

SIERRA CLUB CRIER

GREATER FORT WORTH GROUP • 817/588-1167

ONE EARTH, ONE CHANCE

JANUARY 2005

2004 gave just a glimmer of hope for heading into a new environmental year

Despite a disappointing national election, not everything that happened during 2004 was bad. In fact, to give you some hope as we enter a new year, here's a listing of some good things from the year just past.

The single biggest issue, of course, has been the Bush administration's continuing assault on the policies that protect our nation's environment and public health, and we expect the impacts of those policies to be felt in the coming years.

But make no mistake. The recent election provided this administration with no mandate for putting polluters before the public. Look around and you'll find plenty of reasons to be hopeful about the public's hunger for environmental solutions.

Here are 10 great things that happened in 2004 to give us reasons for hope in the future.

1. On 40, Going on Forever

The Wilderness Act reached a major milestone this year, celebrating its 40th anniversary. To date, there are more than 655 million acres of land "where the earth and its community of life are untrammelled by man."

2. Eye on the Prius

What cynics assumed would be a gimmick turns out to be a goldmine. Toyota has sold over a quarter million of its Prius sedan, a gas-electric hybrid, proving that this fuel saving technology is anything but a flash in the pan.

3. Riding That Train

Baby, you can drive my car. I'm going

to take the train. In 2004, voters passed no fewer than 40 ballot initiatives to fund public transit, ranging from San Antonio, TX to Kalamazoo, MI.

4. Stepping on the (Greenhouse) Gas

California finalized rules for its landmark law to curb global warming pollution from cars and trucks. Now other states like New York and Massachusetts and even Canada are considering

adopting the same rules.

5. Rocky Mountain High Five

The Bureau of Land Management announced that it would no longer consider oil and gas drilling along the Rocky Mountain Front. The Front was first made famous in the journals of Lewis and Clark and is the only place where grizzly bears still venture onto the prairies.

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Fort Worth Group Conservation Notes

City planning cleanup of Gateway Park

Soccer and rugby fields in Gateway Park, closed since 2002, will be re-opened for use by the public if state environmental officials approve a proposal by the City of Fort Worth to alleviate the effects of contaminants known to be in the soil.

The site is located on land formerly used to dispose of dirt from the old Riverside Wastewater Treatment Plant, closed in 1979, and testing has shown low levels of the cancer-causing agent polychlorinated biphenyls (PCB's) to be present. The City plans to cap the area with an impermeable barrier and artificial turf, and will drill test wells to detect any migration of chemicals from the site.

Eventually, the City hopes to reclaim other parts of the treatment plant by hauling soil from the old sludge-pits to a landfill designated to receive con-

taminated materials.

Trinity River Vision project display

The Fort Worth Community Arts Center, 1300 Gendy St. at Lancaster Avenue, is displaying a model of the proposed Trinity River Vision, a massive project which proponents hope will rebuild the north side of downtown by creating a town lake after diverting the flow of the Trinity River.

The cost of the project is estimated to be \$360 million dollars, of which \$110 million has recently been allocated by Congress. The 800 acre location contains numerous industrial sites containing toxic chemicals and heavy metals, and planners have budgeted \$21 million dollars for cleanup.

It is expected that additional funding will be necessary for further testing and disposition of contaminants.

SW Parkway public hearing

Neighborhood organizations and City

Please see CONSERVATION, Page 3

Program Notes

Marilyn Turnage will present the January program on her June trip to Alaska via the Alaska Marine Ferry. "There were six of us and two camped on deck. I am hoping to interest Sierra Club members in utilizing the ferry as an inexpensive and wonderful way to get to Alaska. The trip is as much an adventure as the destination. I'm always surprised at how many people don't even know about it, and think a cruise is the way to go. Not!" she said. Her son-in-law, John Thomlinson, took most of the pictures. He is a Professor of Ecology at the University of Puerto Rico.

Coming Events

February 2, Wednesday

Outings Meeting at the Great Outdoors Sub Shop, 3204 Camp Bowie Blvd, Fort Worth at 7 p.m. to plan new outings and reminisce about old trips. Contact Tolbert Greenwood, 817-737-8698, tgreenwood@canteyhanger.com. Call to verify.

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Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club

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

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**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

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.

General Meeting

Wednesday, January 19

7:00 Main Auditorium in use. We'll meet at Everett Hall until January, University of North Texas Health Science Center, Camp Bowie at Montgomery (exit Montgomery off I-30, go north to Camp Bowie).

February 8, Tuesday, 7 p.m.

The Conservation Committee meets on the second Tuesday of the month at 7 p.m. All members are welcome and encouraged to attend. For meeting location, contact: Chair Glenn Ford, 469-6540 or Earl Burnam, 244-2328 or Bob Scott, 282-1372.

January 19, 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 submissions to Newsletter Editor, P.O. Box 1925, Fort Worth 76101, bring to the ExCom meeting, the general meeting, or email jmoody166@aol.com.

January 31, Monday

Newsletter folding party at Braum's, 6770 Bridge St. at 7 p.m. Call Steve Turner, 457-7131.

February 1, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

Fort Worth Sierra Club ExCom Meeting, 6:30 p.m., at Panera Bread, 1700 S. University Dr. For more information, contact Dan Smith, 410-2955.

Wine Tasting, Sunday, February 20

Learn about wine at a wine tasting fundraiser at Tony's Wine Warehouse in Dallas at 2904 Oak Lawn on Sunday, Feb 20 at 5 p.m. Please register by sending a check for \$20 made out to Fort Worth Sierra Club and your e-mail address to Jeneanne Carson, 906 E. Timberview Ln, Arlington, Texas 76014 by Feb 15. For further information, please contact Todd Nichols at 817-937-5217. Email: toddnichols@comcast.net.

Not everything in 2004 was an environmental disaster

CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

6. Tune In, Turn Out

Sierra Club completed its most ambitious voter education effort ever, knocking on more than 1 million doors, making 1.5 million phone calls, and recruiting 12,000 new volunteers.

7. Nobel Peace Is the Answer

A longtime associate of the Sierra Club's Human Rights and the Environment campaign, Wangari Maathai was awarded a Nobel Peace Prize in October for her work leading Kenya's Green Belt Movement and mobilizing poor women to plant 30 million trees to stave off deforestation.

8. Voting for Dollars

Voters nationwide approved 120 out of 161 local and state conservation ballot measures, raising more than \$3 billion for land conservation.

9. Grab Yer Partner

Protecting the environment is about finding common ground, and Sierra Club found a lot of ground to celebrate this year teaming up with labor unions to promote clean energy technologies, standing ground with ranchers against

the Bush administration's aggressive agenda to expand oil and gas drilling, and working with hunters and anglers to protect America's wetlands.

10. Supreme Rejection

The Supreme Court rejected the Bush administration's argument that it has a constitutional right to keep the workings of its Energy Task Force secret and sent the case back to the Court of Appeals. We won't know what happens until 2005, so hold onto your hats!

Support our printer

Alpha and Omega Graphics reduces our newsletter print cost by 10% of every job we refer to them.

Owner Mark Shippey is one of the few printers in this area who actively encourages the use of recycled paper and soy-based inks. This newsletter is always printed on environmentally friendly paper.

Alpha and Omega is located at 2705 Eighth Ave., Fort Worth. For more information, call 921-3670.

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.

Friday-Sunday, January 21-23

Campout Friday and Saturday evening at LBJ National Grasslands near Decatur for the polar bears in the group, or just come out for the day on Saturday. Day hike of about 10-12 miles on Saturday. Hike will begin at 9 a.m. for those wishing to drive out for the day. (Possible two-mile night hike on Friday night if the weather is decent.) Camp and trailhead at Black Creek Lake. Drive time from Fort Worth is about one to one-and-a-half hours depending

on where you live. Contact Dan Smith at 817 410-2955 or FWSierran@aol.com to sign up.

Friday-Sunday, March 4-6

Carcamp at Kisatchie Bayou, near Nachitoches, Louisiana (about 5 hours drive from Fort Worth). You will need

to drive to La on Friday. Dayhike 7 to 9 miles in the Kisatchie Hills Wilderness on Sat. Sunday, day hike 2 to 4 miles along scenic Kisatchie Bayou. Leaders: Claudia Blalock, 817-924-6242 and Martha Ohlson phone: 972-727-5778, e-mail: mjoholson@drs-irtech.com

Conservation Notes CONTINUED FROM PG. 1

of Fort Worth officials voiced objections at a public hearing to portions of the environmental impact statement prepared by the Texas Department of Transportation for the proposed Southwest Parkway.

The neighborhood groups asked that the state address potential problems of noise and light pollution, requesting screening walls and narrower medians to distance the roadway from homes.

A representative of the Overton Woods area pointed out that the state had not offered predictions on the amount of fine-particle pollution which will be created from automobile and truck exhausts.

A developer's attorney said that the

state's lack of planning to replace disturbed wetlands, as required by federal law, made it difficult for landowners to plan for development of their property.

In a related action, the North Texas Tollway Authority approved a request by the City of Fort Worth to permit curves, hills, and landscaping to slow traffic so that a maximum speed of 50 miles per hour could be authorized.

Normally, the Tollway Authority requires a design which will support a maximum legal speed of 60 miles per hour, but officials have concluded that a lower speed limit would help protect neighborhoods against noise and other traffic-related problems.

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