



Welcome to the January Meeting of the Aiken Group Sierra Club!



Coyotes in the Southeastern Ecosystem

We are excited to have Sean Poppy of the Savannah River Ecology Lab discussing the arrival of coyotes to the southeastern landscape. As an Education Program Specialist, Sean uses native animals to introduce children to the wonders of nature. Sean also directs the popular “Ecologist for a Day” programs at SREL’s Conference Center near New Ellenton. Classes spend the day in the field, checking traps and gathering scientific data. During the summers he takes his message to civic groups and makes presentations at libraries. He also represents SREL and its programs at festivals and other public gatherings throughout the year. He will be accompanied by Scooter, the orphaned coyote.

ACTION ALERT!

Our Edisto River and the surrounding lands are under threat of water depletion and environmental contamination from operations of corporate mega-farms to the area. Residents of Windsor and the surrounding communities are seeing the first, immediate effects, but this issue will ultimately affect us all.

Aiken County residents are encouraged to keep on top of this issue in the news media and to call or write your state representatives to advocate for: (1) regulation of surface water, (2) regulation of groundwater, and (3) a review by our state legislature on DHEC permitting rules for dumping chicken manure.

As-is, a chicken farmer is required to have a DHEC permit for as little as one chicken house, whereas no permits are required for these mega farmers to dump the equivalent of 10 chicken houses (2500 tons of manure) onto the land, leaving local residents gagging from the stench, and local wildlife to suffer the repercussions of the contamination.

We continue to actively seek members who have skills, experience, and time to take an active role in running the show with the Aiken Group Sierra Club! We can use all manner of skills -- office work, specialties of environmental interest, fundraising, communications, public outreach, and so on. If you think you might be interested, please contact aikensierragroup@gmail.com. Alternately you may call or text Wren Krentz at 803-507-7563. If you aren't able to contribute time, there is a tip jar located by the sign-in table!

Thank you for your support!

FEBRUARY 12 MEETING



Our February 12 meeting will feature a presentation by Emily Zucchini of Dogwood Alliance on the deforestation from the wood pellet industry throughout the Carolinas. Forests are increasingly coming under threat from the biomass industry. Across the South, forests are being clearcut, trucked to facilities, put through an energy-intensive production process to be turned into wood pellets, put on huge ships, and sent across the ocean to Europe where they are burned to produce electricity.

Several South Carolina communities have now been added to the growing list of existing or potential wood pellet facility sites. The wood pellet industry is bad for the climate, bad for forests, and bad for communities.

Dogwood Alliance is a coalition of grassroots activists dedicated to defending the unique forests of the Southern United States. We have already transformed the paper and pulp buying practices of some of the largest corporations on the planet, and we are just getting started...

Emily Zucchini is a graduate of the Fulbright Scholarship program, and attended UNC Asheville where she received BA degrees in Political Science and Sociology, and holds a Master's degree in International Studies and a Certificate in Nonprofit Management from NC State.



MARCH 12 MEETING

Our meeting on March 12 will feature Tom Clements of SRS Watch who will give a presentation on various current issues at SRS including high-level waste management, the imports of nuclear waste and plutonium, the status of the MOX project, nuclear weapons. terminating nuclear imports.



Tom Clements, who serves as the director of Savannah River Site Watch, was born in Savannah, Georgia and attended Emory University and the University of Georgia, where he obtained a Masters in Forest Resources in 1977. He has worked for the U.S. Forest Service and U.S. Office of Surface Mining and for the past 25 years has worked on nuclear issues for Greenpeace International, the Nuclear Control Institute, the [Alliance for Nuclear Accountability](#), Friends of the Earth, the South Carolina Chapter of the Sierra Club, and since January 2014 as the director of Savannah River Site Watch. He lived over a decade in the Washington, DC area, where he worked on nuclear proliferation issues policy issues and has spoken and written on U.S. and international nuclear issues and has been quoted extensively by the media.

Clements monitors a host of energy and nuclear issues from a public interest perspective and has focused on the Department of Energy, with a specialty in DOE's Savannah River Site (SRS) located in South Carolina. While monitoring various Department of Energy and Nuclear Regulatory Commission projects, he focuses on risks associated with high-level nuclear waste and plutonium management at the Savannah River Site.

Tom is working to stop SRS from becoming a storage site for the nation's highly radioactive spent nuclear fuel from commercial power plants as well as leading an effort for Congress to defund the controversial plutonium fuel (MOX) program at the site.

Visit the SRS Watch site at <http://www.srswatch.org> before the meeting to learn more about local issues

APRIL 9 MEETING

Paul Koehler, Director of the Silver Bluff Audubon Center & Sanctuary, will be our featured speaker in April, with a presentation on the Audubon Center with emphasis on the bald eagle residents at the center. Paul's presentation will be followed in later April by a Sierra Club outing to the Audubon Center during eagle nesting season.



The Silver Bluff Audubon Center & Sanctuary, nestled along 2.6 miles of the Savannah River, comprises approximately 3,250 acres of forests, fields, lakes, ponds, and streams that support a wide variety of wildlife, with over 200 species of birds, including the federally threatened Wood Stork and Bald Eagle.



Photo Credit: Augusta Chronicle