

Congaree Chronicle

Winter 2007

Volume 30, Number 4

SIERRANS SAY:

"NO MORE SWIMMING IN SEWAGE!"

By Bob Guild, Chapter Chair

Last summer I went for an after work kayak paddle from the back yard of a friend's suburban Columbia home on beautiful Lake Katherine. A paddle to a mid lake island and a quick swim was just the thing to cool off after a typical sweltering day in the midlands. The lake shore was lined with stylish lakeside homes, most with docks and many with ski boats and other watercraft parked alongside. I was only one of many on Lake Katherine enjoying the promise of water in South Carolina safe for swimming, boating and fishing.

My personal epiphany came almost a year later when Sierra Club members lead by retired engineers Earl Meyer and Stewart Christner published their reports of official DHEC water quality records for South Carolina's lakes and rivers. I was shocked- and a bit revolted- to learn that I had been quite literally, 'swimming in sewage' that afternoon on Lake Katherine. DHEC water quality monitoring records for Gills Creek (just below Lake Katherine) recorded fecal coliform levels ten times the legal limit for safe contact recreation: 4,760 fecal coliform colonies per 100 milliliters vs. the standard of 400! Gills Creek was listed by DHEC on the official Clean Water Act Section 303d "List of Impaired Waters" because of these readings. It was not fit for swimming or boating or other contact recreation. Nothing told either homeowners or me that fecal contamination



(Continued on page 3)

South Carolina Leaders Lack Vision on Energy

by Ellie Veno, undergraduate student at the College of Charleston.

Our publicly owned utility, Santee Cooper, is proposing to build a 1320 megawatt pulverized coal plant in rural Florence County on the banks of the Great Pee Dee River. In exchange for having thousands of tons of toxic pollutants pumped into their air and water every year, citizens in this poor, rural area will supply cheap electricity to beachfront coastal properties in Horry and Georgetown counties.

Twenty-one states have passed legislation promoting renewable electricity, including two in the South. Texas has mandated that 2,000 megawatts of new capacity come from renewable resources by 2009. And last year North Carolina required that its utilities get 12.5 percent of their electricity from renewable sources by 2021.

At the federal level, when U.S. Senators sought to amend the most recent Senate energy bill to require utilities to get fifteen percent of their energy from renewable resources by the year 2020, Southern Senators, including our own Lindsey Graham and Jim DeMint, made up half of the "no" votes, thereby killing the effort.

The House energy bill does include a Renewable Electricity Standard of 15 percent by 2020, which originally appeared as an amendment by Congressman Mark Udall (D-NM). While Congressmen James Clyburn, Bob Inglis, and John Spratt did vote in favor of the final bill, how did they and the rest of the South Carolina delegation – Gresham Barrett, Henry Brown, and Joe Wilson – vote on the Udall amendment? The vote was unanimous: all voted against it. Thankfully the measure passed despite their opposition.

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America needs a smart energy policy that increases our energy security and protects the environment. There is a better way. Congress should pass legislation that cuts our country's dependence on oil, increases our use of clean, renewable energy sources like wind and solar power, protects our public lands, and modernizes the electricity grid to prevent future blackouts.

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Explore, enjoy and protect the planet

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It is the contributions from individual Sierra Club members that keep the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club functioning. In other words, "We could not do it without you." Contributors between August 8, 2007 and October 29, 2007 are listed below. Thank you!

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() I'm an advocate for smart energy solutions, for safe clean communities, and wildlife habitat in South Carolina. Make sure my contribution goes for these purposes.
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(Continued from page 1, Sewage in Water)

of their lake exceeded public health based limits exposing us to unacceptable risk of contracting waterborne illnesses from exposure to sewage-related pathogens. Such illnesses include gastrointestinal, skin, respiratory, eye, neurological and wound infections. Waterborne illnesses can range from the minor 'swimmer's ear' to the serious hepatitis and even the deadly cholera epidemics common in third world cultures stem from water contaminated with human waste.

Sierrans like Earl and Chris became concerned about the health of their beloved Lake Keowee. They educated themselves by studying DHEC water quality monitoring reports; and were stunned to learn that dozens of lakes and streams across the state are unfit for swimming or fishing due to contamination from fecal material and pollutants such as mercury. They found that such water quality information was collected by DHEC and recorded in a thorough and comprehensive system of field data collection and data compilations for which the agency had received much deserved praise from other officials. The problem, however, was that the public who needed to know had no idea that their favorite swimming hole or paddling site was officially 'unfit' for human recreational use. Earl, Chris and their Sierra colleagues took the bold step of simply publishing DHEC's own maps of South Carolina rivers and lakes with the official DHEC fecal coliform and mercury results displayed for hundreds of sites near our homes, boat landings and favorite swimming holes. It was from that Sierra report that I learned that I had been swimming in sewage in Lake Katherine.

The obvious objective we all must strive for is to clean up South Carolina's lakes and streams to achieve the legal promise of the Clean Water Act of waters that are swimmable, fishable and supportive of aquatic life. To do this we must identify the sources of pollution which cause the water quality impairments and eliminate their threat. First, however, we must ensure that all South Carolinians understand that there is a problem which requires solution. Only then will an engaged public demand action by those responsible for cleaning up our waters. First, we all need to know from DHEC which of our rivers, streams and lakes remain unfit for human contact, for fish consumption or for support of health aquatic life.

When Sierra Club members shared these stories and circulated these disturbing reports to our fellow conservationists recently the reaction was loud and clear: we have a right to know if we are 'swimming in sewage!' Cleaning up our water will require serious attention to such challenges as run-off of non-point source pollution from urban sprawl development, overflowing municipal waste treatment plants, failed shoreline septic systems and land application of factory poultry and hog wastes. The fecal coliform bacteria are common to warm-blooded animal wastes from humans as well as pets, wildlife and livestock. They are indicators of the presence of the disease carrying pathogens which threaten human health. Cleaning up our waters will require serious action to address these multiple sources of bacterial pollution. Powerful forces in the residential development and factory farm industry will resist changes that threaten their profits. Even our friends and neighbors will have to change the way we manage our lawns, tend our pets and wash our cars.

But first, we insist on the public's right to know if their favorite swimming hole or boating place is unfit for human contact. That's why the conservation community rallied to the Sierra Club's call for a first step to address the challenge: a bill to be introduced in the South Carolina General Assembly to require the posting of waters officially listed as unfit for human recreational use due to fecal contamination, as well as those with mercury fish consumption advisories and those below sewage plant overflow discharges. Boat landings, swimming holes, and road crossings near failed monitoring stations would be posted with swimming and fishing warning signs. The actual pollution levels could be listed with a comparison to the legal standard and a plain language

explanation of the hazard. "Warning: Swimming in Sewage May Cause Illnesses including . . ." Perhaps a phone number could be listed for more information, "call DHEC," or maybe even "call your legislator, Rep. So and so . . ." The details remain a work in progress. The important point, however, is that Sierra members identified this problem and are leading the way toward solving it by building a broad base of informed citizens who demand accountability from those charged with protecting our environment. It is simply not good enough for DHEC to gather the data and write the reports. They must tell the public the truth about the health of our rivers and lakes. An informed public that refuses to swim in sewage will do the rest.

MERCURY LEVELS ARE HIGH IN SC WATER

Tony Bartelme in the Charleston Post and Courier on October 28, 2007 reported that SC has some of the worst mercury hotspots of any place in the nation. Most of these hotspots are in the coastal plain. Although DHEC has a scanner to test mercury levels in people, only one person (a doctor from Hilton Head) has been tested. The worst area for mercury contaminated fish is in the "Mercury Triangle" between Conway and Florence.

MOVIE REVIEW

by Kirbie Crowe, Director, Membership and Special Events
Upstate Forever

"Flicks at Furman" is a series of short environmental and agricultural films presented by Upstate Forever, Greenville Organic Foods Organization, and Furman University. The films are topical and timely, covering subjects like biofuels and organic farming that are currently making headlines. Films are presented at the Furman amphitheater on Saturdays in October at 8pm. Food and drinks are generously donated by Whole Foods Market. Following is a review of one of the films.

The Future of Food casts a harsh light on the phenomenon of genetically-modified food. From the issue of patenting a living organism to the ongoing debates between small farmers and large agri-business corporations, this documentary clearly explains the role of GMOs in today's food industry and the consequences for consumers. The connections between the federal government and companies like food giant Monsanto are exposed, as is the push by such companies to keep genetically-modified food unlabeled on supermarket shelves. While the film paints a grim picture, it concludes with some alternatives to the current trend in the American food system. Community Supported Agriculture (in which consumers develop a relationship with local farmers, receiving a basket of goods from them each week) and local farmers' markets are touted as ways to reconnect with the food we eat on a daily basis. While the film has a general appeal, this is a must-see for proponents of organic agriculture and those interested in food safety.

Conservation Common Agenda Priorities

Cary D. Chamblee, Lobbyist

Among the many strengths of the Conservation Community, of which the Sierra Club is a major part, is our common sense of the urgency and dedication to protect and improve our state's environment and our cohesive efforts to make things happen. Each year, our organizations, 24 at last count, get together to decide on our common goals for the next legislative session. The following is a list of our over-arching goals for next session. Legislation will be developed for each priority and legislative sponsors will be sought to sponsor specific bills that we will work to get passed. This year on November 11-12, at Camp St. Christopher, near Charleston, Sierra Club members, and representatives of most of the organizations in our coalition will gather for 2 days to discuss our ideas and a strategy to get them put into action. All Sierrans are invited to join in this event .

Energy Independence and Efficiency_(encourage energy conservation)

South Carolinians use the fourth largest amount of electricity per capita in the United States. We also have the fourth highest electricity bills in the nation. This energy inefficiency weakens the economy and security of our state - we spend over a billion dollars annually to import energy from distant states and hostile nations. The conservation community is seeking a package of state incentives to encourage investment in measures that save electricity and produce home-grown renewable energy.

Increased Conservation Bank Funding (twice last year's funding)

For the last three years, the Conservation Bank has been the most important source of funding for land conservation in South Carolina, protecting 107,551 acres of natural and historic properties across the state at an average cost of \$560/acre. Through voluntary easements and acquisitions, vulnerable natural and historic lands, family farms, wetlands, battlefields, urban greenways, river corridors and parks have been protected. The Bank is funded with a small percentage of the documentary stamp tax, which ranges between \$ 15 – 20 million. We are seeking double that amount in 2008.

The rapid rate of development far exceeds the amount of land conserved, while the number of grant requests to the Conservation Bank far exceeds the funds available. We are in a race to save our state's last great places (nearly 200 acres of land are developed daily), which is why the conservation community urges the General Assembly to double funding for the Bank this year.

Taxpayer Protection Act (municipal annexation law reform)

Inappropriate and harmful annexations have caused growth to outpace infrastructure in many regions of our state, burdening taxpayers and hindering local and regional planning efforts. The conservation community seeks to review and reform our outdated annexation laws to improve the efficiency of local governments and protect taxpayers from undue burden. Specifically, we want to redefine standing to ensure that parties affected by annexations have the ability to contest questionable annexation proposals; to improve public notice requirements regarding annexation proposals; to require annexations to be consistent with county land use plans; and to require municipalities to provide a plan of services to the public to ensure that annexing municipalities will be able to support the extension of new services.

Ending the Water Wars (surface water withdrawal permitting)

Sen. Wes Hayes formed an ad hoc committee in 2006 of representatives from industries, local water and sewer authorities, agricultural interests and conservation organizations to determine a framework for regulatory oversight of surface water to improve water

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Caving to pressure from utility companies, they and others argued that the South is not a favorable location for renewable energy on the grounds that solar and wind power are more advantageous in the West. Science says otherwise. Several studies show that South Carolina has great potential in biomass, offshore wind energy, and solar power. The problem is that South Carolina has become dependent on dirty coal, which we import from other states in exchange for our ratepayer dollars. South Carolina politicians, in turn, have become dependent on campaign contributions from utilities and the coal industry.

It is worth noting that to date, neither of the area's senators, Hugh Leatherman (R) or Yancey McGill (D), nor any of the House members representing Florence County – Terry Alexander (D), Lester Branham (D), Kris Krawford (R), Philip Lowe (R), or Robert Williams (D) – have asked questions publicly about Santee Cooper's proposal, much less opposed it. Indeed, none of them attended the Army Corp of Engineer "scooping" meetings held recently in Florence and Conway.

Will Governor Sanford weigh in on the Kingsburg plant? Considering our governor's public statements about climate change and the need to preserve South Carolina's natural heritage, he has a clear duty to.

The Little Lost Plastic Bag

An Environmental Bedtime Story by Susan Corbett

Once upon a time there was a little plastic bag. She wasn't a particularly special plastic bag; like her brothers and sisters, she started out as a tiny *nurdle*, the feedstock from which plastic bags are made. And her parents were strong, polyethylene molecules, descended from the petroleum family. Based on her chemistry, she was destined to have a long life, probably more than a thousand years! She was just one of the almost 1 trillion plastic bags made worldwide every year. She had a BIG family . . . BUT, after she left the factory, she

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(Continued from page 4, Conservation Priorities)

management with neighboring states, protect our river and lake habitats and foster economic growth, and. The surface water withdrawal legislation (S.428, H.3578) introduced in 2007 by Sen. Hayes and Rep. Carl Gullick reflects the work of this committee.

The conservation community supports legislation that will provide the state with the authority to regulate withdrawal of surface water in order to manage and protect existing industrial uses and the natural and recreational benefits enjoyed by the citizens and tourists of our state.

Protecting Community

Rights (supporting the 2003 compromise on regulatory takings)

In 2003 The Property Rights Task Force crafted reasonable, compromise legislation (Act 39) to balance the rights of individual property owners and local communities' right to plan for growth. Act 39 passed with the support of development interests, property rights advocates, and conservationists. However, since then, development interests have continued to push for passage of legislation that would undermine this compromise law.



The Eminent Domain Study Committee, which has been assigned the task of studying regulatory takings, is due to make its recommendations to the General Assembly in January. The conservation community continues to support Act 39 and we oppose any legislation that would undermine the recommendations of the Task Force. South Carolina's communities' ability to protect their natural and historically significant properties should not be taken away.

Stop Swimming in Sewage (public notice of polluted water)

The conservation community calls for legislation to protect public health from polluted waters. Long overdue is the required posting of rivers, lakes, and estuaries to alert the public of water that is unsafe for swimming or fishing. The public needs to be better informed about the many causes of polluted runoff - sprawling development, surface paving, animal waste and fertilizers - and the fact that most of the mercury in our waters comes from coal-fired power plant air emissions.

Citizens have a right to know when fecal coliform pollution or mercury contaminated fish consumption threatens public health. Sewage spills also need to be made public within 24 hours.

Unprotected Waters (restoring freshwater wetlands protection)

The protection of non-jurisdictional wetlands has been called into question by recent U.S. Supreme Court decisions. South Carolina has already lost over 33% of its wetlands and now, as a result of these Court decisions, the federal government has withdrawn clear permitting protection for freshwater wetlands - valuable wetlands such as Carolina Bays that are not directly adjacent to a lake or river. Therefore, it is South Carolina's responsibility to clarify the confusing situation that currently exists. Wetlands play a critical role in providing habitat, alleviating floodwaters, and improving water quality, so it is imperative that these functions be maintained. In 2005 the Isolated Wetlands Protection Act was supported by development, farming, utility, and conservation interests. The conser-

vation community continues to support legislation that will protect freshwater wetlands.

Uphold the Atlantic Compact (ending SC's role as the nation's nuclear waste dump)

Last year, the House Agriculture took an historic 16-0 to stick to the plan to close Barnwell to out of Compact waste beginning in July, 2008. Recently released information showing alarmingly high levels of radioactive tritium in monitoring wells on the Barnwell site confirm the wisdom of that decision. The conservation community urges DHEC to act quickly to support the improved burial methods currently recommended by the Atlantic Compact. Questions remain about the future viability and safety of the site.

Details about the Conservation Common Agenda may be viewed at www.makeconservationcount.org or www.conservativotersofsc.org.

(Continued from page 4, Plastic Bags)

started being separated from her family, and she didn't like it.

First, she was sent to a grocery store, where 100 billion of her brothers and sisters are given away each year. She looked forward to being useful. To her disappointment, she was only given the task of holding a half gallon of milk. Along with 10 other brothers and sisters, she made the journey home to a typical American household, where she thought she would have other uses. Once she was emptied of her contents, the humans had a momentary hesitation about where to put her as if subconsciously they knew she needed special care, but, unfortunately, she was not destined to be part of the 3% of plastic bags that are recycled. Instead, she ended up with the 97% that are not, - in the garbage.

She lingered in the garbage for a few days, and then the dump truck carried her to the local landfill, where, she was hopeful, she would find her family. Indeed, she did encounter many bags there, but to her dismay, she ended up on the top of the pile . . . and in a few days, the wind blew her and the rain carried her away from the landfill to a small creek, where she began a long journey to the ocean.

She felt very lost in the big ocean, but strong currents caught her and she began moving rapidly. Along the way, a sea turtle mistook her for a jellyfish and almost consumed her, but she escaped, unlike many of her brothers and sisters, who end up in the bellies of sea turtles and sea birds, who then died after eating the plastic. For months and months she traversed the ocean, small pieces of her shredded off and eaten by small creatures, but nonetheless intact, until one day, something amazing happened.

She came to the surface of the ocean and saw a miracle: she had found her family! Deep in the heart of the North Pacific subtropical gyre in a place called The Pacific Trash Vortex, she saw a slowly rotating ten million square mile area - bigger than the state of Texas - filled with plastic - all kinds of it! Plastic bags of all kinds, plastic bottles of every shape, size and color, bottle caps, lids, billions of lost nurdles, - every kind of plastic imaginable - it was all here! And because of the strong polymers that make up the plastic, this big family will live happily in the ocean forever! The little bag was finally home. The End.

I wish this was a fairy tale, but unfortunately, it is true. The Pacific Ocean gyre I described is real, where there are 6 pounds of plastic for every one pound of naturally occurring organisms. have GOT to stop the use and spread of polyethylene plastic bags, and push for major collection and recycling of other kinds of plastic. I have started laying the groundwork for a SC campaign about this issue, and truly hope that all Sierrans have stopped using plastic bags for grocery shopping.



OUTINGS

Thanks to Doug and Pam DeNeve for gathering and formatting the list of outings from the various outings leaders!

Trillium, Station
Cove Falls Nature
Trail, Oconee Co.
SC

Yellow Branch
Falls, Oconee
Co., SC



November 10-11: Kayak Trip-LUNZ

Overnight kayak trip to camp on Capers Island. A great warm-up for the Otter Island trip in December.

There will be some sort of fee for overnight parking of vehicles. A fairly protected paddle to a wonderful barrier island complete with dunes and a picturesque front beach "boneyard" of ancient oak and pines. Kayakers with little camping experience or campers with little kayaking experience might be suitable for this trip. Ask first.

Contact Starr Hazard 843-881-8902 or hazardes@bellsouth.net.

November 11: 10:00 am

Bird Watching Outing-PEE DEE Group
Huntington Beach State Park with Roger Hux and Julia Krebs

Call or email David Wach for more information
dwach@sc.rr.com or (843) 629-4850

November 17: 9:30 am

Blue Heron Nature Trail-Cathcart Group

Ridgeland, SC. The Nancy Cathcart Group will assist with clean up of the butterfly garden and plant identification on the trail.

Contact Allyn Schneider at 837-2018 for details.

November 17: Jones Gap Trail-Bartram Group

This lovely trail in Jones Gap State Park follows a rushing creek for much of the way and includes a visit to a waterfall. Bring a lunch to eat at a beautiful spot on a large rock in the creek. Hike goes rain or shine. Rated moderate. Non-members welcome

Phone Jack Seitz, (864) 948-1080 (home) or 597-4589 (office) for departure time and location.

November 18: Canoe/Kayak trip-LUNZ

We'll put in at historic Willtown Bluff on the lower Edisto River, paddle up a couple of small paralleling creeks past old rice fields and dikes, and then up into narrow, intimate Penny Creek to finish the trip.

Call Bill Turner at 571-3503.

December 8-9: Kayak trip-LUNZ

Overnight kayak trip to camp on Otter Island. Pending permits. This trip to the place where the ACE Basin meets the sea has some fairly open stretches of water and is not a beginner trip. Experience (such as the November kayak camping trip to Capers Island) is a must. We will seek out the location of a historic Confederate fort and otherwise enjoy the incomparable spectacle of sunrise and sunset on a pristine Atlantic beach.

Contact Starr Hazard 843-881-8902 or hazardes@bellsouth.net.

December 9: Day Hike at Grove Plantation-LUNZ

Grove is the core inholding of the ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge. The 8,000-acre property includes old rice field impoundments, bottomland hardwood and upland pine forests, one of the oldest antebellum plantation houses in the state, and two Civil War earthen fortifications, all of which we'll see on this 8-mile walk.

Call Bill Turner at 571-3503.

Most Weekends: Cycling for Fitness-LUNZ

Why crank out those endless boring miles on the stationary bike at the fitness center when you could be out in the fresh air and sunshine on a real bicycle? Rides include the Francis Marion National Forest, various wildlife refuges, the Kiawah beach, the pastoral countryside of Meggett, etc. Lengths vary from 14 to 24 miles, and are flexible enough to allow for different speeds and abilities. Lunch after.

Call Bill Turner at 571-3503.

For Complete Outings Information, See:
<http://www.southcarolina.sierraclub.org/lunz/events.html>
<http://www.southcarolina.sierraclub.org/outings.html>



SC Chapter ExCom Elections

Y o u r V O T E C o u n t s

The Sierra Club, in addition to being a world leader in conservation and protection of our environment, is also known for its dedication to democratic principles in the selection of its leadership. Each and every Sierra Club member is encouraged to participate in its elections and to voice their opinion on the direction that the club is taking. This year our membership will select four at-large members to serve on the Executive Committee from among the five nominees who were nominated by our nominating committee or by petition. Please read the following candidate statements, that were written by the candidates, and participate in the election process by voting for up to four candidates. Don't forget to provide your name(s) and your Sierra Club Number on the outside of the envelope. Your votes will be kept confidential. The ballots must be received by December 6, to be counted.

PATRICIA CARSON **Robert Lunz Group**



I am flattered and excited to have been nominated to run for an Executive Committee position for the Chapter. Within the last few years, the Sierra Club has increasingly become a bigger part of my life. I have served on the Chapter Membership Committee for nearly three years, and since my move to Charleston I have served on the Lunz Group Executive Committee. I enjoy participating in membership events and outings, and attending meetings and public hearings regarding developments and businesses with an environmental impact. I am eager to bring my ideas, knowledge, and youthful enthusiasm to the Executive Committee.

While grassroots activism is instrumental in facilitating change, it excites me how the Sierra Club also focuses on change through legislation and litigation. I am currently enrolled at the Charleston School of Law where I study Environmental Law. I am President of the Environmental Law Society and have had the opportunity to work at both the Western and Southern Environmental Law Center. Prior to my enrollment in law school, I spent three years working at two environmental laboratories. During my employment with these companies I worked with industrial, Department of Defense, Department of Energy, and EPA contracts, and I became increasingly aware of the widely unknown risks associated with environmental waste disposal. This is, of course, a relevant issue for us in South Carolina, since both Savannah River Site and Chem-Nuclear are located here.

Currently, my strongest interest is alternative fuels and renewable energy, especially since the southeast is a breeding ground for coal and nuclear power plants. Although energy is my main area of interest, I am also interested in land and resource management, wildlife and public land protection, and environmental compliance regulations for factories, plants, and cars.

SUSAN CORBETT **John Bachman Group**



Hi. I'm Susan, and currently I am your Chapter Conservation Chair. I have been re-elected to the ExCom 3 times, and have served on almost every committee at one time or another, so I am very familiar with how the Club operates. My current position as Conservation Chair has afforded me the opportunity to be involved in the ongoing work of protecting our state's environment, and it is indeed a grand challenge. While I personally have worked on issues like the Barnwell nuclear waste facility and the proposed Kingsburg Coal plant, what

inspires and gives me hope is the incredible dedication of our volunteers. Unlike other conservation groups in our state, with numerous paid staff but few actual members, we are a true member-driven organization, a democratic coalition of smaller groups, all working toward the same goal: preserve and protect the natural resources and heritage of our beautiful state. I have been privileged to watch many of you in action these past two years, and I marvel at the dogged perseverance and tenacity of our members. This is not to say our paid staff is superfluous, only that our members are the life blood of our organization, and when effective, a most powerful force, that other conservation groups marvel at. I am in awe of our dedicated membership, and I hope to serve you for two more years as an equally passionate and motivated representative of your determination to make a difference here in SC.

ERIKA HARTWIG, John Bachman Group



My work and my life are dedicated to protecting the environment. The Sierra Club is working toward my vision of an ideal world where natural resources are given proper consideration and protection. Because of its mission, I consider it an honor and privilege to serve the members of the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club.

I have been a member of this organization for eight years and have served on the Chapter Executive Committee for five of those years. I serve as the Chapter Secretary and a representative of the Chapter Membership Committee and would like to continue my active involvement in the future.

I bring a unique perspective to the Sierra Club through my past and current environmental experiences. I have a biology degree from Clemson University and am nearly finished with a Masters degree in Environmental Resource Management from the University of South Carolina. After internships with the United Nations Environment Program in Kenya, U.S. Senator Strom Thurmond, and SC Governor Jim Hodges, I worked for two years in Washington, DC for the National Environmental Trust. I worked as a campaign organizer to protect America's oceans and preserve roadless areas in America's national forests.

Currently, I work for the South Carolina Energy Office as the Renewable Energy Coordinator. In addition to my work with the Sierra Club, I serve on a Technical Working Group of the Governor's Climate, Energy, and Commerce Advisory Committee and serve as a Board Member of the South Carolina Solar Council. Clearly my focus and interests are clean energy alternatives and halting global climate change, but I consider all environmental issues a priority.

Today I am asking for your vote because I will represent your environmental interests within the Sierra Club to the best of my ability.



Linda G.T. Holt
Foothills Group

I am Linda G.T. Holt and I am a candidate for an at-large seat on the Chapter Executive Committee. I have been a member of the Sierra Club for ten years during which time I have served in many functions, both volunteer and elected office. I formerly coordinated the Foothills Group's Adopt-A-Hwy litter pickup team. I am an outings leader and in the past coordinated first aid training for all of our group's outings leaders. I have also served at the group level as secretary and as vice-chair. I was then elected as the chair of the Foothills Group; an office I held for three years. During this time I was sent as the group representative to the Sierra Club's national convention in San Francisco in 2005. At the Chapter level I have served as a group representative and as an alternate group rep. to the Chapter Executive Committee.

All of the things I have done during my time in the Sierra Club have been both for fun and for the mission of the Sierra Club. For an organization with such an important mission, "To explore, enjoy and protect the planet", we sure do have some fun doing it. The Sierra Club really does work best when the individual members are informed and engaged and this depends on good communications throughout every level of the Club. I want to promote the members and the mission of the Sierra Club by serving on the Chapter Executive Committee.

ERIC THOMPSON
William Bartram Group



I have served on the Chapter Ex-Com for the past four years and am currently the Vice-Chair. I have been on the Chapter Conservation Committee and the Personnel Committee during my time on Chapter ExCom. As a part of the Personnel Committee, this summer I attended the National Sierra Club's Human Resources Workshop. I have been Chairing the Search Committee for an Executive Director. I have served on a national Committee, the Sustainable Planet Strategy Team, and was national delegate to the Sierra Summit in San Francisco. I currently Chair the national Leadership Development Committee.

I have also been Chair of the Bartram Group. Locally, I have co-founded a grass-roots organization this past year of neighborhoods for better planning. I have a Master's degree from the University of Michigan's School of Public Health.

Statement

Our work at the Chapter Strategic Planning retreat told us that we need to work internally to improve our groups' and chapter's effectiveness. While we have made some progress on this front, there is much to do. We will be able to aggressively pursue these activities when our new Executive Director is on board to assist us. The reason we exist is to engage ourselves and others in conservation work. This work is never easy. It is a bit like a tug of war. Our side pulls and moves the agenda in the right direction, but the other side is always pulling the other way. We will get more victories by getting more activists on our side of the rope.

South Carolina Sierra Club
2007 Official Ballot

Election of At-Large delegates to the Chapter Executive Committee

Use Column one for individual membership; use both columns for joint membership.
Vote for no more than 4 (four) candidates

Ballots must be received in the chapter office no later than 5:00 pm, December 6, 2007.

Patricia Carson	_____	_____
Susan Corbett	_____	_____
Erika Hartwig	_____	_____
Linda Holt	_____	_____
Eric Thompson	_____	_____
(Write-in Candidate)	_____	_____

Voting Instructions: Place completed ballot in an envelope and deliver or send to the chapter office. Your name and membership number must be written on the outside of your envelope and the envelope sealed shut. You can find your membership number on the Congaree Chronicle mailing label or on you membership card. After verifying the eligibility of ballots received, the Elections Committee will separate the ballots from the envelopes before examining the ballots and tabulating the votes. Failure to follow voting instructions may invalidate your ballot.

Mail ballot to: Steve Valder, Elections Committee Chair, South Carolina Sierra Club, P.O. Box 2388, Columbia, SC 29202. Or deliver it to: 1314 Lincoln St., Suite 211, Columbia, SC 29201.