



## Key West: Protection & use of marine resources

### DIRECTOR'S CORNER

Jonathan Dain

*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.*



### A Need for Facilitation Skills

*The man filing the lawsuit was tall, out of shape and somewhat unkempt; pants too short, belt off-center, Einstein hair in disarray. He looked tense and agitated as he prepared to explain the case to the judge. The “defendant”, standing a few feet and also facing the judge was clearly annoyed—jaw clenched, stare defiant. The judge listened for a few minutes, asked the defendant if he agreed with the complaint against him and said, “I’m sending this to mediation.”*

Most people have heard of mediation, an established method for helping parties in a conflict to find a solution that works for everyone. Mediation is one of many forms of *facilitation*, a process where third parties help individuals or groups with a conversation that they cannot, or will not have by themselves. On the surface, the mediation process is simple, the aggrieved party tells their side of the story while the accused party is asked to listen. The accused then provides *their* account of events while the aggrieved party listens. When everyone is satisfied that their side of the story has been made clear, negotiation begins in the hope that the airing of differences will reveal overlapping interests and/or permit the parties to settle the issue without a formal judicial hearing. All facilitative approaches follow a similar philosophy; bring people together, help them feel comfortable enough to be honest and creative, make sure that everyone is *heard*, and trust them to figure things out, to tap into the “wisdom of the crowd”. There is *facilitative teaching*, where instructors help students share and build on existing knowledge, *facilitative leadership* where those in charge empower those around them to make collective decisions, and *facilitated processes*, where “impartial” facilitators help groups “do their best thinking”\*. Facilitation approaches can take longer than executive decisions, sometimes much longer. Sometimes they can be messy and scary. But they work well enough that on a daily basis, judges in Florida turn over court cases to mediators. It clears overcrowded dockets, but more importantly, when parties engage in self-determination—when they have control over their own decisions—they are more likely to feel satisfied with the outcome. For similar reasons, State and Federal agencies as well as many private sector entities have also begun turning to public engagement strategies when important issues are at stake.

Facilitation, a core NRLI skill, requires serious dedication to group dynamics and to listening, be it mediating a dispute, leading a group in a way that its members feel invested in the outcome or working through a challenging issue related to natural resource management with multiple stakeholders. In Key West, we heard from NRLI alumnus Beth Dieveney, a policy analyst for NOAA who had served as facilitator in a series of meetings designed to obtain input for the update of a marine sanctuary management plan. The convening was serious, the marine areas in question are responsible for contributing an estimated \$2.7 billion to the Key’s economy. Before Beth’s arrival on the scene, a first attempt to engage the public over the management plan had led to anger, division and mistrust. The convened stakeholder groups were diverse and had competing needs and interests, many felt their concerns had not been heard or taken seriously. It was not bad faith on the part of those running the unsuccessful process that led to problems, it was insufficient recognition of the depth of listening required when issues are contentious.



Photos from the Session 5 field trip by Erika Zambello, Savanna Barry and Wendy-Lin Bartels.

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## Directors' Corner—Continued

The second time around, it was Beth's job to make sure that everyone did feel heard, that there was "meaningful opportunity for the public to engage". She described the process to us, including the challenges of re-building broken trust. Her daunting task was to run an effective process for building community, obtaining input and advancing the thinking about the management plan. To do this, she had to focus on listening, really listening to everyone involved regardless of position, attitude or ability to articulate their concerns.

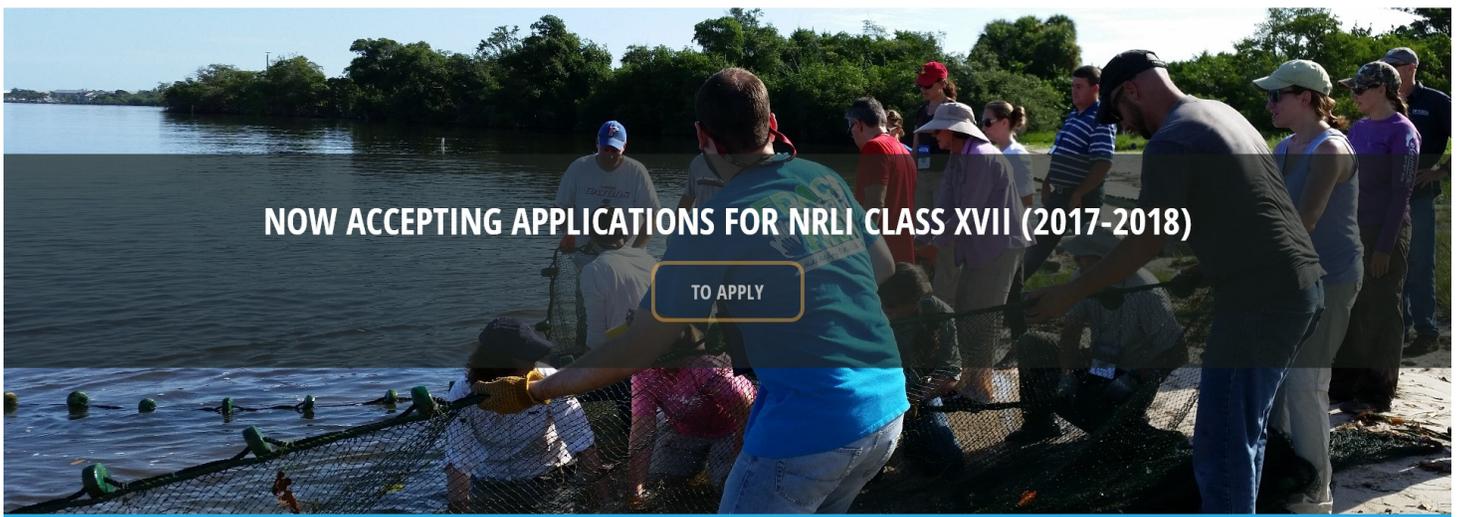
Facilitation approaches and skills are vital for today's natural resource leaders be they managers, researchers, administrators, organizers or educators. They are rarely taught in schools which causes problems for professionals thrust into situations where such skills are needed. In the aforementioned mediation, it took work, but despite the palpable animosity, the parties reached agreement and left satisfied. In the case of the marine sanctuary working groups, Beth's patience and skills helped create buy in. Her facilitation process, like this particular mediation, was successful because all those involved, regardless of their perspective, had the space they needed to explain their concerns. They felt like their perspectives had been understood and validated. Facilitated approaches are not easy, they take more time. The result is usually worth the investment.



### Class XVII (2017-2018)

We are now accepting applications for  
NRLI Class XVII (2017-2018).

For details, including a schedule and  
application instructions, go to  
<http://nrli.ifas.ufl.edu/apply.shtml>.



**A SPECIALIZED LEADERSHIP TRAINING PROGRAM**

# Key West: Protection & use of marine resources

Fellows and Project Team members traveled to Key West, Florida for the fifth session of NRLI Class XVI, which focused on protection and use of marine resources. We were in the area to learn about the development and modification of a management plan for the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary, which protects 2,900 nautical square miles of waters surrounding the islands from Miami to the Tortugas.

As the a policy analyst, Beth Dieveney is overseeing the Sanctuary's comprehensive Marine Zoning and Regulatory Review and associated working groups. A NRLI alumna, Beth has been with NOAA since 2005 and has worked on a range of projects, most notably, the Coral Reef Conservation Program in which she promoted targeted partnerships, resource leveraging, and collaboration for activities that directly increase on-the-ground coral reef conservation action. Since 2013, Beth worked on the Key West Sanctuary management plan and shared her insights with NRLI fellows about public engagement in its development process.



The following morning, Fellows were treated to an Island Adventure Eco Tour Snorkeling Trip with Fury Water Adventures, discovering why so many people are drawn to this Florida gem.



Photo by Savanna Barry



Photo by Erika Zambello

Field trips are generally followed by an opportunity to hear from a variety of stakeholders. As part of each monthly session, we invite individuals who represent a range of viewpoints and have first-hand knowledge of the topic to take part in a stakeholder discussion. Joining us for a lively conversation about the marine sanctuary management plan were

- ◆ John Hunt, Program Administrator, Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- ◆ Suzy Roebing, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Advisory Council Member Citizen at Large, Upper Keys
- ◆ Manny Harerra, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Ecosystem Protection Working Group/Commercial Yellowtail Fisherman
- ◆ Sean Morton, Sanctuary Superintendent, Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Ecosystem Protection.

For more detail on the fifth session, please read the Fellows' article written by Class XVI Fellows Maddie Southard and Houston Cypress (page 5).



# Curriculum Focus: Effective facilitation & group decision-making processes

## OBJECTIVES

By the end of the session Fellows had:

- Learned about effective facilitation and decision-making processes.
- Discussed the phenomenon of the groan zone and its importance to decision-making.
- Experienced the role of a facilitator in decision-making processes.
- Engaged in a scenarios planning exercise and examined its utility for addressing complex multi-stakeholder issues.
- Explored the issue: protection and use of marine resources; heard from Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary stakeholders.

## EFFECTIVE FACILITATION

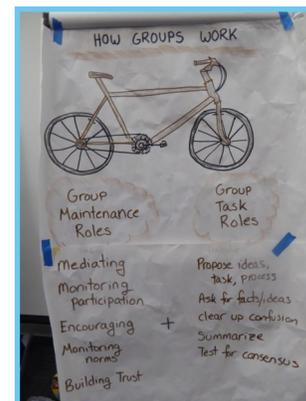
In NRLLI, new concepts are introduced through practice. Fellows began unwrapping the concept of facilitation by participating in a decision-making activity. Wendy-Lin Bartels gave two groups the task of identifying NRLLI sessions for Class 18. Facilitators for each group initiated discussions with a brainstorming activity on criteria for session selection. Participants then made lists of specific session topics and locations followed by a prioritization process. When presenting out in plenary, Fellows discussed the process and evaluated their participation and performance.



Discussion then focused on the role of the facilitator in helping people move through decision making. Good facilitators encourage full participation, promote full understanding, foster inclusive solutions and cultivate shared responsibility.

Readings for this session included the concept of the “groan zone,” a normal (and healthy) part of all group decision making processes. Savvy facilitators navigate through the groan zone by helping participants recognize the frustration they may be experiencing and encouraging them to endure the discomfort with a view toward breakthrough.

Wendy-Lin also introduced the bicycle as a valuable heuristic device to shed light on how groups work. Much like maintaining a bicycle, groups must receive regular tune ups to ensure high performance. To function well, groups stay on task and remain cohesive. However, novice facilitators often tend to focus on helping groups to achieve objectives and forget the importance of building trust, monitoring participation, and assessing satisfaction. If group maintenance functions are ignored, participants may feel left out and decisions can fall apart after meetings. Effective facilitators keep an eye on both the task and group maintenance roles.



## SCENARIO PLANNING— BLUE WORLD, GREEN WORLD

Jon Dain introduced the group to an alternative tool for planning—Scenarios. Emerging from the business field, this creative and non-threatening approach allows groups to imagine a series of realistic but distinct scenarios and brainstorm events and decisions that might lead to them. In times of constant change and uncertainty, Scenarios planning provides a n effective way to prepare for the unknown.



# Session 5 Fellows' Article

Maddie Southard & Rev. Houston Cypress (Class XVI Fellows)

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 Fellows Maddie Southard & Rev. Houston Cypress

We couldn't really ask for a better NRLI location than Key West! During this fifth session, we had the opportunity to learn about the protection and use of marine resources from the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary stakeholders. This session also provided Fellows with an in-depth discussion of decision-making processes and scenario planning exercises.



Our session began with our guest speaker, Beth Dieveney, a policy analyst for the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary and a NRLI alumni from class XIV. As the a policy analyst, Beth is overseeing the Sanctuary's Marine Zoning and Regulatory Review and associated working groups. Her presentation gave the

Fellows a very comprehensive explanation of the multi-year process and establishment of the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuaries. She explained that NOAA's assessments were established with the help of an advisory council, which incorporated the public and various stakeholders input, including commercial fishermen and eco-tour captains. During many meetings, they requested that NOAA analyze a broad range of ideas about potential changes to regulations, zones, and



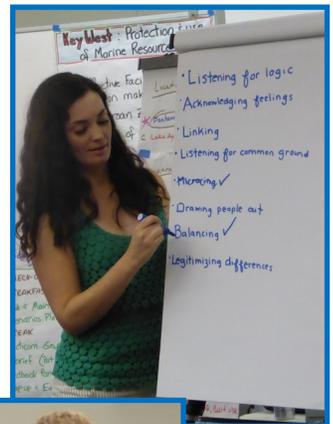
Photo by Erika Zambello

boundaries. Beth explained the review process is ongoing, but will continue to bring the advisory council into the decision making process.

It was an incredible opportunity for the Fellows to learn from a NRLI alumni whose work has clearly integrated the core concepts we're learning in this leadership program. These marine sanctuaries in the Florida Keys were established collaboratively and with a process in which NRLI is founded upon: finding inclusive solutions to seemingly intractable natural resource problems.

After the presentation, we gathered to discuss our major curriculum focus for this session: effective facilitation and group decision-making processes. Our Project-Team leaders explained that the dynamics of group decision-making is often more complex than we might think, but it is an integral part of all our jobs. Understanding group dynamics is a critical core competency for anyone, whether facilitator, leader, or group member, because it has an enormous impact on the outcome of the issue. Designating a group facilitator is one of the most members in effective group decision making because this person's job is to encourage full participation, promote mutual understanding, foster inclusive solutions, and cultivates shared responsibility. The facilitator must acquire listening skills that honor all group-members points of view, which includes techniques such as "drawing people out," and "listening for common ground."

Our reading discussion, led by Katie and Jason, allowed us to put these concepts into practice with group discussion and role-play.



## Session 5 Fellows' Article

*Maddie Southard & Rev. Houston Cypress (Class XVI Fellows)*



Photo by Savanna Barry

On Thursday morning, we embarked on an Island Adventure Eco Tour Snorkeling Trip with "Fury Water Adventures." After getting our wetsuits on and our snorkel gear situated, we hopped off the boat and into one of the most pristine coral reef ecosystems in the Florida Keys. We saw countless types of fish, including parrotfish and barracudas, as well as stingrays and a shark. Our tour guides were exceptionally informative about both the coral reefs we were exploring and the precautionary steps we needed to take to protect this fragile ecosystem. Many of us had the opportunity to talk with these tour guides about NRLI and our session's focus in Key West, which allowed for even more time to engage with passionate stakeholders during this session.



After the snorkeling field trip, the Class XVI cohort returned to the Florida Keys Eco-Discovery Center to interact with the Stakeholder Panel, comprised of 4 members of the Advisory Council. The class divided into small groups and interviewed each of the stakeholders, including the State Co-Chair, the Federal Co-Chair, a Commercial Fisherman, and a Citizen At Large.

One of the classmates asked the State Co-Chair about the ways that Scientific Data influenced the discourse, and was surprised when he responded that "science has its limits in the ecosystem restoration process" and that it was largely a "social and political process." He went on to explain that what really helped change people's minds about the mistrust surrounding this project was simply "sitting long enough in session" together, "hearing a wide range of opinions," and "realizing they're there for the same purpose." These breakthroughs only came about after the collapse of the first iteration of this process, as well as 2 controversies that later came to be dubbed "Maggate" and "Lobstergate."

Other stakeholders commented that key components of advancing the process were the breaks between formal discussion times. Stakeholders would mingle together in their cliques, huddling together sipping coffee or eating snacks, while talking to their friends over the many maps laid out around the room. This was where people envisioned how their interests could be integrated in the planning process.



Beth wrapped up the Stakeholder Panel by reflecting on her baby: this process of facilitating discussion with the Advisory Council. The State Co-Chair, she said, creates in his team the same qualities that are noticeable in his character, and that he has the skill of gathering data and using that to tell a story, bridging Science and Management to create a process that engages the community and acts on their input.

# NRLI Class XVI Fellow Spotlight

## Matt Wegener

Fisheries Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



Matt was born in the small town of Kinmundy Illinois. He was fortunate enough to be exposed to the natural resources world very early on, as his father was the head park ranger (superintendent) of a Stephen A. Forbes State Park, in Southern Illinois. Being the only residents on a 2,000 acre wilderness wonderland meant that there was lots of exploring to do after school and during summer vacations. The adventures started at the age of 5 with catching crawfish in the creek behind his house and expanded to winning bass tournaments on the local lake.

When Matt turned 17, he volunteered during summer vacation at a fisheries research lab located on the state park. Working the entire summer for free made him realize he could do this as a career. He hasn't worked outside of the fisheries field since. After high school, Matt started his post high school education at Southern Illinois University in Carbondale Illinois. He continued to work in fisheries, assisting graduate students with their research projects. His senior year, he was awarded an assistantship and piloted his first research project. That year he won 3rd place at the undergraduate symposium, where he presented his research on Asian Carp.

After graduating with a Bachelor's of Science degree in Zoology, Matt worked for the US Fish & Wildlife Service for 10 months before accepting a graduate position at Mississippi State University, under the direction of Hal Schramm. While spending every waking hour working on his Largemouth Bass project or other students' research on the Mississippi River, he managed to meet the woman of his dreams who was working towards her Degree of Veterinary Medicine.

After earning his Masters of Science degree in Fisheries Management, Matt received a fisheries biologist position in the research branch (FWRI) of the Florida Fish & Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC). Soon after, Matt and Sabrina were married and moved into a house together in Pensacola FL, where they both pursue their passions of veterinary medicine and fisheries biology. Matt has worked for the FWC for more than 6 years now and spends his free time fly fishing the shallow waters of Pensacola Bay or in a duck blind waiting for another flock of redheads to land in his decoys. He also volunteers as the education director for the Fly Fishers of Northwest Florida and serves as the tournament director for the Pensacola Speckled Trout Club.

## Savanna Barry

Regional Specialized Agent with Sea Grant and UF/IFAS Extension

Savanna grew up on a small farm in central Virginia and discovered her interest in marine ecology during family vacations to small fishing towns along the Chesapeake Bay. After earning her B.S. in Biology from the University of Virginia, Savanna split her time between Gainesville, FL and Little Cayman Island to earn her M.S. in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences through the University of Florida. Her M.S. research focused on interactions between seagrasses and calcifying algae but she was also involved in youth education and public outreach on the island. While in Little Cayman, Savanna completed her Divemaster certification and co-organized an island-wide effort to remove invasive lionfish from local coral reefs. After completing her M.S., Savanna moved back to Gainesville full-time to continue into a Ph.D. program at the University of Florida. She did her dissertation work in the beautiful seagrass meadows of the southern Nature Coast where she investigated the morphology, resilience, invertebrate community composition, and carbon storage of seagrass meadows growing under different rates of nutrient input. Savanna began serving the Nature Coast as a Regional Specialized Agent with Sea Grant and UF/IFAS Extension in February 2016 and graduated with her doctorate in April 2016. She lives in Cedar Key and is stationed full time at the Nature Coast Biological Station.

Savanna's extension program is as diverse as the habitats and wildlife that inhabit the Nature Coast. See <https://ncbs.ifas.ufl.edu/outreach/> for a current list of her programs and be sure to follow her blog (Inside Nature Coast) and the NCBS Facebook to keep up with the great research and extension at NCBS. Get in touch with Savanna ([savanna.barry@ufl.edu](mailto:savanna.barry@ufl.edu)) if you want additional information or would like to get involved!

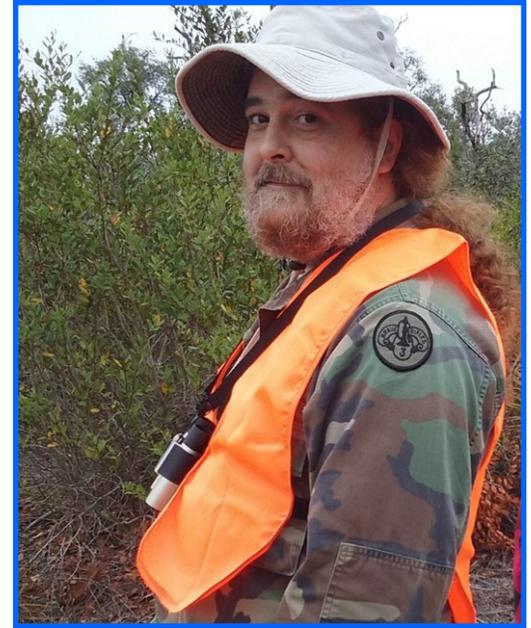


## Sarah Funck

Nonnative Fish and Wildlife Program Coordinator,  
Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Sarah Funck is the Nonnative Fish and Wildlife Program Coordinator for Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. Sarah oversees a statewide program that addresses Florida's nonnative wildlife, ranging from pythons to exotic freshwater fish. Sarah received her B.Sc. in Biology from Millersville University in Pennsylvania and her M.Sc. in Environmental Science from Florida Gulf Coast University. She conducted graduate research in southwest Florida on the diet and potential ecological impacts of the nonnative Black Spiny-tailed Iguana. Prior to her current position, Sarah worked on a variety of sea turtle and Diamondback Terrapin nest monitoring projects (in the US and Ghana), acted as a Natural Resource Advisor on the Deepwater Horizon oil spill response, and assisted with ecotoxicological research related to the Deepwater Horizon oil spill at the University of Maryland.

Sarah and her husband Nathan have a beloved fur-baby they call Bean. They are indeed crazy cat people. Sarah enjoys traveling, hiking, birding, kayaking, attending punk and rock concerts, painting, singing, and playing her favorite acoustic guitar, Jasmine.



## Basil Iannone

Assistant Professor in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation at the University of Florida.

Basil Iannone is an Assistant Professor in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation at the University of Florida. He is also the member of an interdisciplinary faculty cohort focusing on sustainable and resilient land use and affiliated with UF's Program for Resource Efficient Communities and Center for Landscape Conservation and Ecology. Basil joined UF in June 2016. His research and extension programs focus on utilizing spatial analysis and tools to understand the effects of land development on the composition and functioning of ecological communities and to limit the environmental impacts of future development.

Basil started his career as an ecologist while volunteering as a naturalist at Valley Forge National Historic Park. He later moved to Colorado where he pursued undergraduate coursework at Colorado State University. There he was involved with wildlife research on the greater sage grouse, urban bat populations, introduced moose populations, and the ecosystem-level effects of invasive fish. Basil earned his master's degree at the University of Minnesota where he assisted the Department of Transportation in developing strategies to restore prairie pothole wetlands and to control invasive plants that hindered the success of ecological restoration efforts. Basil earned his Ph.D. at the University of Illinois at Chicago where he investigated the environmental impacts and management of invasive shrubs in remnant urban natural areas. After his Ph.D., Basil did postdoctoral research at Purdue University where he investigated drivers of continental patterns of forest plant invasions.

Basil has been with his wife, Dawn who he met in Colorado for about 16 years ago. Dawn and Basil have a 14-year-old daughter, Ann-Marie. Basil tries to spend as much of his free time as possible with his family and exploring nature.

# Looking Forward

## Class XVI Sessions 5-8

Dates	Topic	Location
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



Photo by Wendy-Lin Bartels

### Alumni Engagement

We'd like to recognize the contributions and involvement of NRLI alumnus, Beth Dieveney in the Key West session. Thank you!

## 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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