

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.



# Titusville: Space Coast In Transition

## Director's Corner

### Beginnings

An environmental consultant once told me about a training program he recently attended that focused on working with stakeholders. One thing in particular struck him, a simple concept emphasized by the trainers, that of "beginnings, middles, and ends". The basic point was that meetings, workshops, presentations, etc. all need to have an opening section that gets everyone warmed up, a core, principal part where the central objectives are addressed, and a final, closure section to wrap things up. So, too, must each activity or theme within those sections have a beginning, middle, and an end. The concept stuck with him because he had always assumed that "diving right in" to the issue at hand saved time and made things more efficient. He had never really bothered much with beginnings. Some months later when I reminded him of the conversation, he laughed and spoke of the remarkable difference it had made once he ceased forgoing the oft-skipped attention to beginnings. Time spent setting the stage and helping people to feel comfortable leads to big returns on engagement, understanding, and commitment.

NRLI is a nine-month program composed of eight three-day sessions, each beginning at noon on Thursday and ending at noon on Saturday. These sessions are intense, and packed full of content, interactive activities, interactions with stakeholders, and field trips. As is described below by Fellows Shelby Krantz and Lori Edwards, Class XV's first session was no exception; we covered a lot of ground – and space – as we explored the issues facing Florida's Space Coast. A key part of Class XV's first session was the "beginning," more than 6 hours of introductory activities (almost a third of our time together) designed to explain the program and help Fellows get to know each other. We will not always spend 6 hours in this way, but this was the first session, the beginning. Like any project or initiative involving multiple stakeholders, for NRLI Class XV to be effective, this impressive group of 20 diverse Fellows\* has to feel like they understand the programs' objectives and how it will work. They have to feel comfortable sharing and discussing issues with each other and know that their opinions and experiences will be listened to and respected. This will not happen quickly or automatically; it will take dedicated time and effort. There is a lot to learn in each of the eight sessions, but time spent up-front helping individuals become a cohort will more than pay for itself as Fellows discover how much they can learn from each other and from the diverse groups of stakeholders we interact with. The same goes for any group that comes together with objectives to accomplish. In a world where we are all busy with endless tasks and looming deadlines, it is tempting to "be efficient" by skimping on time needed to establish a constructive environment in meetings, presentations, and projects. Short-term efficiency can lead to long-term headaches, and as my friend learned, it is worth investing in "beginnings".

Jonathan Dain, NRLI Director

\*See page 7 for a complete list of Class XV Fellows.



Photos from the Session 1 field trip; a tour of the Kennedy Space Center. Photos by Jonathan Dain.

### In this issue

Session Overview.....2
Curriculum Focus.....3
Session 1 Fellows Article.....4
NRLI Class XV Fellow Spotlight .....5
NRLI Alumni Spotlight.....6

## Session Overview

Twenty Class XV Fellows traveled from as far as Pensacola and Miami and areas in between for the inaugural Class XV session, August 6-8, 2015 in Titusville/Cocoa Beach. The issue focus of this first session was *A Space Coast in Transition*. We were in the area to learn about and reflect on the many perspectives surrounding economic development and natural resource protection as government, private sector, and citizen interest groups negotiate the rebuilding of the space industry – and the fate of the ecosystems and cultures that surround it.

On Thursday, Project Team members led Fellows through a variety of activities to get to know each other. These included a “walk-on-the-map” introduction activity, an explanation of the NRLI curriculum and core leadership competencies, an overview of the syllabus, and discussions of participant expectations, assignments, and responsibilities. Fellows also developed an initial set of group norms for use during the year.

On Friday, August 7, the group participated in a private tour of the Kennedy Space Center (KSC). Mr. Mario Busacca, Chief of Spaceport Planning, led a bus tour of the KSC, providing an overview of the KSC Master Plan, “a 20-year transformation from a single, government user launch complex to a multi-user spaceport”. His presentation included details on future land use proposals as well as current plans for development and conservation. During the tour, we saw launch pads, viewed pristine natural beach habitat, and toured the ~525 foot tall KSC Vehicle Assembly Building in which the Apollo and Space Shuttle vehicles went through final assembly prior to launch.



Class XV Fellows and NRLI Project Team members pause for a photo in front of the NASA Vehicle Assembly Building. Photo by Jonathan Dain.

A key component of NRLI is emphasis on the importance of learning about the range of perspectives that exist among those involved in and affected by natural resource issues in the communities that we study. Accordingly, as part of each monthly session, we invite 4-6 people with knowledge of the topic and who represent a range of viewpoints to take part in a stakeholder panel discussion. In Titusville, stakeholders who joined us for a discussion of the future of the space industry included

- ◆ Mayor James H. Tulley, Jr., City of Titusville
- ◆ Mario Busacca, Chief of Kennedy Space Center Spaceport Planning Office
- ◆ Layne L. Hamilton, Refuge Manager, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex
- ◆ Dale Ketcham, Chief of Strategic Alliances, Space Florida

For more detail on the inaugural session, please read the Fellows’ article written by Class XV Fellows Shelby Krantz and Lori Edwards (page 4).



Project Team members Bruce Delaney and Joy Hazell discuss group norms with Fellows. Photo by Jessica Ireland.



Class XV Fellows interact with stakeholders during the panel discussion. Photo by Jonathan Dain.

# Curriculum Focus: Introduction to Natural Resources Leadership

During session 1, Fellows participated in activities designed to accomplish the objectives of the session which were to:

- ◆ build a cohort and atmosphere of trust;
- ◆ explain the NRLI curriculum and Fellows' tasks;
- ◆ review Fellows' and Project Team objectives and expectations;
- ◆ explore the NRLI vision of leadership in natural resources;
- ◆ initiate a discussion of natural resource issues and stakeholders in Florida; and
- ◆ visit the Kennedy Space Center and meet with Space Coast stakeholders.

The NRLI vision of leadership focuses on collaboration, communication, and conflict management. Accordingly, the Core NRLI Leadership Competencies are outlined below.

By the end of the nine-month program, Fellows will be able to:

1. Build interpersonal trust and facilitate a trusting group environment.
2. Identify the stakeholders, and their interests, in a natural resource issue/conflict.
3. Apply listening skills to understand stakeholder interests and perspectives.
4. Collect background information on an issue/conflict.
5. Analyze an issue/conflict to identify causes and context.
6. Frame issues in a way that is conducive to collaborative problem-solving.



Fellows learn about and reflect on the Core NRLI Leadership Competencies. Photo by Jessica Ireland.

7. Design meetings and group activities based on identified objectives that incorporate both content and process elements.
8. Identify and use strategies to help groups engage in dialogue and participatory decision-making.
9. Identify causes of difficult group and interpersonal dynamics.
10. Employ techniques and strategies for addressing difficult group and interpersonal dynamics.
11. Work to assure that the input of relevant stakeholders in an issue/conflict is obtained, validated, and shared.
12. Manage your emotional state when involved in meetings, conflicts, and negotiations.
13. Recognize and help groups move through the phases of group decision-making (including the "groan zone").
14. Convene a group and trust the group to make a wise decision even if it doesn't match your preconceived ideas.
15. Plan for and engage in interests-based negotiation.
16. Identify and use mediation strategies to help parties work through disputes.

*NRLI competencies:*

- ◆ recognize that humans make decisions based on both logic and emotion.
- ◆ recognize that participation is a learned skill and takes time and practice.
- ◆ take into consideration socio-cultural issues, including gender, power, ethnicity, age, culture, etc.



Fellows discuss natural resource issues in Florida. Photo by Jessica Ireland.

## Looking Ahead: Class XV Session 2

Class XV will be visiting Apalachicola for session 2. The issue focus is threats to a productive estuary and the curriculum focus is analyzing natural resource conflicts and collaboration.

## Session 1 Fellows' Article

Shelby Krantz & Lori Edwards (Class XV Fellows)

Each month, we ask a pair of Fellows to reflect on the session in their own words. This article describes the key takeaways from the point of view of Fellows Shelby Krantz and Lori Edwards.

Members of NRLI class XV arrived in Cocoa Beach on August 6 to begin their journey against the backdrop of Titusville: Space coast in transition.

The Titusville community is struggling to regain economic vitality following the loss of about 7,000 jobs when the space shuttle program ended four years ago. Unmanned rocket launches and the new commercial space industry as well as continued tourism are the apparent economic drivers

for the near future at Kennedy Space Center.

Within this context, the 20 new NRLI Fellows were given an introduction to the next 9 months. This first session focused on building trust and norms for our cohort. For three days each month, we will be immersed in a natural resource issue in a different part of the state, learning about the issues and stakeholders, and gaining the skills to deal with complex conflicts. We began learning about each other by drawing a map of Florida on the ground with tape and illustrating life events that brought us to NRLI spatially. Class XV is a diverse group from varying backgrounds. Common threads are an interest in environmental issues in Florida and a desire to improve our communication, facilitation, and conflict management skills.

The NASA complex is situated on Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge and Canaveral National Seashore, and Fellows enjoyed a field trip with an insider's view of NASA operations and a glimpse of Florida's largest expanse of undeveloped shore. A walk inside the iconic Vehicle Assembly Building was the highlight for most fellows. This massive building is over 500 feet tall and has an 8-acre footprint. Built in 1966 to house assembly of Saturn V rocket for the Apollo program, it was later modified to accommodate space shuttle vehicles.

Perhaps the most discussed issue during the trip was the proposed 200 acre Shiloh Launch Complex, a launch facility within the Kennedy Space Center, adjacent to NASA operations, to be developed and maintained by Space Florida, the state of Florida's aerospace economic development agency. While Shiloh offers potential jobs and commercial growth, concerns exist related to disruption of wetland, upland, and coastal scrub habitat. The proposed location is also the home of Native American burial mounds and a historic African American cemetery.

Lunch at Port Canaveral offered a reminder of the growing cruise industry and expansion plans for additional cargo

transport. The Port Authority is requesting permission to construct a new railroad that would traverse Banana River as well as the Merritt Island Wildlife Refuge. Other options for the path are along the route of State Road 528 or through the Cape Canaveral Air Force Station.

Fellows' tasks over the course of the program will include facilitating stakeholder panels, guiding group debriefs, interacting online between sessions, and completing a practicum project. Each Fellow will design and implement a project to apply NRLI skills in an actual conflict or decision-making process. We were introduced to the project and given examples of past practica. Participants also learned about how NRLI defines leadership and the competencies to be covered throughout the program.

To gain perspective on the natural resource issues in Florida and experience in participatory decision-making, Fellows participated in an activity in which we were given large post-it notes and wrote one natural resource issue in Florida on each. These were posted on the wall, and Fellows were tasked with grouping issues into categories. The activity demonstrated a collaborative tool, as well as challenged us with the difficulties of facilitating participatory decision-making. The activity also demonstrated the depth of knowledge that this cohort has on natural resource issues in the state, which will be a huge asset during the NRLI program.

Fellows observed their first panel discussion, facilitated by Project Team member Joy Hazell, learning details of extensive management requirements for the refuge and seashore, local government's interest in promoting new commerce while preserving their natural systems, and Space Florida's mission and vision of assisting commercial expansion of Florida's space industry.

Finally, the Fellows debriefed the session with a feedback panel, which will happen at the end of each session. Three Fellows at each session will gather feedback throughout the weekend from others, and consolidate it to provide the NRLI Project Team with input. This session's feedback panel was presented as a very entertaining newscast.

The NRLI Project Team taught throughout the weekend through example. The entire weekend is packaged as a demonstration of an effective meeting: sufficient introduction time to build trust, in-depth treatment of the issue, inclusion of diverse and representative stakeholders, time for debriefing, and opportunities for feedback. The modeling of effective facilitation by the Project Team will be an important piece of the Fellows' education through the NRLI program.

# NRLI Class XV Fellow Spotlight

## Chad Rischar

Senior Project Manager, St. Johns River Water Management District



Chad Allen Rischar is a Senior Project Manager for the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) headquartered in Palatka, FL. His primary responsibilities are to the Florida Department of Transportation (FDOT) Mitigation Program. He received his bachelors degree from the University of Florida, where he studied Natural Resources and Environmental Science as well as Soil and Water Science. He has worked in the field of natural and

environmental sciences for 11 years in both the private and public sectors. Recently, he has focused on natural resource conservation and management through habitat enhancement initiatives and hydrologic restoration. This work involves vetting large-scale land acquisitions, developing ecological restoration and/or enhancement plans, and working with cooperating state and federal agencies to achieve mitigation success. Prior to this role, Chad was the District Soil Scientist for the SJRWMD and provided technical assistance to regulatory and engineering staff throughout the District's 18 county service area. He is the President of the Florida Association of Environmental Soil Scientists (FAESS), Chair of the Florida Certified Professional Soil Scientists Board, and a Professional Wetland Scientist through the Society of Wetland Scientists. Chad was appointed to the Keystone Airpark Authority (KAA) Governing Board in March of 2015 and serves as Treasurer and Natural Resource Conservation Chair. In addition to his professional endeavors, he enjoys photography, gardening, boating, fishing, and most outdoor activities with his family. He resides in Keystone Heights, FL with his wife Julie and three young children; Solomon, Kinnan, and Emory.

## Cheryl Millett

Biologist, The Nature Conservancy



Cheryl Millett is a Biologist with the Florida Chapter of The Nature Conservancy at Tiger Creek Preserve. She leads landscape-scale partnership programs focused on land and invasive species management. Currently, she leads the Ocala Longleaf Local Implementation Team, the Central Florida Lygodium Strategy, and the

Heartland CISMA. The Ocala Longleaf Local Implementation Team, a partnership to set priorities and restore and maintain longleaf pine habitat on public and private lands in central Florida, is part of America's Longleaf Restoration Initiative to restore longleaf pine habitat across its 9-state historic range in the southeast. The Central Florida Lygodium Strategy is a partnership to apply a regional approach to stopping the northern spread of Old World climbing fern on public and private lands. The Heartland CISMA is a partnership to regionally focus efforts to deal with invasive species in central Florida. She also coordinated and now advises Python Patrol, a partnership program to provide containment and early detection of and rapid response to invasive exotic Burmese pythons and other invasive species in south and central Florida, now a program of Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. She also coordinated and now advises Jay Watch, a citizen science program monitoring the federally threatened Florida scrub-jay, now a project of Florida Audubon. She is on the Finance Committee of the Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council and Board of Directors of The Wildlife Society's Invasive Species Working Group. A common theme to her work, even before earning a M.S. in Natural Resources from Humboldt State University, is working collaboratively across fencelines. That includes hiking and kayaking wherever she can.

## Nick Trippel

Research Associate, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Fish and Wildlife Research Institute



I grew up in Florida and North Carolina. After a mentoring project during my senior year of high school, I realized I wanted to make a career out of fisheries. I got my undergraduate degree in fisheries from Auburn University. I then went on to get a master's degree at the University of Florida working with American shad and largemouth bass in the

St. John's River. After that I got a job with the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission in the freshwater fisheries research section and have now been with them for ten years. My current job responsibilities include coordinating research that goes

on at the Florida Bass Conservation Center, overseeing statewide bass stocking projects, and researching other issues that come up from stakeholders or managers such as assessing whether or not bed fishing can have population level impacts or not. I really enjoy the research aspects of the job and dealing with the public. There is usually never a dull moment when working with anglers.

During my free time I end up doing more work. I started a small environmental consulting business on the side years ago to earn some play money. It has gone better than expected but now leaves little time for play. We typically do jobs such as private pond/lake management, private land management, or small wetland mitigation projects. It has been interesting and educational to see how the private business sector works. When I can break free from all that I try to travel around Florida and the southeast to fish, scuba dive, and hunt as much as possible. I am really excited to be part of this NRLI class and am looking forward to putting the knowledge gained to good use.

# NRLI Alumni Spotlight

## Holly Abeels

Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent, University of Florida/  
IFAS Extension Brevard County



Since starting her career with the University of Florida/IFAS Brevard County Extension, Holly Abeels has been successful in developing an extensive extension program to address timely and relevant coastal issues in Brevard. These program areas include adult and youth environmental education, boating and waterways, seafood sustainability and management, and ecotourism education.

Holly has been very active working with community partners, such as the Brevard Zoo, the Brevard County Natural Resources Management Department, and local citizen scientists on water quality issues in the Indian River Lagoon. Some of the education/outreach programs include oyster gardening, diamondback terrapin monitoring, and reduction of terrapin captures in crab traps.

Another program area for Holly has been environmental sustainability. She has been a co-organizer and moderator for the Southeast Florida Regional Boating and Waterways Workshop and Northeast Florida Regional Boating and Waterways Workshop and co-chair of Stem to Stern II Conference with the Department of Environmental Protection and Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) staff.

She was also the Co-PI of Florida Seafood at Your Fingertips Extension Program Enhancement Grant with goals to provide extension agents statewide with updated, easy-to-access information regarding Florida seafood resulting in increased consumer awareness and consumption.

In addition to developing and maintaining a solid extension program, Holly has enhanced her leadership and professional development skills by participating and graduating from the Florida Natural Resource Leadership Institute and the National Sea Grant Academy.

## Jane Provancha

Environmental Projects Manager, MESCI-InoMedic Health  
Applications



Ms. Provancha has over three decades of experience working on environmental projects and programs in the conduct and design of environmental and ecological surveys and monitoring. For the NASA Kennedy Space Center (KSC) ecological program, she supported NEPA compliance during the Shuttle era and initiated several of the KSC and MINWR long term monitoring programs (manatee surveys, sea turtle nesting, in-water sea turtles,

air quality, surface water quality, seagrass, and many other long term projects). She mentored students and staff in programs that have continued for over 30 years. She is a 2008 Fellow of the Natural Resources Leadership Institute (University of Florida/IFAS). She was a visiting scientist and partner for the World Wildlife Fund in Mozambique Africa (2008 and 2009) in capacity building, developing protocols, and training field teams to conduct aerial surveys of dugongs in the Bazaruto Archipelago National Marine Park.

Her technical NASA-KSC efforts include a liaison position with federal and state regulatory agencies and a collaborative position with ecological researchers from various organizations (USGS, FWRI, USFWS, NOAA, etc.). Since 1984, she has been a principal investigator and permit holder for NASA-KSC on several long term projects related to manatees, juvenile sea turtles, and small mammals. She coordinated the local NMFS sea turtle and marine mammal stranding networks from 1981 to 1998.

Currently, Ms. Provancha is the Environmental Projects Manager on the NASA Medical and Environmental Services Contract for InoMedic Health Applications, LLC. This includes direct technical work (fauna and flora), as well as developing teams, preparing level of effort estimates, and managing projects (historical, cultural, archeological, threatened and endangered species, water sampling, fisheries, etc.).

A hearty thanks goes out to Holly and Jane for all of their help in planning the Space Coast session.

## Class XV Fellows

**Brad Austin**, Dairy Farmer/Co-Owner, Cindale Farms

**Angela Collins**, Florida Sea Grant Extension Agent, UF/IFAS Extension/Sea Grant Manatee County

**Samantha Danchuk**, Assistant Director, Broward County Environmental Planning and Community Resilience Division

**Lori Edwards**, Supervisor of Elections, Polk County

**Gretchen Ehlinger**, Senior Technical Manager/Senior Biologist, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Planning & Policy Division Jacksonville District

**Greg Harden**, Field Representative, Florida Farm Bureau Federation

**Andy Kohler**, Land Management Specialist, St. John's River Water Management District

**Shelby Krantz**, Coordinator, Southeast Climate Consortium, University of Florida

**Jody Lee**, Environmental Manager, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Office of Agricultural Water Policy

**Erin McDevitt**, South Region Marine Habitat Coordinator, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

**Cheryl Millett**, Biologist, The Nature Conservancy

**Marta Reczko**, Water Resources Manager, Miccosukee Tribe of Indians of Florida

**Chad Rischar**, Senior Project Manager, St. John's River Water Management District

**Fred Rondeau**, FWC Captain, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Division of Law Enforcement

**Angeline Scotten**, Senior Wildlife Assistance Biologist, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

**Jason Spinning**, Chief, Coastal Navigation Section, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Planning and Policy Division, Jacksonville District

**Jacqui Thurlow-Lippisch**, Town Commissioner, Town of Sewell's Point

**Nick Trippel**, Research Associate, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

**Ivan Vicente**, Visitor Services Specialist, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Crystal River National Wildlife Refuge Complex

**Tracy Wyman**, Landscape Architect, Independent

### NRLI Project Team

Jonathan Dain  
Bruce Delaney  
Jessica Ireland  
Joy Hazell  
Paul Monaghan

#### Contact us:

**Jessica Ireland**  
NRLI Program Coordinator  
P.O. Box 110240  
Gainesville, FL 32611-0240  
Phone: 342-294-7643  
E-mail: [jjtireland@ufl.edu](mailto:jjtireland@ufl.edu)



*Collaborative solutions for natural resource challenges*