



FLORIDA
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INSTITUTE



Florida Natural Resource Leadership Institute Alumni Newsletter

Spring 2009; Volume 1, Issue 1

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**The NRLI Alumni
Association
Mission is to
foster effective
leadership and
professional
development,
provide
networking
opportunities,
enhance the
NRLI program,
and promote its
long-term
viability.**

President's Welcome by Deborah Burr

Welcome to the first edition of the NRLI Alumni Association eNewsletter! This eNewsletter is produced by and for the alumni of the Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute. I hope you will enjoy reading about what the growing community of NRLI Alumni (155 IN ALL!) is doing around the State of Florida to help conserve and manage our natural resources.

I am looking forward to working with a new and energized group of professionals and implementing many activities that support ongoing leadership in conserving and managing Florida's diverse natural resources. One way that you can help continue this effort is by participating with NRLI recruiting, submitting an article for the next eNewsletter, providing financial support via membership dues, or by staying informed by visiting our website at <http://fnrli-alumni.org>. You can download the NRLI program brochure, download a NRLI presentation to help recruit new Fellows for Class IX, or join the NRLI blog to help stay connected with former classmates. Job announcements are also often posted on the blog. Don't forget, Class IX will start the new program schedule in August 2009. The 2009 schedule follows and is also on our web page at <http://nrli.ifas.ufl.edu>. **As always**, we value alumni participation at our sessions.

We welcome your participation and support for ongoing fellowship in the NRLI Alumni Association. Please do not hesitate to contact me or any of the Directors listed above if you have any questions or would like to participate. Wishing you all the best in 2009!

Too Busy? You Can Still Help NRLI's Efforts! by Wes Wheeler

I am writing on behalf of your Board to explain and encourage the payment of annual dues. The Association has a dues structure of twenty-five dollars (\$25) annually or one-hundred and twenty-five dollars (\$125) for a life-time membership.

These dues will support the Association in promoting alumni interaction with the program through sponsoring "meet and greet" socials at the various seminars around the state. Funds will also support the Association's

web site and eventual alumni directory.

Other suggested ideas have also included polo shirts, speaker fees, a reception at the annual conference, etc.

We encourage each of you to continue in your participation with FNRLI through investing your time and money in the Association. I encourage you to attend a seminar(s) in your area and to contact Board members (*or your Class Representative*) to ask about the latest activities and events. And, please, don't forget to send in those dues!

Please make checks payable to:

NRLI Alumni Association

And mail to:
**NRLI Alumni Association
PO Box 1396
Winter Haven, FL 33882**

Meet Your NRLI Alumni Board of Directors!



Deborah Burr-Class IV (President) works for the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission as the Gopher Tortoise Management Plan Coordinator. She is responsible for implementing the gopher tortoise management plan in order to restore and maintain viable populations of gopher tortoises



Ed Wright-Class VI serves as a USDA Liaison to Florida's 5 Water Management Districts. He is a certified total quality management facilitator, and has over 20 years of experience in meeting and small group facilitation.



Dianne Hughes-Class VIII (Annual Meeting Coordinator) is an Environmental Consultant for the Florida Department of Environmental Protection. Since 1999, she has been working on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan and other South Florida restoration issues.



Bob Tietz-Class VI is the Biologist for Pasco County Government responsible for County Environmental Programs including wetland jurisdictional determinations, assistance to the environmental lands acquisition program; environmental review and recommendations in preparation of Development Orders; Brownfield designations, ground and surface water management plans, and gopher tortoise relocation.



Stan Bronson-Class II is the executive director of Florida Earth Foundation, a public-private partnership whose mission is to "bring people together through education, outreach and facilitation to ensure Florida's environmental integrity and quality of life."



Teresa Watkins-Class VII (Vice President) is an independent environmental landscaping consultant, and a horticultural specialist with the St. Johns River Water Management District's Florida Water Star program.



Wes Wheeler-Class IV (Treasurer) runs his own law practice and is the general counsel and chief bottle washer for Wheeler Farms, Inc.



Hank Vinson-Class VII works for the Florida Communities Trust. FCT administers two land acquisition grant programs that assist local communities in meeting outdoor recreation and open space needs as well as preserving Florida's commercial fishing and aquaculture industries.



Bryan Fluech-Class VIII (Secretary) works for the University of Florida Extension Service as a Sea Grant Extension Agent in Collier County. His extension work focuses on recreational fisheries, resource stewardship, and marine education.

BOD Looking for a Few Good Alumni!

The NRLI Alumni BOD is looking for two eager NRLI alumni who are interested in serving on the NRLI Alumni Board of Directors. If interested please contact, Deborah Burr at: communications@fnrli-alumni.org.

We would like to thank Sunny Diver and Andrew Walmsley for their service to the NRLI Board of Directors and wish them the best of luck in their future endeavors!

Congratulations to NRLI Class VIII by Deborah Burr

On behalf of the entire FNRLI Alumni Association, I want to congratulate Class VIII Fellows on their recent graduation. Graduation was held at the Paramount in Gainesville and was well attended by leaders from UF IFAS, UF School of Natural Resources, NRLI program staff, and keynote speaker, Melissa Meeker. NRLI Alumni in attendance represented all classes. As NRLI Alumni President, I had the honor to present Melissa Meeker, also the keynote speaker, with the NRLI Annual Leadership Award. NRLI Laila Racevskis also presented awards for Alumni of the Year and the Honorary Director's Award, as well as the 3rd Annual Burl Long Award. Congratulations to all award recipients!

Following Friday's festivities, the

new Class VIII alumni and approximately 20 other NRLI alumni went on a field trip to the Lake Lochloosa site owned by Plum Creek Timber. Alumni Greg Driskell (Plum Creek), Steven Miller (SJRWMD), and Deborah Burr (FWC) lead the discussion on public-private partnerships and how they were successful in achieving a multitude of conservation goals at this model site. This field trip was followed by the Annual Meeting of the NRLI Board of Directors held at the Yearling Restaurant in nearby Cross Creek. While hungry alumni ate a delicious lunch, the new appointees were confirmed by the current BOD.



FNRLI Class XIII Graduates



Melissa Meeker being awarded the NRLI alumni Leadership

Changes in Store for 2009 NRLI Class IX by Bruce Delaney

We are currently recruiting for Class IX. We have a core of an excellent class accepted but still need more quality applicants. There are two distinct actions that you can take that would be helpful. The first is to identify a likely candidate for NRLI and to talk to that person about the value of the NRLI program; someone who would benefit from the program and, at the same time, brings something to NRLI as well. The second action would be to speak to those in your organization who have the authority to fund a NRLI Fellow. We know that these are tough budget times and those with authority to expend training funds will need to be convinced of the value of NRLI. As alumni, you can do that better than anyone else. We plan to have opportunities for a limited number of competitive fellowships for Class IX. Details for the procedures to apply for the Fellowships will be forthcoming.

We know that many of you are more familiar with a NRLI schedule that concludes a class in October and then commences the next class in January. However, after careful consideration, we decided to change to a schedule that would provide us with the opportunity for a more deliberate year-end review and update of the NRLI curriculum. The schedule change will also allow for more time to make the logistical preparations that the sessions require and to recruit.

Our 2009 schedule follows and is also on our web page at <http://nrlifas.ufl.edu>. As always, we

value alumni participation at our sessions. We appreciate whatever level of participation you may choose and look forward to seeing many of you at Class IX NRLI sessions.

2009/2010 NRLI Class IX Schedule

Location	Topic	Dates
Bradenton	<i>Coastal Economies and Land Use Planning: The Expansion of Port Manatee</i>	August 13-15
Pensacola	<i>Planning for a Sustainable Emerald Coast: A Regional Visioning Process</i>	September 10-12
Jacksonville	<i>Ocala to Osceola National Forest Ecological Greenway, the "O2O": Coordination of Private, Local, State and Federal Efforts</i>	October 8-10
Steinhatchee	<i>Working Waterfronts Communities: Economic Development and Coastal Access</i>	November 12-14
Miami	<i>Preparing for Sea Level Rise through Local Government Planning and Community Engagement</i>	December 10-12
Apalachicola	<i>Tri-State Water Wars: Upstream Uses, Downstream Effects</i>	January 14-16
Clewiston	<i>Agriculture and Conservation: The Process of Large-Scale Public Lands Acquisition</i>	February 11-13
Gainesville	<i>Practicum Presentations and Graduation</i>	March 18-20

Pasco County’s Environmental Lands Acquisition and Management Program in Full Stride! By Bob Tietz

In 2008, the Pasco County ELAMP acquired over 715 Acres of Environmentally Sensitive Lands for preservation. Since its authorization in 2004, this program has purchased real property or negotiated conservation easements on well over 1200 acres of sensitive lands using a combination of “Penny for Pasco” funding and cooperative funding with the Southwest Florida Water Management District, Florida Communities Trust, and the Florida Forever Program acquisition programs. The core goal of this program is to acquire approximately 6200 acres which make up the critical wildlife corridors intended to permanently link the well fields and publically owned preserves as well as Coastal lands and other habitats under development pressure throughout the county. This program is regional in scope and will ultimately provide continuous habitat corridors with connections to surrounding Counties.

Leading Change by Ed Wright

I recently participated in a weeklong training session on leading change. One of the books used for the session was “The Heart of Change” by John P. Kotter. In this book the author describes Eight Stages of Successful Large-scale Change. I’d like to share these stages with you.

Kotter points out that people change what they do more so because they are shown a truth that influences their feelings than because they are given analysis that shift their thinking. In his Eight Stages he suggests that the central challenge to successful large-scale change is not in strategy, systems or culture.

The central challenge of successful large-scale change is changing people’s behavior!

While your main goal of distributing a newsletter might be to sell your product or service, the key to a successful newsletter is making it useful to your readers.

A great way to add useful content to your newsletter is to develop and write your own articles, or include a calendar of upcoming events or a special offer. Your headline is an important part of the newsletter and should be considered carefully.

In a few words, it should accurately represent the contents of the story and draw readers into the story. Develop the headline before you write the story. This way, the headline will help you keep the story focused.

Kotter’s work is the result of interviewing 400 people from 130 organizations. Very interesting reading....

The Eight Stages of Successful Large-scale Change

1. Creating a sense of urgency
2. Putting together guiding teams with the credibility, skills, and reputation, and formal authority to lead change.
3. Using guiding teams to create sensible, clear, simple, uplifting visions and sets of strategies.
4. Communicating the vision and strategies through many unclogged channels.
5. Empowering people to act on the vision
6. Helping people to produce short-term-wins
7. As momentum builds, don’t Let UP!
8. Make the change stick by nurturing the new culture. Walk the talk!

Kissimmee River Restoration by Dianne Hughes

The Kissimmee Basin encompasses diverse wetland and aquatic ecosystems, including more than two dozen lakes, their tributary streams, associated marshes, and the Kissimmee River and its floodplain (**Figure 1**). The basin forms the headwaters of the Kissimmee-Okeechobee-Everglades system. In the 1960s, the Central and Southern Florida Flood Control (C&SF) Project modified these systems extensively to achieve flood control by construction of canals and water control structures in the Upper and Lower Kissimmee Basin. The 56-mile-long C-38 canal in the Lower Basin’s Kissimmee Valley channelized the Kissimmee River, eliminating flow in the original river channel and preventing seasonal inundation of the floodplain, with profound ecological consequences. (con’t.)



Kissimmee River Restoration (con't.)

In the Upper Basin, modifications allowed lake stages to be regulated at reduced ranges of fluctuation, altering or eliminating much of the formerly extensive littoral zones around lakes. These and other environmental concerns led to the Kissimmee River Restoration Project (KRRP) and the Headwaters Revitalization Project (KRHRP) which involves the purchase of 102,000 acres of land along the river and around Lakes Kissimmee, Cypress, Hatchineha and Tiger and backfilling over a third of the C-38 canal. The project will restore over 40 square miles of river/floodplain ecosystem including 43 miles of meandering river channel and 27,000 acres of wetlands.

The restoration project is a joint partnership between the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) is the permitting and compliance authority for this restoration project. Phase I of four major phases of the Kissimmee River Restoration Project was completed in February 2001. A second phase of backfilling initiated in June 2006 is complete. Currently, Phase IVB is underway and expected to be completed by December 2009.



Figure 1



Restored oxbow on Kissimmee River



Creation of new oxbow on Kissimmee River

LEEN Holds Environmental Meetings for Hispanic Audiences by Bryan Fluech



Hispanic citizens represent a growing percentage of the population in Southwest Florida, and they have not traditionally been reached through environmental outreach and education programs. In an effort to expand outreach and education opportunities to these populations,

the Latino Environmental Education Network (LEEN) is hosting a series of community meetings directed at the Hispanic populations in four Southwest Florida communities: Fort Myers, Arcadia, Bowling Green, and Immokalee. LEEN is made up of members from Florida Sea Grant, the Gulf of Mexico Alliance, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Lee County Extension, and Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (NEP). The meetings will be conducted in Spanish by facilitators with expertise in various environmental topics. Participants will hear presentations on wildlife, water, and sustainability issues, and will participate in facilitated breakout sessions to discuss more effective methods to reach out to Hispanic

populations. Participants will also be treated to a free lunch for attending the meetings. The meetings are sponsored by a grant from the Charlotte Harbor NEP as well as contributions from several local organizations who are interested in the success of reaching out to the Hispanic community. To learn more about LEEN's efforts, feel free to contact me at (239) 417-6310 x204 or Fluech@ufl.edu.



Hispanic citizens participate in breakout sessions during the Ft. Myers meeting



Florida Communities Trust: Two Decades of Success by Hank Vinson

The Florida Communities Trust is a competitive land acquisition grant program housed within the Florida Department of Community Affairs. FCT administers two grants funded under the Florida Forever bond program: a Parks and Open Space Program that assist local governments and environmental non-profit organizations acquire land for parks and open space areas, and the Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts Program that supports Florida's commercial seafood and aquaculture industries.

Originally created by the Florida Legislature in 1989, FCT's Parks and Open Space program helps local communities meet the challenges of growth by supporting viable community

development and protecting natural resources and open space.

Originally funded through the Preservation 2000 bond program, FCT now receives \$63 million of the total \$300 million annual Florida Forever appropriation, subject to legislative approval. In its nineteen year history, FCT has helped preserve more than 81,000 acres statewide. FCT opened its latest annual grant cycle on February 27 2009, with an application deadline of May 13, 2009.

The Stan Mayfield Working Waterfronts program was created by the Florida Legislature in 2008 in honor of the late Representative Stan Mayfield and housed within FCT. Unlike the FCT's more traditional parks and opens space program, Stan Mayfield provides fund for local

governments and eligible nonprofit organizations to purchase lands directly used for the commercial seafood and aquaculture. Stan Mayfield monies may also be used to buy land for exhibitions and other educational venues to educate the public and the economic, cultural, and historic heritage of Florida's traditional working waterfronts. The Stan Mayfield program currently receives 2.5 percent of the Florida Forever appropriation which, at the current level, provides \$7.5 million to the program.

For more information about Florida Communities Trust, please visit the program's website at www.floridacommunitiestrust.org.

FLORIDA COMMUNITIES TRUST

Florida Water StarSM Program by Teresa Watkins



A year and a half after its official launch, Florida Water StarSM has enhanced program performance and expanded usability to increase quantification of water conservation methods. The St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) created and manages Florida Water StarSM, a voluntary certification program that encourages water efficiency in new homes.

Among recent improvements to the program, SJRWMD launched a more user-friendly program website, found at www.floridawaterstar.com. The website includes a new online reporting system by which certifiers will file their post-inspection reports. This will standardize reporting and deliver reports directly to reviewers, thus expediting home certification. SJRWMD 's criteria for meeting its Silver tier certification became effective Jan. 8, 2009. For example, a new requirement that applicants provide landscape and irrigation plans will help the certifier to more efficiently provide home inspections. Another new criterion is to give points only for high-efficiency toilets (1.28 gallons per flush).

In another move to ensure a refined certification process, SJRWMD selected six qualified consultants to serve as Quality Assurance Providers (QAPs) for the program. The QAPs will add a level of review to help ensure that qualifications have been met prior to certification. This will also put Florida Water StarSM on the path to recognition by the American National Standards Institute.



SJRWMD formed a technical advisory group that includes builders and irrigation and landscape professionals to provide recommendations on program criteria and to assess new innovations in water efficiency.

SJRWMD is working with the Southwest Florida Water Management District to develop and implement a new Gold tier certification for new homes. A pilot version of the Florida Water Star Gold certification program launched March 25th in Dunedin, for the SJRWMD and SWFWMD areas at the Glen Cairn community. For more information on builders, certification criteria, and resources, go to <http://www.floridawaterstar.com/>

CALANDER OF EVENTS

April

Apr 3 Mapping Florida Communities: An Introduction to GIS & Community Analysis Workshop; Valencia Enterprises of Orlando 2411 Sand Lake Road Orlando, FL, 32809. www.urban-research.info

May

May 15-17 Florida Marine Science Educators Association Annual Conference <http://www.fmsea.org/>

May 19-21 Green Cities Florida, Orange County Convention Center, Orlando
<http://greencities.com/usa/florida/orlando/2009>

May 28 NE Florida Living Shorelines Workshop. Port Orange, FL. Contact (904)-731-3079 for more information

May 26-29 Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council Symposium- "Weeds of Wrath": Delray Beach Marriott, 10 North Ocean Boulevard Delray Beach, Florida 33483, Phone: (877)-389-0169
<http://www.fleppc.org/index.cfm>

June

Jun 3 SW Florida Living Shorelines Workshop. Rookery Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve, Naples, FL. Contact: (239) 417-6310 x204 for more information

Jun 16-17 Florida Cattlemen's Association Annual Convention & Allied Member Trade Show. Marco Island Marriott Resort. <http://www.floridacattlemen.org/events.htm>

Jun 23-26 Florida Association of Counties Annual Conference. Marco Island Marriott Resort.
<http://www.fl-counties.com/fcf/facconferences.shtml>

July

July 21-24 Florida Chamber's 23rd Annual Environmental Permitting Summer School; Marco Island Marriot Resort <http://www.floridaenet.com/permitting.php>

August

Aug 24-28 Florida Recreation and Parks Association, Walt Disney World Coronado Springs Resort - Lake Buena Vista <http://web.frapa.org/index.cfm?PageId=36>

Be a Part of the NRLI Alumni Newsletter!

We encourage you to submit an article about a project you have been involved with or one of interest to other NRLI alumni. Our next newsletter will be published in fall 2009. Submissions must be received by September 1st to be included in the next newsletter. Articles should be 500 words or less and pictures are encouraged. Please send submissions to Bryan Fluech at: fluech@ufl.edu

Resolving Conflict Through Leadership!

