

If it's Friday, environment's in danger

Public less likely to be informed by media on weekends and holidays

If it's Friday, you know what that means: It's likely to be another bad Bush Administration announcement for America's environment.

It's TGIF for the Bush administration. Once Friday has rolled around, they can announce their latest plans for America's environment, safe in the knowledge that it will attract the minimum amount of scrutiny from the press and public. Today, a decision that paves the way for logging in America's largest rainforest, the Tongass National Forest in Alaska. The U.S. Forest Service is expected to deny Wilderness protections for as much as 9 million acres of rainforest, lands that the government itself has categorized as being pristine and free of roads.

"Americans might be surprised to find out that the Bush administration doesn't consider a single acre in America's largest rainforest worthy of Wilderness designation," said Carl Pope, Sierra Club Executive Director.

"Americans know that Alaska defines the very essence of wild and remote forests."

Today's decision, released as a Supplemental Environmental Impact Statement (SEIS), is especially egregious because there is very little that Americans will be able to do to scrutinize or challenge this decision. A rider attached to the recently passed 2003 Omnibus Appropriations bill this month by Senator Ted Stevens (R-AK) prohibits the public from seeking administrative appeal or judicial review of the Tongass wilderness decision.

"Americans want to see Alaska's wild forests protected as places they cherish and where they hunt, hike, and fish," said Pope. "The Bush administration knows decisions like this will stimulate controversy, so they have shielded it from public scrutiny."

Combined with the Bush administration's attempts to weaken or eliminate the landmark Roadless Rule, today's decision on the Tongass could leave

large swaths of Alaska's wild forests open to the timber industry.

"By slipping controversial proposals in under the radar, the administration seeks to accomplish their goals quickly and quietly, without full public knowledge, public debate or public consent," said Pope. "This is not the way transparent government and true democracy work."

Please see BUSH'S, Page 2



PARKLAND TOUR: Members of the Fort Worth Group of the Sierra Club toured the 400-acre parkland in north Tarrant County that the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department proposes to sell rather than develop. Sierrans believe it will be a great loss to us in this area if developers are allowed to bulldoze the area and build luxury homes.

Program
Notes

April Program: The April program could not be confirmed as of press time, but we guarantee it will be a good one. We know you'll enjoy the one we expect to have AND – even if that one doesn't pan out, you'll certainly get a kick out of the substitute program that Chairman (and Program Chair) Dan Smith will have to perform for 30 minutes to take its place. Does he juggle? Perform magic tricks? You'll never know if you miss it.

Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club

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All the following numbers are Area Code 817 unless otherwise noted

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Sierra Club National Hotline 202-675-2394

Web Pages

Fort Worth Group <http://sierraclub.org/chapters/tx/fortworth/index.html>

National, Lone www.sierraclub.org

Lone Star Chapter www.texas.sierraclub.org

The Planet www.sierraclub.org/planet

Bush's assault on the environment intensifies on Fridays CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

Fridays and holidays are typically times when the public is distracted.

Saturday is the day that the fewest people read the headlines or watch the news. Other examples of the Bush administration's Friday or holiday announcements:

Friday, Jan. 10, 2003 -- released Final Environmental Impact Statement authorizing largest oil and gas project ever on public lands (39,000 new wells in the Power River Basin of Wyoming and Montana).

Friday, Jan 10, 2003 -- proposed guidance restricting scope of Clean Water Act

Friday, Jan 17, 2003 -- released Draft Environmental Impact Statement for expanded drilling in the NPR-A (Western Arctic).

Tuesday, Dec. 24, 2002 (Christmas Eve) -- Interior Department releases a new rule allowing states and local jurisdictions to use Revised Statute (RS) 2477 to turn old trails, abandoned dirt roads, and stream beds into new high-

ways (published in the Federal Register on Jan. 6, 2003)

Tuesday, Nov. 26, 2002 (Thanksgiving week) -- proposed revisions to the National Forest Management Act

Friday, Nov. 22, 2002 -- announced proposed new rules to weaken the Clean Air Act (New Source Review). The rules were entered into the Federal Register on New Year's Eve, 2002. No public comment period followed.

Instead, they relied on comments about a proposal that the Clinton Administration put out in 1996 and 1998. The public was shut out of the most recent round.

Friday, May 3, 2002 -- announced new rules creating loopholes for Mountaintop removal mining allowing mining companies to blow the tops of mountains and dump the waste into rivers and streams.

Friday, March 30, 2001 -- removed Clinton rule requiring that Federal contractors have to have complied with U.S. environmental laws.

Texas Wilderness Pow Wow at Angelina Nat'l Forest April 11-13

Join members of the Texas Committee on Natural Resources and the Lone Star Chapter of the Sierra Club, as well as other Texas, for the 24th Annual Texas Wilderness Pow Wow April 11-13.

The event is a great opportunity to enjoy a beautiful National forest while learning more about a diverse forest ecosystem.

This year's Pow Wow will headquarter at Caney Creek Recreation Area. Guided nature walks into upland Island Wilderness and Longleaf Ridge and

along the Neches River will feature a variety of habitat types.

To reach the Caney Creek Recreation Area, to east from Zavalla on Hwy. 63 to FM 2743. At the end of the road, take Forest Road 336 to the campground.

Registration will be on-site Friday and Saturday.

There is no set fee, only a suggested \$10 per family donation to help defray event expenses. For brochures, contact TCONR, 512-441-1122, tconr@texas.net.

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Greater Fort Worth Group Sierra Club Outings

Fort Worth Sierra Club outings are open to members and nonmembers. Trip leaders serve in a volunteer capacity and assume no responsibility above that of organizing the trip. If you have special needs or medical requirements, notify the leader prior to the trip. All outings officially begin at the trailhead. Leaders cannot assign carpools, but may help coordinate ride sharing. Many outings require advance reservations at the trip designation as well as from the participant. Notify the trip leader promptly if you must cancel. Donations of \$3 per person and \$5/family are requested for overnight trips to be used for conservation efforts of the club. Any park and/or camping fees are the responsibility of the participant. In order to participate on one of the Sierra Club's outings, you will need to sign a liability waiver. If you would like to read a copy of the waiver prior to the outing, please see <http://www.sierraclub.org/outings/chapter/forms> or call 415-977-5630.

April 11-13, Friday-Sunday

2nd annual Caprock Canyon State Park and Trailway We'll travel to Caprock Canyon on Friday night and establish base camp at Little Red Tent Camping area. Saturday's bike trip will be 25 miles from the west end of the trail riding back toward the state park. The trailway is a converted rail trail, and the west to east trek is mostly downhill, though the grade is very gentle. It is extremely scenic, traversing red rock canyons over railway trestles and through the Clarity Tunnel with its population of Brazilian Free-tailed bats. Fat tired bikes are necessary due to conditions of the railbed. Limited to 12 bikers. Sunday morning will be optional bike rides or hikes within the park. Cost of \$10 per person includes campground reservations and trail fees. Leader: Dan Smith, 817 410-2955, or email RiverdogDan@aol.com.

April 11-13, (Friday-Sunday)

Backpack trip to Caney Creek/Buckeye Mountain. Enjoy a spring trip in western Arkansas. We'll backpack a total of about 9 miles. The hike to camp is on a ridge and offers excellent views of the Caney Creek Wilderness. We'll set up camp near a waterfall. Friday night camp will be at Shady Oaks Campground nearby. Leaders: Marcos Jorge (972) 394-2546 (mjorge@ustgolfshaft.com) and Faith Mauk.

April 17-20, Thursday-Sunday

Zion National Park Car Camp. Spend Easter weekend in the dramatic landscape of sculptured canyons and soaring cliffs. Meet at Zion National Park Wednesday night or Thursday morning. Day hike Thursday, Friday and

Saturday, and hopefully catch a sunrise on Sunday before returning home. Day hikes may include popular sights and 2 miles into the Narrows - weather permitting. One long day will be spent in Bryce Canyon NP for hiking and exploring. Each participant is responsible for making transportation arrangements. Several options are available. Leader: Wendy Lambert, w Lambert@concrete-pipe.org. 817 251-0016(H).

April 27, Sunday

Keller/Haslet Area Bike Ride. Bicycle about 30 miles in the countryside around Keller and Haslet. Traffic should be minimal and the riding speed will be moderate, but be prepared for some hills. Meet at 9 a.m. at the Keller Sports Complex which is located south of Golden Triangle Blvd. and just west of Keller Parkway (Main) in Keller. Helmets are required and bring snacks, plenty of water and an extra tube or a repair kit. No prior reservations are necessary, but for information you may contact leader Linda Zombeck, zombeck@charter.net. 817-431-2346.

May 8-11, Thursday-Sunday

Canoe a section of the Buffalo National River in central Arkansas on Friday and Saturday for a total distance of less than 20 miles on this national wild and scenic river. This river is crystal clear and surrounded by beautiful cliffs and trees. Camp each night at Tyler Bend Park in Arkansas which is located at the midpoint of the canoe trail. You must leave on Thursday afternoon due to the 7 hour drive to the campsite. Shuttle service and canoe rental must be arranged in advance by contacting the outfitter at 870-439-2888. The number of canoes available is very limited. The website is www.gilbertsstore.com. No shuttles are provided by the canoe outfitter for personal craft. This trip is open to experienced canoeists and requires approval of trip leader. This is not a technical river, but there is a current and basic canoeing skills are needed. Leader: Marilyn Sumner (Turnage), 817-491-2382 marilynturnage@msn.com, or Claudia Blalock, 817-924-6242 cpblalock@msn.com.

May 17-18 Saturday-Sunday

Lake Mineral Wells Car Camp, Hike and Bike Ride- Camp at Lake Mineral Wells State Park, a beautiful park featuring steep hills, deep ravines, open

savannah and a lake surrounded by timber-covered hills. This park is about 45 minutes west of Fort Worth. Saturday we will bike the Lake Mineral Wells State Trailway to Weatherford, a fairly easy 30 miles round trip although shorter rides are possible. A Sunday hike of one of the park's scenic trails will be optional. Plan to camp Friday night or arrive Saturday by 10 a.m. for the bike ride. Bring your bike, helmet (required), repair kit and water bottle. You need to reserve your campsite in advance by calling the Texas State Parks and Wildlife office at 512-389-8900 or visit their website for campsite reservations. Contact leader Linda Zombeck zombeck@charter.net. 817-431-2346 to sign up.

June 7-8, Saturday-Sunday

Canoe the South Llano River near Junction, Texas. This is a spring-fed river, flowing over limestone rocks, with great scenery. For those who don't canoe, the river is great for swimming or tubing, or for just keeping cool. We will camp at South Llano River State Park, in the walk-in area, and reservations should be made well in advance for this heavily used park. The park is 250 miles from Ft.Worth, down Hwy 377. We will canoe on Saturday, and rest up on Sunday morning for afternoon drive home. Two good websites: tpwd.state.tx to access the South Llano River SP site, and Canoeman.com for great information on the river. Contact Marilyn Turnage at 817-491-2382 or marilynturnage@msn.com.

September 7-12, Sunday-Friday

High Sierra Fly fishing. The search of the elusive California golden trout requires a strenuous 35-mile backpack in the Ansel Adams Wilderness. Brookies, rainbows and browns will also be sought. This fly fishing trip is from Devil Post Pile to Tuolumne Meadows on the John Muir Trail. The trip is rated strenuous and only for those who have had extended backpack trips in bear country. Bear resistant canisters are required for food storage. A California nonresident fishing license and trout stamp is required for angling. There is a nonrefundable fee of \$5 for the wilderness permit. The trip is limited to 6 experienced backpackers. Contact the leaders who will determine if you qualify for the trip. Leaders: Marcos Jorge 972-394-2546 (mjorge@ustgolfshaft.com) and Steve Longley, 972-394-2546.

Coming Events

April 1 and May 6, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.
Fort Worth Sierra Club ExCom Meeting, 6:30 p.m. The May meeting returns to its old location, Madelein's in downtown Fort Worth. For more information, contact Dan Smith, 410-2955.

April 16, Wednesday, 7 p.m.
Fort Worth Sierra Club General Meeting.

Newsletter deadline. Submit articles, ads, letters, or other information in writing. Articles may be submitted by mail, email, or on Iomega Zip disks accompanied by hard copy. B&W or color nature photos and electronic images (150dpi or greater) will be accepted (prints returned if submitted with SASE). Photographs of outings or other club activities are particularly encouraged. Identify subject of photo and state photographer's name. Please do not write on the back of photos. Mail

General Meeting Wednesday, April 16

Program: See Pg. 1 for information on April program.

7:00 Main Auditorium, University of North Texas Health Science Center, Camp Bowie at Montgomery (exit Montgomery off I-30, go north about a mile to Camp Bowie).

submissions to Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 1925, Fort Worth 76101, bring to the ExCom meeting, the general meeting, or email jmoody166@aol.com.

May 5, Monday

Newsletter folding party, Smoky's Ribs, 6 p.m., 5300 E. Lancaster. Eat, or have the beverage of your choice, while working with other Sierrans to prepare the newsletter for mailing. Call Steve Turner, 457-7131.

Conservation Committee Meeting

The Conservation Committee normal-

ly meets the last Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m., at the University of North Texas Health Science Center, Library Building, Room 306. Contact: Earl Burnam, 244-2328 or Bob Scott, 282-1372, to verify location and date.

May 6, Tuesday

Outings Committee Meeting, 6 p.m., at The Great outdoors. Contact Claudia Blalock, 817-924-6242.

October 17-19

Sierra Celebration. Initial planning has been done to hold this year's Sierra Celebration at Bastrop State Park. Cabins, bunkhouses, campsites, and "the great fire ring" have been reserved for the weekend. At this point we have environmental singer/musicians and entertainers Bill Oliver and Frank Meyer scheduled for Saturday evening for our featured entertainment. In addition plans are being made for outings events, including hikes, "casual" orienteering sessions, and "naturalist" hikes as well as social events.

'Roy Bedichek's Vanishing Frontier' focuses on influence of little-known naturalist

Emmy Award-winning documentary filmmaker Rob Tranchin recently discovered Roy Bedichek's classic 1947 work, "Adventures with a Texas Naturalist", and was inspired to rediscover the love of nature he felt as a young boy.

The results can be found in "Roy Bedichek's Vanishing Frontier," a one-hour documentary produced by KERA-Dallas/Fort Worth, that looks at the ever-changing landscape of the natural world. It airs on PBS affiliates nationally in April, 2003.

Following in the literary footsteps of Bedichek, Tranchin embarks on a road trip, looking at the modern landscape of the southwest through the philosophical eyes of a complex Texan with a deep appreciation of nature.

"Roy Bedichek's Vanishing Frontier" is the result of his unique journey, as Tranchin discovers the changes and unlikely similarities that exist when early 20th-century writings are compared to the world of today. As he revisits the sites that were both points of inspiration and observation for Bedichek, Tranchin crosses paths with:

—noted writer John Graves, author of "Goodbye to a River";

—a graduate student studying the mating rituals of mockingbirds, a species that captivated Bedichek; and

—the staff of a sewage treatment plant that completes a natural recycling pro-

cess by converting waste into rich soil.

As Tranchin interacts with these modern-day naturalists, he realizes that Bedichek's issues and concerns are as relevant today as ever. His observations have become an historical snapshot of the world that existed during the first 67 years of his life. A first-hand witness to the plundering of the frontier, as settlers overtook the West, harnessed it for

their own needs, and abandoned it when it could no longer sustain their demands, Bedichek fully realized the impact humans have on the environment and the way that nature, whenever possible, demonstrates its resilience. Within these observations lives a legacy of timeless lessons on the connectivity and interdependency of all living things.



Sierra Singles Events

On Sunday, April 6 join other Sierra Singles for a walk on the wild side. Come and experience the Dallas World Aquarium. See what a rainforest can be like without the stifling heat, numerous bugs or eight hour plane trip. Where else can you get to see unique animals with really close in parking? We will meet at 1:30 p.m. at the front door of the DWA, 1801 N. Griffin in the West End of Dallas. If we get 15 or more adults, the admission price will drop from \$11.85 to a \$8.66. For more info or directions to the DWA, see its website at www.dwazoo.com or call 214-720-2224. Reservations not necessary, but for the discounted admission price, please send an email to alogan@raytheon.com. Optional lunch before the rainforest experience and optional afternoon tea following it. Contact Allan Logan at 214-763-4884 for more info.

On Monday, April 21 at 7 p.m. join us for dinner at Ruen Thai, 3310 W. Rochelle, near Beltline, in Irving. Gather in the bar at 6:45 to mingle before being seated. Contact: Jenny Lehman.

On Monday, May 19 at 7:30 p.m. [note new time!!] join us for dinner at Italianni's restaurant, 1601 Precinct Line Road in Hurst (north of 183 aka Airport Freeway). Gather in the bar at 7:15 to mingle before being seated. Contact: Jenny Lehman.

Just a reminder that all events officially begin at the event site/trail head.

Contact for Sierra Singles information: Jenny Lehman, (817) 263-1357 or avidhiker@killerfrogs.com

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Mission statement

The purposes of the Sierra Club are: To explore, enjoy and protect the wild places of the earth; to practice and promote the responsible use of the earth's ecosystems and resources; to educate and enlist humanity to protect and restore the quality of the natural and human environment and to use all lawful means to carry out these objectives.

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