



Friends of St. Sebastian River

P.O. Box 284 ❖ Roseland, Florida 32957-0284

May 2011

website: www.fssr.org email: info@fssr.org ph: 772-202-0501

The mission of the Friends of St. Sebastian River is to maintain and improve the health and beauty of the St. Sebastian River and its watershed.

FLORIDA CATTLE RANCH

Local photographer Bob Montanaro will give his presentation at our May meeting, entitled "Florida Cattle Ranch: Treasure Hammock Ranch". The subtitle is "Critters, Cows and Cowboys: A Photographic Exploration into the Wildlife & Work of a Florida Cattle Ranch." His presentation chronicles the workings of the historic Treasure Hammock Ranch, owned by the Sexton family in Indian River County.

Some of you will be familiar with Bob and his wonderful photography from his previous documentary on ospreys at Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge. He has a great talent for combining his photography with a passionate story, for a professional quality multi-media presentation.

Treasure Hammock Ranch has been conserved in perpetuity through a conservation easement as a result of the work of the Indian River Land Trust with the Indian River County Commission. The property was the first in the state to be conserved through such an easement, specifically for the purpose of protecting our agricultural heritage. Bob's work helps to document and preserve our local heritage for future generations. In addition, the ranch watershed helps filter nearly 600 million gallons of drinking water each year (Indian River Land Trust).

The meeting will be on **Tuesday, May 24, 7:30 PM** at the North Indian River County Library in Sebastian. All are welcome to attend, and you may find out more about Bob's work on his website at www.lunarcabin.com.

GEORGE SCHUM MEMORIAL AWARD

George Schum was a long-time member of our board of directors. He passed away in April 1997 and the award is given in memory of his spirit of volunteering and community service. The award is given to a Sebastian River High School senior who has participated in similar activities and has shown an interest in environmental issues.

We are pleased to announce that this year's winner is Taylor Lukomski. Taylor has volunteered with the Special Olympics, Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge and festival, the North Indian River County Library, and is involved with her class's school government.

The award also includes a \$500 scholarship. Taylor plans to pursue a career in the medical field and go to college at either Florida State or the University of Florida. Congratulations to Taylor and best of luck with her future education and endeavors.

FERTILIZER AND FLORIDA'S WATER QUALITY

We last got an update on issues regarding Florida's efforts to limit excessive and inappropriate fertilizer use, and therefore its impacts of surface waters, from Jim Egan of the Marine Resources Council, at our November 2010 General Meeting. Since then and similar to last year's Florida legislative session, legislators were working on rules to limit local governing authorities' ability to restrict the use of specific nutrients. In addition, provisions were proposed that would provide all kinds of loopholes for professional and commercial applicators for when, where, how much and what types of fertilizer could be applied.

And along with all of this negotiating on the fertilizer front, the state is working to restrict the implementation of EPA requirements to comply with water quality standards that have been part of the Clean Water Act for at least 20 years! Some of the primary pollutants in Florida's waters that degrade our water quality, therefore resulting in them being considered as "impaired" by federal standards, are nitrogen and phosphates from fertilizers.

Do all of these machinations remind you of anything? How about an addiction to your favorite drug of choice? The dealers or distributors' only interest is keeping you hooked on whatever that vice is so that they can make money. Current Florida legislators seem to be denying that there is any problem or consequence of uncontrolled use, and are throwing all kinds of road blocks in the way of trying to improve the situation, thus enabling the situation to fester or even get worse.

Meanwhile, local politicians who have been working to pass local ordinances that help their local and specific situations, were about to get their hands tied with legislation at the state level that would supercede any of their local good efforts. In fact though, the current state legislative session has come to an end with virtually none of the proposals making it into law. Cris Costello of a local Florida Sierra Club chapter said that we may have to redefine victory a bit, but the fact that we didn't lose everything is a victory.

The result is that laws passed within the last few years by the state remain in effect. Wording from that legislation is instructive and hopefully will be considered more seriously in next years' legislative session. The law states "The Legislature finds that the implementation of the Model Ordinance for Florida-Friendly Fertilizer Use on Urban Landscapes (2008), which was developed by the department in conjunction with the Florida Consumer Fertilizer Task Force, the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, and the University of Florida Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences, will assist in protecting the quality of Florida's surface water and groundwater resources. The Legislature further finds that local conditions, including variations in the types and quality of water bodies, site-specific soils and geology, and urban or rural densities and characteristics, may necessitate the implementation of additional or more stringent fertilizer management practices at the local government level." Additionally "Each county and municipal government located within the watershed of a water body or water segment that is listed as impaired by nutrients pursuant to s. 403.067, **shall, at a minimum**, adopt the department's Model Ordinance...."

Ephraim King, director of the EPA's Office of Science and Technology, says the pollution caused by population growth is outpacing Florida's attempts to regulate it. "While that process probably works well when you only have a few impaired waters, in Florida, they've got over 850 waters that are impaired, and 60 percent of those are impaired due to nutrients," King said.

Florida DEP Secretary Mike Sole stated, "The State of Florida recognizes that more needs to be done to address nutrient pollution in our rivers, streams, lakes and estuaries, and these actions will help our State and all of our stakeholders prevent and better manage sources of nitrogen and phosphorus from entering our waters."

THIS YEARS LEGISLATURE AND FLORIDA'S GROWTH MANAGEMENT

The prediction of 1000 Friends of Florida that this would be one of the most challenging legislative sessions, with regard to legislation of Florida's growth management regulations, and the Department of Community Affairs (DCA), were pretty accurate. The results of this year's legislation they say "...removes

a quarter century of legal decisions supporting the rights of communities to address sprawl, urban service boundaries, and other key planning issues.” It “... eradicates numerous rulings upholding the rights of citizens to participate meaningfully in their local planning process.”

The Sierra Club stated that this year’s legislature has “gutted the Florida Growth Management Act,” observing that it has “...removed fiscal feasibility as a requirement, and removed transportation, schools, and parks and recreation as mandatory elements in a comp plan.”

Former DCA Secretary Tom Pelham stated, “The so-called growth management bill passed by the Legislature is an unbalanced, one-sided, and unfair bill. It is written almost exclusively in the interest of developers at the expense of other citizens and the public interest. This is not surprising because most of the bill’s provisions were written by lobbyists for business and development groups.... The bill eviscerates the state’s role in planning, eliminates or greatly weakens many important provisions of the current law, and stacks the deck against citizens by making it almost impossible for them to successfully challenge plan amendments for non-compliance with state law.”

Michael Grunwald, Washington Post reporter and author of “The Swamp” – an environmental history of the degradation of the Everglades, wrote a recent opinion on the Time magazine’s website – time.com, regarding Florida’s growth management changes in this year’s legislature. The column is entitled “Florida Loses its Mind. Again”. He states, “This is so insane I don’t even know what to say about it, except that I assume Carl Hiaasen has found the subject of his next novel.” “...maybe the real problem is that it isn’t easy enough to build sprawl in the Sunshine State. Maybe gutting the state growth management agency and eliminating impact fees on developers will finally liberate Florida’s builders from their shackles.”

“And maybe there’s nothing wrong with Charlie Sheen that a little more cocaine couldn’t fix.”

FINANCIAL UPDATE

March 1, 2011 – April 30, 2011

Balance 3/1/11	\$6431.37
Receipts	751.00
Total	7182.37
Disbursements	1412.00
Balance 4/30/11	\$5770.37

George Schum Memorial Award Fund

Total to date	\$256.00
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CALENDAR OF EVENTS

Tuesday, May 24, 7:30 PM

Florida Cattle Ranch

Bob Montanaro

FSSR

North IR County Library,

Sebastian



Wednesday, May 25, 7 PM

Motions in the Oceans

Drs. Al & Patricia Dove,

Georgia Aquarium

Harbor Branch

Oceanographic Institute

5600 US 1 North, Ft. Pierce

info: www.fau.edu/hboi/



Saturday, May 28, 1 PM

Eco-Art Recycled

Container Gardening

Barrier Island Sanctuary

8385 S Hwy A1A,

Melbourne Beach

info: www.barrierislandcenter.com

RSVP: 321-723-3556,

free with seeds provided by

Naturewise

(www.naturewiseplants.com)



Monday, June 27, 7 PM

Pelican Island Preservation

Society

TBA

North IR County Library,

Sebastian

info: www.pelicanislandfriends.org

Please visit the “Meeting Info/ Events” page of our website for more events!

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Roseland, Florida 32957-0284



APPLICATION FORM

The Friends of St. Sebastian River depends on member support for programs of conservation and education.

Youth (under 18) free — Individual \$10/year

Family \$15/year — Corporate \$50/year

Name: _____

Address: _____

_____ Phone: _____

Email: _____

Special interests, concerns or expertise: _____

Please check here to allow us to use your contact info on our membership list in the "Members Only" section of our website. To restrict use of any info, list here: _____

Please mail your completed application and dues to:

P.O. Box 284, Roseland, Florida 32957-0284

NOTE: The date on your mailing label is the month/year when your dues are next due. Thank you.

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Officers for 2011

President Tim Glover
Vice President Mike Beck
Secretary Gayle Heath
Treasurer Sherry Shipley

Directors for 2011

Paul Barker Tom Bauer
Buzz Herrmann Anne Putman
Lynn Stieglitz Bruce Zingman

WELCOME NEW MEMBERS

Ron & Darlene Kratovel
Jay Pruden
Darryl Rutz
Nancy Soucy
Pete & Joyce Tarini

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