



News from the Foothills

September 2005

The Newsletter of the Piedmont Group of the Sierra Club
P.O. Box 5531, Charlottesville, VA 22905
<http://virginia.sierraclub.org/piedmont/>

Sierra Club Activities

On September 7 the Piedmont Group hosted a lively discussion of recycling programs in our area. Rochelle Garwood of the Thomas Jefferson Planning District Commission and Bruce Edmonds of the Rivanna Solid Waste Authority clearly described recycling facilities in our area. They explained that while Charlottesville and Albemarle are recycling about 28% of their waste, several of the more rural counties in the district are well below the 25% benchmark set by the state.

Al Fioretti of the U.Va. Recycling Department described how his staff collects recyclables and ensures they are sent to a reputable salvage company. U.Va. is recycling 40% of their waste. He said their major concern was the final destination of electronic equipment that is sometimes shipped to third world countries and disassembled under unsafe conditions.

All three of our speakers suggested that citizens ask their county governments to resume curbside pick-ups and encourage businesses that recycle to move into our area. More information about our recycling programs can be found at

<http://www.tjpdcc.org/environment/solidWaste.asp>

In the months ahead the Piedmont Group will be working on several important environmental issues that affect our community:

-Along with the Charlottesville Center for Peace & Justice we will be asking

local governments to sign onto the "Climate Protection Agreement" by making a commitment to meet or exceed the global warming reduction targets of the Kyoto Treaty.

-Requesting government leaders in Charlottesville, Albemarle, and Orange Counties to pass resolutions opposing the construction of new **nuclear reactors at North Anna**.

-Opposing the approval of a **North Pointe Development** that includes large stores, worsens traffic problems on Rt. 29N, threatens water quality in the Rivanna River, and has no resemblance to the "neighborhood model." (A public hearing on North Pointe is tentatively scheduled for Oct. 12.) For more information on these projects please call John Cruickshank at (434) 973-0373.

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Calendar of Events

Oct. 8 Virginia Environmental Forum

9:00 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. U.Va. Department of Environmental Science Building (Clark Hall) Fifteen environmental groups are presenting workshops on:

- Energy & Air Quality
- Water Resources
- Transportation & Sprawl
- Forestry & Sprawl

Registration of \$10.00 includes lunch. (Call John at (434) 973-0373 for more information.)

Oct. 29 Pond Clean-Up 9:00 to 11:30 a.m. Sierrans and other community members will clean the pond area across from the Senior Center on Hillsdale Drive in Charlottesville. (Please call Barbara at (434) 973-0373 for more information.)

Nov. 16 A Sierra Club/PACE Joint Meeting will be held at the St. Mark Lutheran Church, corner of Ivy Rd. and Alderman in Charlottesville. **Dinner** will be served at 6:30 p.m. At 7:30 we will view the video "Oil on Ice" and discuss threats to the Arctic Wildlife Refuge and energy issues.

Nov. 12 Ragged Mt. Natural Area Hike 9:30 a.m. This easy hike around the reservoir is about 3 1/2 miles long and will be fun for the entire family! Bring water. For more information call Allie at (434) 295-1395.

Join the Piedmont Group email List: Receive weekly updates on environmental issues and events in our area. To subscribe simply go to the Piedmont Group website (<http://virginia.sierraclub.org/piedmont/>).

Albemarle County Appointing A Natural Heritage Committee

By Tom Olivier (tolivier@starband.net)

Albemarle County's supervisors are appointing a standing biological advisory committee, to be known as the 'Natural Heritage Committee'. Applications to serve on this committee from members of the public were taken in August. Supervisors met to review applications and choose committee appointees earlier in September. As of this writing, letters to candidates announcing result of their application are being prepared. The first meeting of the Natural Heritage Committee is expected to take place soon after appointments are completed.

The purposes of the committee, as specified in the comprehensive plan, include development of a county biodiversity protection plan, development of a biodiversity public education program, and advising the board on matters related to biodiversity protection. The committee is to include scientists and some non-scientists with related interests. For more information on the Natural Heritage Committee, you can contact Scott Clark (sclark@albemarle.org), a senior planner on the Albemarle County staff.

Of related interest, in 2002 Albemarle's supervisors created a work group of local scientists that conducted a preliminary assessment of Albemarle's biological resources. You can download PDF files with various components of the report at the County Biodiversity work group page (<http://www.albemarle.org/departments.asp?department=planning&relpage=3560>).

Creation of this committee required strong expressions of support from the Sierra Club, other environmental organizations and many individuals. Your voices did make a difference!