

Outside interests push to hijack Sierra Club

■ **Get all the facts on the candidates in the upcoming board of directors election – and be sure to vote**

By *Drusha Mayhue*.

The internal Sierra Club election this spring could prove pivotal and could dramatically alter the direction and mission of our organization. In fact, the Sierra Club we all joined may have a very different look to it next year, depending on the outcome of the 2004 Board of Directors election. That's because current members of the Sierra Club Board of Directors have openly recruited candidates with agendas widely different from the Club's historic conservation mission.

The Sierra Club's direct elections make us unique and vulnerable. One of the most important opportunities Sierra Club members have is the chance to select our own Board of Directors. Every year members select five directors for three-year terms on our fifteen-member Board. But as the Club has grown, the proportion of our members who vote has declined.

And now the Sierra Club is in trouble; our own democratic process is being used against us to take over our organization and hijack our agenda and assets. Because fewer and fewer members are voting, it has left us vulnerable to take-over efforts by people and parties with narrow, personal, one issue agendas like animal rights and anti-immigration. These outside groups can recruit and run petition candidates from outside the Club who share their ideology.

And that's exactly what's happening with help from some current members of the Club's Board of Directors. Director Paul Watson outlined this effort at an animal rights conference earlier this year, just weeks after he was first elected to the Club's Board. "One of the reasons I'm on the Sierra Club Board of Directors right now is to try to change it," Watson proclaimed.

"And once we get three more directors elected, the Sierra Club will no longer be pro-hunting and pro-trapping and we can use the resources of the \$95-million-a-year budget to ad-

dress some of these issues," said Watson, who calls fishermen "sadistic bastards" even though about a sixth of the Club's membership fishes.

Watson noted his task will be made easier by low voter turnout in Club elections: "The heartening thing about it is that, in the last election, of the 750,000 members of the Sierra Club, only 8 percent of them voted. So, you know, a few hundred, or a few thousand people from the animal rights movement joining the Sierra Club – and making it a point to vote – will change the en-

Please see DON'T, Page 2

The environment was 'address unknown' in Bush's State of the Union Address

By *Carl Pope*,

Sierra Club Executive Director

Time and again we see the Bush Administration shutting the public out of plans that will weaken environmental laws and then sugar-coating those plans once they're out in the open.

Since taking office, the Bush Administration has weakened or stopped enforcing key sections of the Clean Air Act and Clean Water Act. They have allowed corporations to escape their responsibility for cleaning up the damage they cause and shifted those costs to taxpayers. And the Bush Administration has opened millions of acres of wilderness, including some of America's most environmentally sensitive lands to logging, mining, oil and gas drilling.

Thirty years of progress has taught us: there is a better way. The Bush

Administration should enforce clean air and clean water laws; hold polluters responsible for the damage they do; and create jobs and clean up our environment by investing in modern technology, energy efficiency, and renewable energy sources like wind and solar power to create a clean and affordable energy future.

It is regrettable that President Bush touted the failed energy bill during the State of the Union Address. Instead, the President should have focused on the common sense solutions that will protect communities, save consumers money, and provide America with the energy it needs. Despite what the President may claim about this energy bill, this bill would benefit the worst polluting industries in America without cutting our oil dependence, adequately decreasing the risk of blackouts, or cre-

Please see ENVIRONMENT, Page 3

Program Notes

Programs, etc. etc: This month, Terry Jolly (local member) will present a program on trip(s) to Nepal. In March, Nancy McVean (another local member) will present a program on a recent Sierra Club national trip to Antarctica. And in April, Chris Wilhite, Sierra Club South Central Region Conservation Organizer, will present a program on "Stop the Drilling On Padre Island National Seashore".

Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club

P.O. Box 1925, Fort Worth, TX 76101

817/588-1167

All the following numbers are Area Code 817 unless otherwise noted

Executive Committee

Chair Dan Smith 410-2955 riverdogdan@aol.com

Vice-chair Susan Robinson 254-582-8228
srobinson@whitneytx.net

Secretary Jeneanne Carson 860-1870 jcars@flash.net

Treasurer Wendy Lambert 251-0016
wlambert@concrete-pipe.org

Members

Brian Haney

James Moody 295-1623 jmoody166@aol.com

Todd Nichols

Glenn Ford

Conservation Contacts

Chair Glenn Ford 469-6540

gfordfortworth@hotmail.com

Earl Burnam 244-2328 aeburnam@airmail.net

Bob Scott 282-1372 roscott@flash.net

Outings Contacts

Chair/Bicycle Tolbert Greenwood 737-9698

Canoeing Marilyn Turnage

B'packing/day hikes Claudia Blalock 924-6242

Administrative Contacts

Membership Ellen Christian 329-4301

Programs Dan Smith 410-2955

Newsletter Staff

Editor James Moody 295-1623

Ad director Wendy Lambert 251-0016

Circulation dir. Steve Turner 457-7131



**SIERRA
CLUB**
FOUNDED 1892

Sierra Club National Hotline 202-675-2394

Web Pages

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

National www.sierraclub.org

Lone Star Chapter www.texas.sierraclub.org

The Planet www.sierraclub.org/planet

Don't sit on the sidelines — vote in Sierra election

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

tire agenda of that organization."

Noted outdoors writer Jim Shepherd characterized this statement as an "attempt to hijack the Sierra Club," an effort Watson confirmed at the Club's annual September meeting, when he admitted that he's trying to "take over" the Sierra Club and its agenda.

In addition to Watson's efforts to commandeer the Sierra Club, the anti-immigration forces which have been targeting the Sierra Club for more than a decade have now joined forces with the animal rights activists. Club Director Ben Zuckerman, another Club Director with close to zero Club experience when he was elected to the Board, has recruited candidates to run for the Sierra Club board from an obscure organization called the Diversity Alliance for a Sustainable America. This organization shares his desire for the Club to become involved in closing down immigration into the United States. The DASA has been funded in part by grants totaling \$125,000 from foundations controlled by the notorious Clinton hater and right wing patron Richard Mellon Scaife and his family. According to the *Washington Post*, "Scaife and his family's charitable entities played a central role in the rise of the right, giving at least \$340 million to conservative causes and institutions."

Director Zuckerman's principal focus on the Board has been a relentless effort to persuade his fellow Directors to overturn the membership vote several years ago to unite the Club by remaining neutral on the question of immigration policy. Zuckerman has compared immigration to cancer, defended Colorado Congressman Tom Tancredo — an anti-immigration zealot who earns an average LCV score of 15% — as "the person in Congress doing the most for the environment," and called for the Club to work on halting immigration as a means of fighting the war against terrorism. A number of anti-immigration web sites have recently been urging people to join the Sierra Club in order to elect the candidates recruited by Zuckerman.

These unrelenting efforts to undermine the Sierra Club, its conservation agenda, assets, and democratic process prompted the Southern Poverty Law Center, perhaps the nation's leading

organization in exposing hate group activities, to advise the Club's volunteer leadership this fall: "We think that members of the Sierra Club should be fully alert to the methods and motives of some of those who are trying to shift it from its historic mission."

So consider yourself alerted to these take-over efforts, this deliberate attempt to undermine our democracy and hijack the agenda chosen by a majority of Sierra Club members. Consider all that is at stake in this Sierra Club election — our democracy, our direction, our ability to stop the Bush administration's assault on our environment and overcome some of the most serious environmental challenges we have ever faced.

Don't sit on the sidelines this election. Vote.

Ballots will be mailed to all Club members at the end of February, and must be filled out and received back by the Judges of Elections by April 21. Every Sierra Club member will receive a ballot and an accompanying statement, in which each candidate describes his or her background, qualifications, and goals for the organization. These last are often written in rather general language, but the Club and the candidates provide Internet mechanisms through which they can be questioned more specifically about their views. Take the opportunity and question them.

"Sierra Club Board elections are a fine opportunity for our members to look at our Club and determine the directions they want the organization to go," says Club President Larry Fahn. "I urge all our members to study the candidates carefully. And I urge all members to vote. It is member participation that has made the Sierra Club the most effective environmental organization in the world. It is member participation that will empower us to stop George Bush, and will allow us to carry on our wonderful tradition of effectiveness into the future."

Drusha Mayhue is a long time Club grass roots leader, and has held many positions including Chair of the Houston Group. She currently sits on the Montana Chapter Executive Committee. If you have comments or questions, or would like further information, contact Drusha at drusha_m@yahoo.com.

The Greater Fort Worth Group of the Sierra Club

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.

February 20-22, Friday-Sunday

The Friends of the FW Nature Center is planning to hold the Pulich Birding Tour again this year. The focus of the trip (not a Sierra Club trip) is a 4-hour boat ride to spot and watch whooping cranes. The report from Rockport is that this year there are 194 cranes at Aransas – the most in 100 years! One pair has twins with them, a rare occurrence. The tour also has other birding

opportunities built-in for the area around Fulton, and on the outbound and homeward drives as well. A preliminary itinerary is available. Cost: \$210 to \$250 depending on how many go (includes everything except meals). Please call or e-mail one of us for details: Marsha McLaughlin 817-551-8060 (o); 817-447-9081 (h) mamcl@earthlink.net or marsha.mclaughlin@alconlabs.com. Jean Fox, 817-763-7016 (o); 817-590-2215 (h) naturalcreations@charter.net or jean.l.fox@lmco.com.

April 17-18, Saturday-Sunday

Lake Mineral Wells State Park hike and bike car camp. 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. 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. Call 512-389-8900 or visit the Texas State Park website for campsite reservations. Camping reservations fill up fast, so the earlier you reserve a site, the better. Leader Linda Zombeck, 817-431-2346 or capells@earthlink.net. or zombeck@charter.com to sign up.

April 24, Saturday

Canoe the West Fork of the Trinity River, Fort Worth Nature Center to Eagle Mountain Dam, from 8:30 a.m.-noon. Canoes, paddles, and life jackets provided. Bring water and snack. Meet at the nature center west of Lake Worth on SH 199. Leader: Jim Walling, 817-444-4416.

May 22, Saturday

Hike the Canyon Ridge Trail at the Fort Worth Nature Center. Meet at 8 a.m. at the nature center on SH 199 west of Lake Worth. The hike is six miles, give or take, and will require about three hours. Dress appropriately and bring snacks and water (two quarts). Leader: Jim Walling, 817-444-4416.

Environment: State of the Union's forgotten topic

CONTINUED FROM
PAGE 1

ating jobs.

Instead of taking responsible steps forward, this bill would take us backward and put our communities at risk. This bill elevates the profits of the polluting corporations funding the Bush administration over the public good. The majority of Americans don't want to breathe dirtier air, they don't want to drink polluted water, and they don't want their precious natural heritage sold out to the oil and gas industry.

Developed three years ago in the backroom meetings of the Cheney Energy Task Force, the energy bill was an act of secrecy from start to finish. The Sierra Club is currently suing to find out exactly what happened between Bush Administration officials and energy industry executives in the Task Force. The suit, currently before the Supreme Court, received recent attention due to media reports that Supreme Court Justice Antonin Scalia joined Vice President Cheney on a hunting trip on the property of an energy industry executive after the Court had agreed to hear the case. Serious ques-

tions remain as to the appropriateness of this trip, including who paid for Justice Scalia's private jet to the outing.

The pattern of secrecy continued when the Republican-controlled conference committee for the energy bill kept Democrats and the public in the dark about the bill they were drafting. The American people were given almost no time to examine the myriad disastrous provisions of the bill before Congress had to vote on the bill last fall. Fortunately, the Senate blocked the destructive bill.

President Bush also highlighted the so-called "Healthy Forest Initiative" which passed the Congress last fall. The President is always unlikely to mention that the measure ignores real solutions for Western communities and does next to nothing to protect homes and communities from wildfires. The result will be wildfire policy that effectively removes citizen participation, interferes with the judicial system, increases commercial logging, leaves old-growth and roadless forests vulnerable, all while leaving communities at risk.

The President also pushed his administration's plan to weaken the Clean Air Act, allowing power plants and factories to dump more pollution--like Mercury, Sulphur Dioxide, Nitrogen Oxide, and Carbon Dioxide--that causes smog, asthma, acid rain, global warming and birth defects into the air.

Recently the Bush Administration promoted weakening protections from mercury only days after warning Americans not to eat fish containing the toxin. Strict enforcement of the existing Clean Air Act will do much more to protect our clean air.

Visit us on-line

Keep up with the latest outings and read the newsletter at least a week earlier than it comes in the mail. Fort Worth Group's web site: <http://sierraclub.org/chapters/tx/fortworth/index.html>.

The newsletter can generally be read online two-four weeks before it is delivered to you by mail. Up-to-date outings information is also displayed.

Coming Events

February 10, 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.

February 18, 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,

General Meeting

Program: Terry Jolly (local member) presents program on trip(s) to Nepal. **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).

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 oth-

er 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.

March 1, Monday

Newsletter folding party at Burger King, I-30 and Oakland. Call Steve Turner, 457-7131.

March 2, Tuesday, 6:30 p.m.

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

Is the environment healthier than a year ago?

The hard part is convincing the public that President Bush is actually as bad on the environment as he really is. It's hard because good-hearted Americans don't believe that a president would sell out our children's health, the cleanliness of our air, water and food, and the stability of our climate system, just for a couple of hundred million dollars in corporate contributions from Exxon-Mobil, Monsanto and a who's who list of the dirtiest energy, chemical, mining, and power companies around. It's like anti-Semitism or racism or homophobia: You've got to actually see someone do it to believe it.

George W. Bush came into the White House with a lousy record in Texas, where he rolled back the clean air laws to help the power companies and gave thousands of kids asthma in the bargain. But this is America, where anybody can have a new start. We chose not to pre-judge what the president's approach towards the environment would be. We could never have guessed, anyway. It was far worse than his Texas record. The nonpartisan League of Conservation Voters gave the president's environmental record a D- in 2002 and then dropped it to an F in 2003.

To paraphrase Woody Allen, Bush went from miserable to horrible. He gutted regulations making power plants clean up their acts and called it the "Clear Skies Initiative."

Eric Schaeffer, the top regulatory official at the EPA, resigned over the roll-backs and the deals the White House was cutting for campaign contributors who didn't want to face lawsuits from Schaeffer.

It doesn't stop there. Bush called letting logging companies clear-cut in America's national forests the "Healthy Forests Initiative." It was the same across all the other issues: He rolled back projects to clean up Superfund sites and wetlands protection, tried to increase snowmobiling in Yellowstone National Park (but was stopped, thankfully, by a federal judge), and opened public lands to mining and gas exploration.

And forgive me for this personal example, but Bush's Justice Department is prosecuting my own organization, Greenpeace, for trying to stop the importation of illegally logged mahogany from the Brazilian rainforest from coming into the United States.

We sent several activists onto a ship containing 70 tons of contraband mahogany three miles off the coast of Miami. Greenpeace's efforts succeeded in securing a temporary moratorium on the cutting of those protected trees in the Brazilian Amazon. The response from the Justice Department: It has indicted Greenpeace using an 1872 law against "Sailormongering," the first criminal charges in U.S. history brought against an organization for engaging in peaceful protest.

And just hours away from Christmas Eve, the Bush administration slipped through an exemption of the roadless rule protection for the Tongass National Forest, the last intact temperate rainforest in North America. In other words, as the security code went up to orange and Americans were leaving for the holiday, Bush gave a huge favor – 9 million acres to be exact – to the tim-

ber barons.

It gets even worse. No, I am not going to accuse the president of knocking down old ladies, although if they get a whiff of the air coming out of his contributors' smoke stacks, it'll do just that. But it is even worse than it looks, because the once-high standard that America set for countries the world over in creating national parks, setting rules for clean air and water, promoting forest and soil protection, and creating jobs in super-efficient industries like solar and wind power, are being destroyed. America is no longer a beacon for values above and beyond the almighty buck. Instead we have come to symbolize, under the leadership of President Bush, the newest form of ugly Americanism, selling out our environment and our children's health for that quick buck.

John Passacantando is executive director of Greenpeace USA (www.greenpeace.org).

Breathers get their day in court

A D.C. Court of Appeals gave breathers a holiday gift. In a suit brought against the Bush administration by several states, cities, and environmental groups, including the Sierra Club, the Court blocked the administration's attempt to weaken a Clean Air Act provision that requires the oldest and dirtiest power plants and refineries to install modern preventative equipment when making changes that increase pollution. The Administration's rule change would allow factories to spend as much as 20% of the cost of their facility every year under the guise of "routine maintenance."

The Greater Fort Worth Group of the Sierra Club

Letter to the editor

'Anybody but Bush' may not be an improvement if it's Dean

I would like to respond to the many letters over the past few months that have endorsed (Howard) Dean for president, especially those flying under the "anybody but Bush" flag.

While governor of Vermont, Dean pushed for a natural gas plant and pipe line that would make way for a large scale clear-cutting project in that state. Dean also struck a deal with then governor of Texas George W. Bush to ship Vermont's nuclear waste to a poor, mostly Hispanic community in Sierra Blanca (Source: *New York Times*, Oct. 2, 2003 "National Briefing: Kerry attacks Dean for Bush Pact").

But the best source remains our own organization. Tom Elliot, former political director of the Vermont Sierra Club, said: "Howard Dean's environmental record in Vermont is *toxic* (Source: *Concord Monitor*, Aug. 22, 2003, article by Lisa Wangsness).

The organizations in Vermont have not endorsed Dean for his last five campaigns in that state.

The fact of the matter is that people in Vermont know better than Texas who Dean really is and just to support him

because he is not Bush can leave many of us disappointed if he wins.

Those of us who will continue to vote Green will show Dean that some peo-

ple are unwilling to make compromises and forget the past when it comes to the environment.

Phillip Mendenhall

Classified Advertisement

For Sale: Perception Dancer white-water kayak. Lightly used. \$375.00 Includes spray skirt, paddle, and extra flotation for bow and stern. Dan Smith: 817 410-2955; riverdogdan@aol.com

Membership

Yes, I want to join the Sierra Club! My check is enclosed.

Name _____

Address _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (optional) _____

Individual (\$35) Joint (\$43)

Annual dues include subscription to *Sierra* (\$7.50) and chapter publications (\$1.00). Dues are not tax deductible.

F94QT19002

F94Q W99901

-1
Entity Code

Mail to Sierra Club, P.O. BOX 52968, Boulder, CO 80322-2968

Backpacking • Kayaking • Climbing

Mountain Sports



BEST Service
BEST Selection
BEST Prices

2025 W. Pioneer Parkway • Arlington
METRO (817) 461-4503

We will match any advertised price including mail order or sale price!

www.mountainsports.com

SILVER CREEK MATERIALS RECYCLING & COMPOST



Recipient of the 1997 Governor's Award for Environmental Excellence

100% Money-Back Guarantee

- Compost
- Premium soil mix rich with compost
- Lava sand mix including mother Earth's own life-giving volcanic sand
- Native tree mulch
- Pecan mulch
- Organic fertilizer
- Lawn rejuvenation services
- Sand and gravel

246-2426

225 Silver Creek Rd. Delivery or pickup available
Open Mon. - Fri. 7 a.m. to 5 p.m., Sat. 7 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Greater Fort Worth Sierra Club
P.O. Box 1925
Fort Worth, Texas 76101

Nonprofit Organization
U.S. POSTAGE PAID
Permit No. 714
Fort Worth, TX 76101

Return Service requested

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.

... dedicated to the conservation and appreciation of our natural world.

Winter Clearance

Major Markdowns Have Been Taken

Save up to 50%!



 **SUN & SKI SPORTS**
YOUR GUIDE to the GREAT OUTSIDE

Grapevine Mills
Hwy 121 (Just North of D/FW Airport)
972-355-9424 • www.sunandski.com

 
For your complete **Steamboat**
Ski Vacation via Continental
Airlines daily direct service call
Continental Airlines
Vacations at **1-800-829-7777**.