottom of this page. There are four candidates listed below. There are two positions open on the executive committee for chapter-at-large representatives in 2007, The chapter-at-large representatives serve for two years on the executive committee. They must be current members of the club, willing to attend four quarterly meetings a year and to assist in creating policy for the chapter and to vote as part of the executive committee (excom) on funding and business issues of the chapter. They are eligible to serve as a chapter officer and to represent the chapter at the council of club delegates. Below are brief statements by each candidate.

Charlie Fryling

I have always considered it both a pleasure and an honor to work as a leader with Delta Chapter. The Sierra Club has been and will continue to be a strong voice for the protection of the Louisiana environment. The broad focuses of the Club from outings, important environmental issues, to political activism make our Club essential. Keeping this diversity is vital. Since joining the Sierra Club in the late 1960s I have had a strong interest in protecting the Atchafalaya Basin. This has been my main interest yet I realize that there are many, many important issues and all aspects of the Clubs program must be supported so that the Club will be strong. It is always my desire to encourage everyone to enjoy, respect, and to work with the Club. Our mission requires inclusion. If elected I will work to achieve these goals.

For those who are new to the Club or who don't know me I will list a few of my qualifications. I am an Associate Professor of Landscape Architecture at LSU with interest in Land Use Planning, Ecology, and Design. I represent East Baton Rouge Parish on the Atchafalaya Trace Commission. I am known by many of our elected officials and governmental agencies as one who is very concerned about the protection of our environment. I am one of the

Pat Snow

I have been a member of the Sierra Club for many years because I support the issues that the Sierra Club supports. I have been active in Little Theater in Baton Rouge for 40 years and I have supported Democratic Party issues. I believe I can contribute to the Board and the club as a whole. Thank you for considering me

Wendy King

Wendy is an active member of the New Orleans Group holding various positions over time including Treasurer. Wendy is currently the Recycling chair for the Delta Chapter and the New Orleans Group. She has been an active participant in the recovery in New Orleans including restoring my own house. She is been working diligently to urge our public officials to reinstate curbside recycling in New Orleans. Wendy has actively encouraged and stands up for sustainable development and alternative transportation in the region.

She believes that the Sierra Club needs to continue to be a progressive voice calling for Corps reform, closing the MRGO, getting real revenues to the state for coastal restoration and to get the big box stores to stop selling Cypress Mulch. If she is elected to the board, she brings her experience, leadership and passion for major issues that plague us as residents of Louisiana.

Please mail your ballot to Delta Chapter Ballot, 4521 Jamestown Ave. Suite 12-13, Baton Rouge, LA 70808, Vote for two candidates only. Joint memberships can vote for four. Ballots must be returned by Feb 1. Originals only.

Aaron Viles

I've been honored to be a part of the Delta Chapter's leadership for quite a few years now, and would like to continue to help guide this effective voice for the conservation of Louisiana's natural resources. I'm currently a member of the national Sierra Club's Smart Energy Solutions Conservation Initiative Committee, helping to drive the Club's energy strategy, and am hopeful that the Delta Chapter can help play a role in its implementation. I've helped head up our legislative committee, and will be looking at opportunities to fund cypress conservation, urge the development of an energy strategy which addresses the reality of global warming, commit to a sustainable hurricane response, and ensure our state receives a fair-share of the oil & gas revenues produced off our shores, without forcing every state to follow our poor example of coast-destroying energy development.

Conservation politics aside, I want to make sure that Club members feel welcome and inspired to help shape the Delta Chapter's future. As we continue to regroup after the overactive hurricane season of 2005 scattered us far and wide, more than ever we need to be connected to our grassroots membership. Thanks for your support.

Delta Chapter 2007 Ballot

Charlie Fryling _____

Wendy King _____

Pat Snow _____

Aaron Viles _____

Waste Abundance

Continued from page 10

Here is a breakdown of the vehicles processed:

Locality	Vehicles	Percent of Total
Mandeville Area	175	34.9%
Covington Area	128	25.5 %
Slidell Area	73	14.5%
Other St. Tammany	97	9.3 %
Outside St. Tammany	71	4%
Unknown (no zip code)	22	4.4%
Total 502 cars		

NOLA

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people rebuilding their homes, three "Katrina Cottage" models showed how a stronger, more hurricane-resistant house could replace the current FEMA trailers, which are inappropriate for our region, and are so cramped that two people can't move around in them comfortably. These homes don't have the trailers' problems with formaldehyde fumes, and are built to withstand 140 mph winds. The FEMA trailers are so flimsy, that most of their residents would have to evacuate during a tropical storm or category 1 hurricane. So, here we are, back in our city and region. It's been 15 months since Katrina and Rita. New Orleans' trash pickup is an anemic, erratic once-a-week cycle. The city's curbside

recycling program is gone, and won't be back, unless we meet with the Sanitation Department director, and tell her that our city's returned residents believe that it's important to have their recyclables picked up. Post-Katrina debris pickup is an ongoing struggle: FEMA or the Corps? Who takes the debris from off our sidewalks, and hauls it to a landfill? The lack of reliable citywide trash pickup, whether household or post-K debris, shows the rest of the country that New Orleans' city government can't get a handle on a basic sanitation task: keeping the city clean, and getting its rodent problem under control.

I think some things are improving,



environmentally speaking. We may finally get the Corps to close MR-GO. Many of us went to the October 28th public hearing, and have sent in comments, by Nov. 11th, about MR-GO. Congress told the Corps to work out how to close MR-GO to deep-draft ships. As of Nov.7th (and maybe Nov.8th, depending on the final US Senate returns), we now have Democrats in control of the House of Representatives for the first time in 12 years. This shift in power may finally mean an end to oil-drilling schemes in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge, road-building in our



roadless areas, and a shift to clean-energy legislation. We may finally get legislative action to curb emissions from power plants, cars, and other sources of air pollution.

Our city's tree canopy, which got shredded by Katrina's Cat 3 winds, is being replaced by hundreds of saplings (when it's not being butchered by Entergy's corps of workers who specialize in "crowning" the oaks whose large branches are "in the way" of Entergy's lines.) Our public transit system is coming back. Our streetcars, both green and red, should be fully running by next summer. Right now, the streetcar tracks are being put to good use by joggers, dog-walkers, (and I saw one guy walking two miniature horses!), and horseback riders. Our buses, which sat in floodwaters, will be replaced, as well. Parts of New Orleans, like the lower 9th Ward, still look like war zones.

There are collapsed houses everywhere, and fallen trees. These are places that some urban planners thought shouldn't be reinhabited. Tell that to the homeowners who are returning to reclaim, recover, and rebuild their homes.

Contributed by New Orleans Excom Member, Wendy King

Checkout the Delta website for volunteer opportunities in 2007 to help in New Orleans.



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