

NRLI seeks to impact decision making in Florida by creating a network of professionals prepared to effectively address natural resource issues through collaborative leadership and conflict management.



Rodman Reservoir: An Intractable Dispute?

Director's Corner Jonathan Dain

We all have "our Rodman"

In comparison to Port Everglades (the focus of our first session in Ft. Lauderdale), the Rodman Reservoir controversy, at first glance, seems easily digestible. There is a reservoir created by a dam that has altered the course of a river. Some people want to remove the dam and restore the natural flow of the river; others want to retain the dam and preserve the reservoir. This is not by any means a small decision, but a person can walk across the dam structure in less than a minute, and airboats, bass boats, and canoes ply the waters rather than supertankers and cruise ships.

That being said, one set of stakeholders sees a vibrant and stable lake ecosystem teeming with energy and promise. Bald Eagles soar above, while below, the gleaming water teems with bass. The reservoir is an integral part of the community, the economy, and their lives and identities. On the other side, a different set of stakeholders sees a terrible wrong that needs righting. They don't see vibrancy; they see the scars of "crushers" that flattened swaths of forests and the ghost of a river channel hidden beneath a stump-choked pool. Restoring the hidden river and its energy and promise is an integral part of their identity; a different vision of something special.

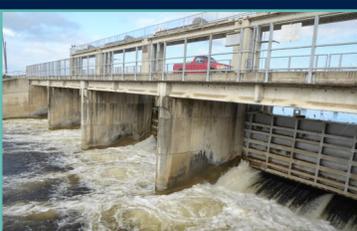
We chose to learn about the Rodman issue because the size of the dam belies the seriousness of the conflict; it is the kind of conflict often referred to as "intractable." This divisive battle has been alive for decades, complete with charismatic champions, impassioned pleas, secret (and not-so-secret) power plays, and back and forth battles over what will be gained, what will be lost, and whose rights and opinions carry more weight. Missing from the story is a history of constructive dialogue, of opponents seeing each other as people.

There are no simple answers to intractable conflicts which are about more than competing interests; these conflicts involve deep-rooted values, complex relationships, differing interpretations of data, and intense emotion. NRLI Fellows and Project Team members learned about the issues surrounding Rodman Reservoir over the course of three days after which we drove away with lessons learned written in our notebooks. Soon it will seem a distant memory. Yet, as Project Team member Paul Monaghan noted, "We all have our Rodman." As interested parties in the management of Florida's natural resources, each of us has issues that we feel passionately about, that are linked to our values, perceptions, and livelihoods. This can make it difficult to relate to those who see things differently.

What can we do to avoid the trap of intractability in "our own Rodmans"? How can we navigate our emotions, assumptions, biases, and beliefs? As a first step, we at NRLI stress the importance of listening, "seeking first to understand before seeking to be understood\*." What do people want and why? What are they feeling and why? When we make the effort to really listen, to first confirm that we "get it," we can build trust, opening the door to dialogue.

What is "your Rodman," and are you seeking first to understand?

\*Attributed to Stephen Covey's 7 Habits of Highly Effective People and to the Prayer of St. Francis: "Grant that I may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand".



Photos from the Session 2 field trip: an airboat tour of Rodman Reservoir and a walking tour of Buckman Locks and Kirkpatrick Dam. Photos by Wendy-Lin Bartels .

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# Natural Resources Focus: Rodman Reservoir

Fellows and Project Team members traveled to Palatka, Florida for the second session of NRLI Class XVI. We were in the area to learn about and reflect on the many perspectives surrounding the Rodman Reservoir in a session entitled: Rodman Reservoir: An Intractable Dispute?

Dr. Steven Noll, Master Lecturer, from the University of Florida's Department of History was the guest speaker and provided a historical overview of the Cross Florida Barge Canal, the ill-conceived and grandiose "Ditch of Dreams" (Noll and Tegeder 2015) that led to the creation of Rodman Reservoir.

A key component of each NRLI session is learning about the range of perspectives that exist among those involved in and affected by natural resource issues in the communities that we study. To this end, the group participated in a two-part visit to the Rodman site: an airboat tour of the Reservoir guided by Dave Bowman, retired manager of the Cross Florida Greenway, Florida Department of Environmental Protection and a walking tour of the Buckman Lock system and Kirkpatrick Dam guided by Mickey Thomason, Manager, Cross Florida Greenway, Florida Department of Environmental Protection.

In addition, Fellows heard from a group of individuals who represent a range of viewpoints and have first-hand knowledge of the topic. Stakeholders who joined us for a panel discussion of the Rodman Reservoir conflict included

- ◆ Lisa Rinaman, St. Johns Riverkeeper
- ◆ Jim Gross, Executive Director, Florida Defenders of the Environment
- ◆ Captain Erika Ritter, A Cruising Down the River Ocklawaha River Boat Tours
- ◆ Thomas O. Ingram, Of Counsel, Akerman LLP (Attorney for Save Rodman Reservoir Inc.)
- ◆ Ruth Lawler, P.A., REALTOR®, Broker-Associate, CRS, GRI, Keller Williams Cornerstone Realty, Ocala (Past President, Save Rodman Reservoir Inc.)

For more detail on these and other activities, please read the descriptions below and the Fellows' article written by Class XVI Fellow Margaret Guyette (page 6).

\*See page 9 for a complete list of Class XVI Fellows.



Guest speaker Dr. Steven Noll. Photo by Jessica Ireland.



Stakeholder panel discussion. Photo by Wendy-Lin Bartels.



Left: Rodman Reservoir; right: fisherman fishing at Kirkpatrick Dam. Photos by Wendy-Lin Bartels.



# Curriculum Focus: Understanding Natural Resource Disputes

## Effective Listening: A Core Skill

The skill of listening is a central part of the NRLI curriculum. Empathic listening is a way of listening and responding to another person to improve mutual understanding. The goal is to effectively understand and accurately interpret another person's meanings, to "seek to understand before seeking to be understood" (Covey 2004).

Empathic listening has several benefits: It forces us to listen attentively to others, it helps avoid misunderstandings, and it tends to open people up, to get them to say more. Empathic listening helps build trust and safety.

During this session led by Paul Monaghan and Wendy-Lin Bartels, Fellows learned about the key qualities of empathic listening and then participated in a group role play where one Fellow played the role of the listener, one the role of the speaker, and another the role of the observer. The small groups rotated roles so that everyone had a chance to experience speaking, listening, and observing.



Fellows practice empathic listening.  
Photos by Wendy-Lin Bartels.

## Stakeholders, Positions, Interests, and the Triangle of Needs & Interests

Although the term stakeholder is widely used, it is not always clearly defined. This session, led by Jessica Ireland and Wendy-Lin Bartels, began with brainstorming and open discussion regarding "what is a stakeholder?"

Stakeholders are those affected by an issue or conflict, those who can affect an issue or conflict, or those who have special information or expertise on the topic. For stakeholders in a given situation to be able to collaboratively problem solve when there are strong

disagreements, it is important for them to get beyond their "positions" and instead focus on "interests." Positions are the parties' preferred answers—what they want or don't want; interests refer to why those answers are important to them—why they want or don't want something (RESOLVE 2007). Listening for and discussing needs and interests is vital to conflict management because being confined to understanding only someone's position limits options for negotiation. Seeking to understand someone's interests can create opportunities for finding commonalities, essential for developing solutions for mutual gain (Fisher & Ury 1980).

Fellows were also introduced to the "Triangle of Needs and Interests" which is based on the theory that people have three interdependent types of needs and interests that should be carefully considered when holding difficult conversations or planning activities to address contentious issues (CDR Associates 2007 – based on C. Moore 1986). The three types of interests are: procedural (how people want to be involved—process matters); psychological (how people want to be treated—relationships matter); and substantive (what people care about—substance matters). Conflicts can arise when people feel that one or more of their needs and interests have been unnecessarily sacrificed in pursuit of someone else's objectives (Arnold 2011).

## NRLI Practicum: Margolis Wheel

For the practicum, Fellows develop a project that allows them to apply skills and concepts learned in NRLI to actual conflict, decision making, or leadership situations in their organizations or communities. Fellows came to session 2 with initial ideas for their practicum project, and a technique called the Margolis Wheel was used to engage them in sharing those ideas and providing feedback to others. Sharing ideas also allowed for identification of opportunities for partnering on a project.



Fellows participate in the Margolis Wheel activity.  
Photos by Wendy-Lin Bartels.

# Curriculum Focus: Understanding Natural Resource Disputes

## Situation Assessment

On Friday, Jon Dain and Wendy-Lin Bartels introduced Fellows to a tool called the Situation Assessment. This matrix can be used to help one define the issue being examined, including the stakeholders involved and their respective positions and interests. It also helps the user identify the “frames” used to characterize the people and the situation, record the timeline of events and relationships among those involved, analyze the power each has to influence the situation and identify any overlapping interests and opportunities that might exist for collaboration. Fellows practiced using the matrix (shown in Figure 2) to analyze stakeholder groups for the Rodman Reservoir dispute.

## Two-minute Introductions

In an effort to help the group get to know each other better while practicing the challenging art of conveying complex topics in a short amount of time, Fellows were tasked with introducing themselves via a two-minute presentation. The only rules were a 2-minute (enforced) limit and the use of PowerPoint was not permitted. The Project Team and Fellows were moved and impressed by the creative and effective presentations which included the use of props, poems, images, and music to share personal stories.

STAKEHOLDERS	POSITIONS	INTERESTS*	FRAMES	HISTORY & RELATIONSHIPS	POWER & INFLUENCE
<p><i>The power to make decisions</i></p> <p><i>The power to block decisions</i></p> <p><i>The power to convene/galvanize people</i></p> <p><i>Affected by decisions</i></p> <p><i>Special interest or expertise with regard to issue</i></p>	<p><i>What is important to them:</i></p> <p><i>stakeholders’ preferred answers</i></p>	<p><i>Why? Why are they worked up about this?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Substantive (tangible interests or benefits re: issue)</li> <li>• Process (transparency/fairness or process as issue is addressed)</li> <li>• Relationships (expectation of respect/dignity by those involved)</li> </ul> <p style="text-align: right;">*Moore 2007</p>	<p><i>What arguments are being made?</i></p> <p><i>How is the situation being characterized?</i></p>	<p><i>How long has this been an issue? How did it arise?</i></p> <p><i>What is the timeline of key events?</i></p> <p><i>What relationships exist between key stakeholders? Between you (or your organization) and key stakeholders?</i></p> <p><i>Is this an outgrowth of an earlier issue?</i></p>	<p><i>How much power do they have to influence the situation?</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mobilize</li> <li>• Contribute</li> <li>• Alter process</li> <li>• Control access</li> <li>• Block</li> </ul> <p><i>How is that power being expressed?</i></p> <p><i>Where does that power derive from?</i></p>
<p><b>OVERLAPPING INTERESTS AND OPPORTUNITIES:</b></p>					

Figure 2. Situation Assessment Matrix.

### NRLI Alumni Engagement

The Project Team would like to recognize the contributions and involvement of five alumni in the Rodman Reservoir Session. Allen Martin (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Class XII) was instrumental in the planning of the session, including the field trip and stakeholder panel. Nick Trippel (Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Class XV) generously brought an airboat for the fieldtrip. In addition, Chad Rischar (St. Johns River Water Management District, Class XV), Clay Coarsey (St. Johns River Water Management District, Class XIV), and Jody Lee (Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Class XV) participated and socialized with Fellows.

# Session 2 Fellows' Article

Margaret Guyette (Class XVI Fellow)

Each month, we ask Fellows to reflect on the session in their own words. This article describes the key takeaways from the point of view of Fellow Margaret Guyette.

The second session of NRLI Class XVI was held in Palatka to learn about issues surrounding Rodman Dam. This intractable issue has been a source of contention in Marion and Putnam counties for many decades. As we explored this issue, we also developed our leadership skills further as we learned about conflict management, the concept of stakeholders, and practiced empathic listening.

One important point that the Project Team made during this session is that we focus on "Conflict Management", not "Conflict Resolution". Our focal topic this session, Rodman Dam: An intractable dispute?, was the perfect issue to help to hammer this home. This decades-long controversy illustrates well that sometimes controlling or managing the conflict is the more attainable goal. We witnessed a glimpse of this at the conclusion of the stakeholder panel when each person on the panel, despite representing diametrically opposing views, discussed remarkably similar values: each person wanted to see a system where public access and ecotourism could be maximized.

As we learned about how we define "stakeholder", we found that the Project Team designs this program to provide ample opportunities for formal and informal interactions with stakeholders, whether through subject matter lectures, tours of relevant infrastructure or habitats, or the stakeholder panel itself. The Fellows were privileged to hear a presentation by Dr. Steven Noll, Master Lecturer with the University of Florida's Department of History and author of *Ditch of Dreams: The Cross Florida Barge Canal and the Struggle for Florida's Future*. This lecture provided thorough and relevant context to help us understand how the history of the region has led us to the current "intractable dispute". Much of this subject matter was revisited and reinforced by other stakeholders as we visited the Buckman Lock, Kirkpatrick (Rodman) Dam, and the reservoir itself. We heard from representatives from the Florida Department of Environmental Protection's Office of Greenways and Trails and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, and received an invaluable guided tour by airboat from retired Greenway Manager, David Bowman. Throughout these experiences and the stakeholder panel, we each gained scientific, political, and emotional insight into the issue that helped us understand the complexity of this controversy and perhaps start to formulate our own individual opinions.

The concept of empathic listening is one of the key reasons that we were able to get as much out of each of these interactions. We were testing out the newly-learned skill of empathic listening at various times throughout this session, where we seek first to understand the perspectives, feelings, goals, and desires of others. This approach really changed how we experienced the stakeholder panel this month because we were looking for more than just the words. We keyed into body language, whether subtle or overt, looking for behavior or sounds that suggest more than what the words alone can tell us.

Of course, very often, the words really do matter. An interesting point, made by Dr. Noll toward the beginning of his presentation, is that language can be important. The words that people use in discussing an issue can tell us a lot about their perspective and values. To illustrate this, he mentioned that the body of water above Rodman Dam is sometimes referred to as a reservoir, lake, or impoundment, depending on whether the focus is on retaining or removing the dam. Indeed, we were introduced to yet another name for this body of water in the stakeholder panel discussion: Rodman Pool. The importance of language in discussing this particular issue makes it especially challenging to avoid inserting bias into discussions. We may inadvertently convey inappropriate or unintended bias if we are not careful with the words we use surrounding this issue. In fact, it has been challenging to write this reflection on our experience without using the words "Rodman Reservoir" or "Rodman Lake" (does this suggest we support Save Rodman Reservoir?) or "Rodman Impoundment" or "Rodman Pool" (does this suggest we support removing the dam?).



Fellows tour Rodman Reservoir (top) and Kirkpatrick Dam (bottom). Photos by Wendy-Lin Bartels.

## Walter Cheatham

Wildlife Biologist, Ostego Bay Environmental, Inc.



I grew up in Aiken, SC. To say Aiken is a horse town is an understatement. Everyone there is involved in horses in some way or another. I was as well. My mother founded Edisto River Hounds in 1994, a mounted foxhunting club.

Some may be accused of being reared in a barn; I was raised in a kennel. I attended Aiken Preparatory School and graduated in 2003. Then I arrived at Auburn University where I majored in Animal Sciences, Pre-Vet. For the next four years I immersed myself in the veterinary world, working in theriogenology, pathobiology, and finally as a large animal veterinary technician working with cattle and horses. It was through this intense immersion that I became disenfranchised with this field and searched for another.

In a Damascus Road experience, I stumbled nose first into Aldo Leopold's A Sand County Almanac which led me into a major switch in what should have been my last year in college. I double majored in Forestry and Wildlife Sciences. I realized during this time that I truly wanted to be an academic in some tree-covered ivory tower of learning and dropped the Forestry, garnering solely a degree in Wildlife Sciences.

Taking some time off, exploring what it was like to not be a college student for the first time in eight years and brainstorming which university to try to convince I was a great candidate for their master's program, I fell in love and ran away to Florida. A stint in teaching, a brief dance with being a roadie and a professional hunting career later led me to Adventures Kayaking in Bonita Springs, FL. Here I was forced to spend every single day in a kayak on the water with some of the coolest life forms on Earth and I got to do my favorite thing in the world with them: talk.

Finally, I ended up working with Ostego Bay Foundation as an environmental educator. I am fortunate to spend time teaching the public to be citizen scientists and better stewards of our great, green planet.

I have been married for five years and have a beautiful, though far more verbose than I, four year old daughter and a very handsome, though ill-advisedly adventurous, nine month old son. I have been many things: vet tech, huntsman, writer, farm hand, cook, roadie, biologist, guide, Master of Foxhounds, naturalist, teacher, but my proudest title is Dad.

## Audrey Kuipers

Program Manager, Okeechobee Soil and Water Conservation District



Audrey Kuipers was born in central Florida and moved across the Kissimmee River to Okeechobee, FL in 2006 where she is the Program Manager for Okeechobee Soil and Water Conservation District. Her duties range from agricultural producer BMP cost share payments, youth environmental education, and everything else in between. She is a graduate from the University of Florida, majoring in Wildlife Ecology & Conservation.

Audrey is the current President of Okeechobee County AgVenture Inc., Past President of the Florida Conservation District Employee Association, the Indian River Lagoon Envirothon- Okeechobee Liaison, a past member of Okeechobee County and Florida Cattlewomen, and served as the Okeechobee Cattlemen's pageant director for Miss Rodeo Okeechobee from 2009-2014. Audrey was a former 4-H/ Livestock IFAS Extension Agent, as well as a 4-H leader for several years. She has a hard time saying "no" to volunteering.

Audrey shares her life and work environment with her husband, Scott who is the Wetlands Restoration Easements Natural Resources Specialist for USDA-NRCS. She has a 14 year old son and two bonus children (22 and 24 years old) that live in Melbourne and Gainesville. They spend most of their free time with their son's youth programs which consist of shooting sports, football, and showing cattle.

Growing up daddy's little girl, she was always learning wood working, lawn care and fishing. She is like her mother when it comes to gardening and landscaping. You will also find Audrey enjoying inshore saltwater fishing and ballet. Often you will find her getting lost in observing animals' behavioral interactions from horses and cattle to birds and lizards. She loves to spend time with family because she can truly be herself.

# Looking Forward

Class XVI Sessions 3-8		
Dates	Topic	Location
October 19-21, 2016	Agriculture and water quality: BMAPs in Jackson Blue Springs & Suwannee River Basins	Marianna
November 16-18, 2016	Everglades restoration in progress	Naples
January 15-17, 2017	Protection & use of marine resources	Key West
February 15-17, 2017	Recreation & the endangered Florida manatee	Crystal River
March 15-17, 2017	Responding to sea level rise	St. Augustine
April 6-7, 2017	Graduation & practicum presentations	Gainesville



## Class XVII (2017-2018)

The schedule for class XVII will be available in early-November, and the application process will open around the same time.

Please visit the NRLI website for additional information (<http://nrli.ifas.ufl.edu>) or e-mail Jessica Ireland ([jjtireland@ufl.edu](mailto:jjtireland@ufl.edu)).

## Class XVI Fellows

**Savanna Barry**, Regional Specialized Sea Grant Agent, UF/IFAS Extension Nature Coast Biological Station

**Tyler Beck**, Snail Kite Conservation Coordinator, Species Conservation Planning Section, Division of Habitat and Species Conservation, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

**Amy Castaneda**, Water Quality Technician, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

**Walter Cheatham**, Wildlife Biologist, Ostego Bay Environmental, Inc.

**Houston Cypress**, President & Artistic Director, Otter Vision, Inc.; Co-Founder, Love the Everglades Movement

**Courtney Davis**, Florida Vegetable Sales Representative, Speedling, Inc.

**Sarah Funck**, Nonnative Fish and Wildlife Program Coordinator, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

**Margaret Guyette**, Water Resource Data Manager, St. Johns River Water Management District

**Katie Hallas**, Environmental Administrator, Office of Agricultural Water Policy, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

**Basil Iannone**, Assistant Professor, University of Florida School of Forest Resources and Conservation/Program for Resource Efficient Communities/Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology

**Scott Kihei**, Law Enforcement Captain, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

**Audrey Kuipers**, Program Manager, Okeechobee Soil and Water Conservation District

**Jason Mathis**, County Alliance for Responsible Environmental Stewardship (CARES) Program Coordinator, Florida Farm Bureau Federation

**Meredith Moreno**, Archaeologist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

**Maddie Southard**, Program Manager, Florida Wildlife Corridor

**Jessica Stempien**, Environmental Administrator, Office of Agricultural Water Policy, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services

**Phillip Stokes**, Education Specialist, UF/IFAS Center for Public Issues Education

**Donald Voss**, Founder/Long-term Strategies, One Florida Foundation, Inc.

**Patrick Walsh**, Law Enforcement Academy Captain, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

**Matthew Wegener**, Biological Scientist II, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

**Erika Zambello**, Marine Economic and Tourism Development Resource Coordinator, Okaloosa County Tourism and Development Department

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