

ACADIAN GROUP
BATON ROUGE GROUP
HONEY ISLAND GROUP
KISATCHIE GROUP
NEW ORLEANS GROUP
OUACHITA GROUP

Find a group near you:

Acadian Group (Lafayette)

Meets the 2nd and 3rd Wednesday of the month at 6:30 pm at the First Methodist Church, 701 Lee Ave, Lafayette, LA

Baton Rouge Group

Meets the 4th Thursday of the month at The Backpacker, 7656 Jefferson Hwy, Baton Rouge, LA 70809

Honey Island Group (Northshore)

Meets the 3rd Sunday of the month at 2:30 pm at various locations

New Orleans Group

Meets the 2nd Sunday of the month at the First Unitarian Church of New Orleans (Claiborne Ave at Jefferson - 2903 Jefferson Avenue, New Orleans, LA 70115)

Kisatchie Group (Alexandria/ North Louisiana)

Ouachita Group (Monroe/ West Monroe)

Currently seeking members to revive these two groups in North Louisiana!

Contact us at:

**Delta Chapter
Sierra Club
P.O. Box 52503
Lafayette, LA 70505**

Email: Chapter-info@louisiana.sierraclub.org

Web: www.sierraclub.org/louisiana

And look for us on Facebook & MeetUp



Delta Chapter: Sierra Club News

I Quarter 2018

A Call for North Louisiana to Reboot!

The Delta Chapter is working to rebuild our Club since losing many members in the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina. Our northern Groups - Kisatchie and Ouachita - drained away and have not been active in recent years. We'd like to see a resurgence of these Groups, since there are many vital issues that we could have a very positive effect on.

To name a few: 1) the Ouachita River and its drainage areas that are heavily affected by pollution coming from Arkansas; 2) misdirected efforts by local officials at Lake Bistineau and Cheniere Lake to "manage" forests and waters to the detriment of the lakes and residents; 3) Colfax, LA and Camp Minden where the US Government has decided that poisoning Louisiana residents is okay; 4) loggers destroying vast acreage to produce "biomass" pellets for the European fuel trade; 5) sometimes illegal and always immoral cypress loggers who turn beautiful and productive cypress forests into mulch for ignorant gardeners; 6) planned highways that aren't planned with the environment or



Clean Harbors Colfax operates an open burning facility for hazardous munitions wastes. (Photo: Courtesy, LDEQ)

people in mind; and last, but definitely not least, 7) ubiquitous hydraulic fracturing which has been proven to poison both surface and ground water (aquifers), as well as emit highly toxic fumes and vapors that poison nearby residents.

You know the old saying about pulling yourself up by the bootstraps? Well, the bootstraps are at the top of the boot leg, so dust off your membership and let's start pulling together at the top of the 'boot'. Visit our website - www.sierraclub.org/louisiana to see what we're up to and to get involved. You can also write us at: chapter-info@louisiana.sierraclub.org.

GRAND BIRDING AT OUR SPRING CHAPTER RETREAT IN GRAND ISLE

Our Spring Retreat is happening during the Grand Isle Migratory Bird Celebration! There will be special programs throughout the town of Grand Isle the entire weekend. We'll be staying in the heart of old Grand Isle.

Bed space is limited to 28 participants; Fee for the entire weekend (Friday afternoon, 4:00 p.m. - Sunday, 11:00 a.m.) meals included, is \$75 for Adults. Tent campers & Children (under 12) - \$40; Day-trippers (2 meals) - \$25. Sleeping arrangements are bunkhouse-style and 3 shared bathrooms. Many of the bunk beds are doubles, so be prepared for making new friends as we will be likely to fill up all sleeping spaces!

YOU MUST REGISTER & PAY IN ADVANCE! Go here for more info and to register: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/W3QZLBY>

If signing-up online is not feasible, write:

chapter-info@louisiana.sierraclub.org or call 985-373-7097.

You won't find such a bargain elsewhere at the Migratory Bird Celebration! There are planned Festival events from Friday through Sunday.

Delta Chapter Environmental Lobby Day at the Capitol

If you've ever wanted to see your State Legislature in action and learn about lobbying and how Baton Rouge works, now is your chance! Under the guidance of Julie Rosenzweig, Chapter Director, we'll have a fun day of training and legislative action on Thursday, April 26th, starting and 9:00 a.m. and wrapping up in the early afternoon. Participants will meet up in the Capitol Rotunda (the big hall on the main floor), where we'll have a Delta Chapter table filled with information on our activities for legislators and visitors to the Capitol.

We will have a citizen lobbyist training, participation in a committee hearing, luncheon in the Governor's Press Office to which legislators have been invited to attend, and opportunities to speak with your legislators.

You **must register** for our annual Environmental Policy Day at the Legislature. No cost to members or their guests.

Signup Instructions: Register by filling out the online form: www.surveymonkey.com/r/6LSSD6H

Additional Directions: After registration, further details will be provided to you at the email address you provide on the registration form as to where to meet, where to park, etc.

These newsletters will come to you quarterly, but if you'd like to receive more regular updates, please notify Julie so that she send you our monthly E-newsletter to keep you better informed!
Julie.Rosenzweig@sierraclub.org

Delta Chapter Celebrates 50th Anniversary in 2019

Back in 1966, Bill Futrell and his wife Iva had just resettled in New Orleans after time away in California and New York. Since they'd been active in the Sierra Club in both those areas they began trying to find like-minded individuals to share outdoor activities in Louisiana. Bill reports his frustration with finding outdoor enthusiasts, "I called the Crescent City Bird Club and asked advice from Tulane faculty; but to no avail. I wrote the Sierra Club, which even at that time was studying natural areas around the country. They wrote back and said, "We do not know anything about the Gulf Coast, but here are the names of Sierra Club members who live in Louisiana. Why don't you call them and get together with them and organize a Sierra Club group?" I invited those people to our house and asked them to bring their friends who might be interested in Sierra Club activity. Fourteen people showed up in April of 1968. Iva and I soldiered on, each month inviting people on our list of current and potential Sierra Club members to meet with us for refreshments and a short film borrowed from the national office on parks in the Redwoods, in the North Cascades, and other areas."

The initial stage of what was to become the Delta Chapter was born. Bill describes the first "victory" that members who would later form up as Delta Chapter participated in; he, Don Bradburn and Claire Stocks prepared a mailing followed by more than 200 telephone calls to group members calling for telegrams and letters to local Congressmen. "Congress was deluged with calls and telegrams from all around the country. This was the first political exercise of the new politics of ecology. The bill was defeated."

The Northshore area that became our Honey Island Group would contribute one of the original members, Hulin Robert of Ponchatoula. Hulin, now in his 90s, still happily recounts his earliest memories of the Delta Chapter and has provided us with some of the earliest editions of the Delta Sierran newsletter for our archives.

If you were a member in earlier times, especially pre-1980, we'd love to hear from you. Vance Levesque, New Orleans Group Chair is collecting stories and mementos of our history. We hope to put these into a library setting so that they are preserved for posterity. Any items or memories, and especially photographs of early outings, will be much appreciated. Please share your stories with us! You can also contact Margie Vicknair-Pray, Chapter Conservation Projects Coordinator, if you have items or memories to donate. Email Vance at mrkahuna@gmail.com, and Margie at margie.vicknair-pray@sierraclub.org.



Jan & Placide Jumonville, HIG members from Covington, hauled in a huge boatload of trash fished from the Pearl River on September 23rd, 2017.

Honey Island Group Participates in Pearl River Cleanup: Pix From Event Chosen as one of the Top Ten Photos by American Rivers!

Last September's National River Cleanup saw over 490 miles of the Pearl River, from its headwaters in Mississippi down to Louisiana's Honey Island swamp, cleaned of over 34,000 pounds of trash by stalwart volunteers. A photo taken in Pearl River, Louisiana was chosen by American Rivers.org (the sponsor of the national river cleanups), as one of the Top Ten photos of river cleanups in the USA!

Jan and Placide Jumonville, Honey Island Group members, were hauling one of the many loads of debris that they'd gathered up to the dumpster when the much admired photo was snapped. Although it didn't win the top national honor, we feel that it expresses the commitment and caring of our Delta Chapter members.

Our Scenic Rivers Are Under Attack Once Again!

Since 1970, Louisiana has had a unique category of streams and bayous protected for their scenic value by Louisiana Scenic Rivers Act. Scenic and historic rivers are designated by the State Legislature and are protected under a program administered by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Unfortunately, legislation passed in early 2017 undermines the protections for waterways in Louisiana's Scenic River Program. Senate Bill 132 set out to remove several rivers from protection, and ended up reducing the protection to eight of our most beautiful waterways. The bill gave exceptions for certain uses on the Amite River, West Pearl River,

Tangipahoa River, Tchefuncte River, Bogue Falaya River, Abita River, Comite River, and Bayou Manchac.

Now, in 2018, the attack on our scenic rivers continues. Bills that would remove the Comite River, the Tickfaw, and possibly other scenic streams from protection are under debate in both the House and Senate in Baton Rouge.

The reason given for the change in status of these waterways was recent flooding, but proponents of the bill refused to discuss the changes this legislation would actually have on the waterways and area drainage even though hydrologists and other experts warned that dredging and other alterations to the rivers could

cause further flooding and navigation problems.

The loss of Scenic Rivers and their floodplains will affect YOUR homes and businesses. Flooding is not caused by these waterways, it is caused by the unplanned and under-regulated development that has allowed new development to dump fill into areas that once received huge volumes of water during flood stages. Now the water has nowhere to go but into the new "low areas" - **your already constructed homes!** Talk to your parish council and other leaders, including Planning & Zoning, about preserving your rivers. Contact your State Legislators and ask them to support the preservation of the Scenic Rivers Program. Do it now!

Director's Corner

By Julie Rosenzweig
February 2018

50 years. For 50 years the Sierra Club Delta Chapter has fought to protect and explore the wild places of Louisiana. Well, nearly 50. In 2019, the Delta Chapter will celebrate its 50th anniversary. We've done a lot in 50 years of the Delta Chapter: outings, advocacy, litigation, education. Forming friendships, trying out amateur photography, muddying boots, getting frustrated with our legislature and courts. At the heart of the Sierra Club are these experiences, these tangible contacts with nature that drive our passion to use our land wisely. A Delta Chapter member shared with me recently one such experience. Carl Helwig responded to last month's e-newsletter in which I detailed the lawsuit the Delta Chapter and other environmental groups filed to try and halt construction of the destructive Bayou Bridge pipeline through the delicate Atchafalaya Basin. With his permission, I share his words with you.

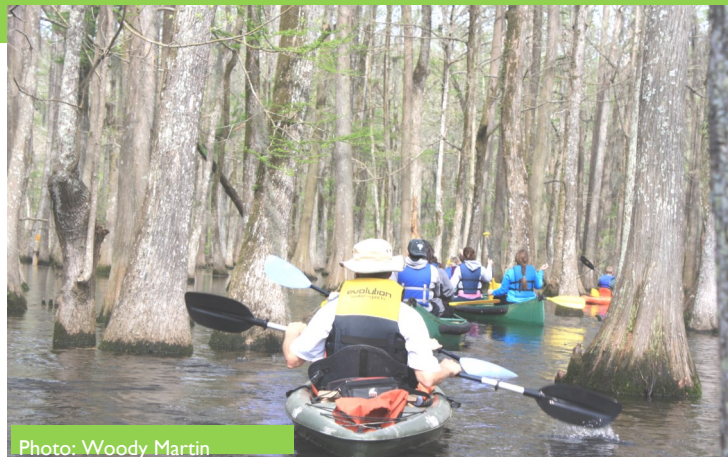


Photo: Woody Martin

Julie,

Of all the places I've been there was no greater experience when years ago my wife Jeanne and I launched our cabin boat at the southern end of the Atchafalaya basin and went North West into the swamp. We both are from New York and had moved to Metairie as I was employed in the Commercial Diving business in support of the Offshore Oil Industry. We have both visited various Zoos, including the Bronx Zoo in NY.

Going into the Atchafalaya Swamp that day was as though we had entered into a Zoo World. We parked our boat and began to observe so many animals/ birds it was astounding! They carried out their activities as though we were not there. I just spoke to my wife (now 85) and asked if she remembers that activity. She said: "Do you remember the huge owl that sat in the tree above us?" I didn't but I remembered the alligator on a log not far away and the family of Nutria moving about.

Can you imagine a pipeline going through this area and having a break? Every living thing would be destroyed. The thought haunts me.

Regards,
Carl Helwig

The thought haunts us, too. I was recently interviewed by a reporter who moved to Louisiana from Pennsylvania. She couldn't help but ask, "Why? Why do you guys in Louisiana let this happen to your state? I've never seen anything like the Atchafalaya Basin, that just doesn't exist anywhere else in the world. Why would you allow something like this pipeline to be built?"

I didn't have a great answer. Jobs? Oil and gas lobbyists?

Probably a better answer is that a change is needed in our collective consciousness regarding the value of our natural world. More people need to get into the basin, into our wild places, to see the alligators, hear the owls, feel the soft moss - see the images of destruction caused by oil and gas spills. The Sierra Club can help with that. I want to thank you for being a part of this 125-year-old organization, and encourage you to keep up the fight, stay outdoors, and support the continued good work of our Delta Chapter.

[Catch all of Julie's messages, as well as legislative updates, campaigns updates and events at www.sierraclub.org/louisiana]

For those of you who don't stay connected electronically, we are pleased to announce that Delta Chapter hired its first Chapter Director in October 2017. Julie Rosenzweig from New Iberia, Louisiana stepped into the spotlight as Delta's first Director and has been showing us what it means to have a full-time staff person on hand.

Julie has a law degree from Tulane with a concentration in natural resources law and related courses. Julie also has a Bachelor of Arts degree in communications from Loyola University in New Orleans. She has practiced law as public defender and in private practice. Julie is President and Co-Founder of the non-profit Acadiana Flood Protection Coalition. She serves on boards of directors of numerous civic service organizations and has worked actively with the Tulane Environmental Law Clinic and with Loyola University Center for Environmental Communications. Having a Chapter Director has greatly assisted us in organizing efforts and in getting assistance from the national Sierra Club on campaigns and projects. As Delta Chapter Director Julie will be working to increase our visibility and effectiveness in environmental issues in Louisiana. She will be working with us in the State Legislature and on the ground with priority issues and campaigns.

Chapter Director: Julie Rosenzweig

-- Upcoming Events! --

Throughout April-May - Call Your State Reps & Senators - it makes a difference!

(see the Legislative Page at www.sierraclub.org/louisiana for updates)

April 20-21-22 - Chapter Retreat at Grand Isle

April 26 - Legislative Training & Lobby Day in Baton Rouge

April 22 - Happy EarthDay!

May 5 - Chapter ExCom Meeting - Jean Lafitte National Park

Contact Your Local Groups for Meetings, Outings and Activities

Fighting for the Atchafalaya Basin

The Sierra Club recently joined ranks with environmental groups representing the interests of the millions of people who use, visit, study and rely on the Atchafalaya Great River Swamp. "The Bayou Bridge Pipeline would pose an unacceptable risk to the wetlands, water, and communities along its route, and should never be built," Julie Rosenzweig, director of the Sierra Club Delta Chapter, said in a statement.

After an initial win in district court, judges in the 5th U.S. Circuit Court of Appeal in New Orleans struck down a ruling by a federal judge in Baton Rouge that had halted the pipeline's construction through the environmentally-sensitive Atchafalaya Basin. This mid-March ruling, which is being appealed, allows the continued destruction of the swamps and bayous of the Atchafalaya Basin, one of the nation's ecological crown jewels. Hundreds of Louisiana's streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands and bayous will be affected, and of course, the flow of water throughout the entire Atchafalaya Basin. "Not only is the Atchafalaya Basin the most important ecosystem for neotropical migratory birds in the western hemisphere, but it is also critically important to protect much of south Louisiana and the Mississippi valley from major river floods. By allowing unsustainable development in the Basin, we are endangering hundreds of cities and communities and millions of people in southern Louisiana," proclaims Dean Wilson, Executive Director of Atchafalaya Basinkeeper.

The groups – Atchafalaya Basinkeeper, the Louisiana Crawfish Producers Association (West), Gulf Restoration Network, Waterkeeper Alliance, Sierra Club and their lawyers at Earthjustice – filed a lawsuit in January to keep construction of the pipeline from moving forward. The lawsuit claims that the 162-mile pipeline would pose a serious threat, with risks of oil spills into wetlands, rivers and lakes; as well as the potential for permanent destruction of invaluable cypress and tupelo river swamps.

The Louisiana section of the pipeline project proposes to connect the controversial Dakota Access pipeline, which transports volatile and explosive Bakken crude oil from North Dakota, to refineries in St. James Parish and export terminals, forming the southern leg of the Bakken Pipeline. [Energy Transfer Partners owns both the Dakota Access Pipeline and the proposed Bayou Bridge Pipeline.](#)

"Energy Transfer Partners wants to bring its toxic mix of incompetence and greed to one of the nation's crown jewel landscapes—the Atchafalaya Basin," says Jan Hasselman, Earthjustice

attorney for the plaintiffs. "The Corps refusal to look closely at the risks of this project is not just short-sighted, it's illegal."

The Atchafalaya Basin's bottomland hardwoods, cypress swamps,

bayous and backwater lakes are some of the country's most productive wildlife habitats – home to 45 species of mammals, 250 species of birds and 40 species of reptiles – and a vital part of the region's economy, with tourism and travel expenditures that exceed \$400 million annually. Northern stretches of the pipeline, including areas near where the Water Protectors at Standing Rock protested the pipeline's construction, have already suffered leaks due to faulty construction. Recently constructed sections of the Dakota Access pipeline leaked at least five times in 2017. Pipelines leak: In November, TransCanada's Keystone pipeline, spilled over 210,000 gallons of crude onto farmland in Amherst, South Dakota. [One study revealed an average of 20 major spills occur in Louisiana each year.](#) In addition, federal data shows that Energy Transfer Partners and its subsidiary Sunoco Inc. were guilty of 329 "significant" pipeline incidents across the USA in the last decade. "For too long, companies like Energy Transfer Partners have profited from the build-out of pipelines and lax enforcement by the government, while local communities and economies pay the price," said Marc Yaggi, Executive Director of Waterkeeper Alliance. "When it comes to oil pipelines, the sad reality is that it is not so much a question of if a spill will occur, but when. It's preposterous to put communities and our natural resources at risk for the sake of industrial polluters' profits." "Oil and gas pipelines, and the spoil banks and canals associated with their construction, have degraded or destroyed extensive portions of the Basin's wetlands and waterways," the complaint reads. Despite repeated requests for adequate environmental review, the Corps issued permits and authorizations for the pipeline on December 14, 2017 [without requiring an Environmental Impact Statement](#)—a violation of the Clean Water Act, and National Environmental Protection Act, according to the complaint.



Photo: Julie Dermansky



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