



Jacksonville: Wildland-Urban Interface

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.

Director's Corner: Jonathan Dain

Announcing the **General Joe Joyce Family Endowment for Natural Resources Leadership**



Thank you, Dr. Joyce and family.

In this column, I generally write about the issues we encounter at NRLI sessions and strategies for managing conflict. It is, however, the holiday season, and most every newsletter that I encounter focuses on the idea of giving with inspiring stories of generosity. We at NRLI are thrilled and deeply honored that we too can share a story of remarkable generosity this year. Last month, Dr. Joe Joyce retired as Director of the UF/IFAS Center for Leadership. Prior to that, he served as Associate Vice President of UF/IFAS for over 17 years; he also is a retired Brigadier General, U.S. Army Reserves. Over the last 24 months, Joe has been incredibly supportive of the NRLI program, taking time to attend sessions and to really learn about our mission, activities, and Fellows. In November, Dr. Joyce announced the establishment of the *General Joe Joyce Family Endowment for Natural Resources Leadership*. The endowment will fund scholarships for NRLI Fellows and provide general program support. It is also an important part of Dr. Joyce's broader legacy of support for leadership in agriculture and natural resource management. This is a watershed moment for the NRLI program, and the moment was made even more impactful by the subsequent actions of Dr. Jack Payne, Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources, who pledged a contribution to the endowment in honor of Joe Joyce's service to UF/IFAS. We are deeply grateful to Dr. Joe Joyce and his family and to Dr. Jack Payne for their remarkable generosity. The endowment will have a lasting positive impact, and through the NRLI Fellows, Florida and its citizens will be the beneficiary.

To make a gift to the General Joe Joyce Family Endowment for Natural Resources Leadership:

Online: <http://tinyurl.com/JCJ-Endowment>

Mail: checks may be mailed to:
UF/IFAS Development
PO Box 110170
Gainesville, FL 32611

*Please make checks payable to the University of Florida Foundation.
Include "FNRLI-Joyce Endowment" in the memo line.*

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Photos from the Session 4 field trip: a tour of the Julington-Durbin Preserve. Photos by Jessica Ireland.

Session Overview

Class XV convened in Jacksonville November 5-7, 2015 for session 4. The session focus was the wildland-urban interface (WUI) and the many issues surrounding “the area(s) where structures and other human development meet or intermingle with undeveloped wildland” (USFS Northern Research Station, 2015). WUI involves challenges related to wildland fire and prescribed burning, urban sprawl adjacent to wildlands, invasive species, and human/wildlife conflicts. It often exacerbates conflict among groups with differing values and beliefs regarding use and management of natural resources (Macie & Hermansen, 2002; Hermansen-Baez, Seitz, & Monroe, 2009). Areas of WUI and their associated challenges have continued to increase in Florida as populations increase and development encroaches on natural areas. The City of Jacksonville was a perfect location to showcase complex WUI issues and innovative approaches to managing them.

On Friday, November 6, Fellows visited the Julington-Durbin Preserve, a 2,031 acre area managed by the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD). Our tour guides were Matt Corby, Conservation Manager for Camp Blanding and formerly a land manager with the SJRWMD; Heather Venter, a Land Manager with the SJRWMD; and Graham Williams, a Land Management Specialist with the SJRWMD. The group toured the area on an “ecobuggy” and made multiple stops to discuss restoration efforts on the property as well as challenges and success stories related to land management at the urban interface.

NRLI emphasizes the importance of listening to and learning about diverse perspectives, particularly among those involved in and affected by natural resource issues in the communities that we study. On Friday, Fellows spent much of the afternoon with stakeholders who joined us for a discussion of local challenges associated with the wildland-urban interface. Stakeholders included:

- ◆ Alex Gulde, Wildlife Assistance Program Administrator, Wildlife Impact Management Section, FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation
- ◆ Tera Meeks, Division Chief, Natural and Marine Resources, City of Jacksonville Parks Recreation and Community Services
- ◆ Lia Sansom, Coastal Training Specialist, Guana Tolomato Matanzas National Estuarine Research Reserve
- ◆ Mark Hebert, Resource Unit Leader, Rayonier
- ◆ Gian Basili, Bureau Chief, Water Resources, St. Johns River Water Management District; homeowner in WUI area
- ◆ Matt Corby, Conservation Manager, Camp Blanding; formerly a Land Manager with the St. Johns River Water Management District

In contrast to the traditional “stakeholder panel” used in previous sessions, stakeholder interaction was conducted via individual interviews with this session’s invited guests. Fellows divided into small groups and met separately with one of the stakeholders, using the opportunity to practice their interview skills while collecting information about issues of concern to the interviewee. Following the interviews, Fellows debriefed the experience, sharing opinions and perspectives gleaned from the stakeholders they spoke with and lessons learned about interviewing.

For more detail on the session, please read the Fellows’ article (page 5) written by Class XV Fellows Chad Rischar and Angela Collins.



Matt Corby shows Fellows a sandhill ecosystem within Julington-Durbin Preserve that is being managed with prescribed fire. Photo by Jessica Ireland.

Curriculum Focus: Designing effective meetings and group decision-making processes

Fellows participated in activities designed to accomplish the objectives of the Jacksonville session which were to:

- ◆ Learn about and practice applying the concepts of effective meeting design.
- ◆ Learn about and apply interview and observation skills.
- ◆ Practice the timeline tool as a method for understanding conflict and facilitating dialogue.
- ◆ Explore the role of data/structural issues in generating and/or managing conflict.
- ◆ Review NRLI concepts, skills, tools, and strategies from the first four sessions.
- ◆ Explore the issue: wildland urban interface; meet with stakeholders.

Effective Meeting Design

No matter what type of job you have, it is likely that you spend a significant amount of time planning and participating in meetings. Whether these meetings are staff meetings, planning meetings, or decision making meetings, all can benefit from effective planning. In meeting planning, there are two important concepts to keep in mind: content (what) and process (how). Oftentimes, meeting planners put the majority of their time and energy into thinking about and planning the content and spend little time thinking about the process. Many of the “things that make a bad meeting” are due to lack of process planning (i.e., the methods and procedures, the activities, the rules or norms, the group dynamics, and the tone of the meeting). A process agenda is a tool that can be used to help in designing effective meetings. It generally includes:

- ◆ Outcomes/objectives (why)
- ◆ Times (when)
- ◆ Topics (what)
- ◆ Activities (how)
- ◆ Materials (how)
- ◆ Persons responsible (who)

In designing a process agenda, one must define outcomes/objectives for each topic/activity on the agenda, as well as the overall meeting goal.

To introduce Fellows to the process agenda, Joy Hazell and Bruce Delaney led a brainstorming session in which Fellows thought about their meetings experiences and “what makes a bad meeting.” The reflection generated a list of bad meeting characteristics which was used to analyze whether each characteristic was related to process, content, or both. Joy then gave a presentation providing tips and examples for more effective meetings and conducted a small group activity in which Fellows developed a process agenda for a realistic but imagined meeting. Groups presented their agendas, discussed what was difficult about the exercise, and critiqued each other’s agendas.

Interviewing & Observation

Focus groups are a qualitative data collection technique that originated in the marketing/business world. The focus group is commonly used to collect information on opinions, attitudes, and perceptions. Focus groups can be used to uncover social marketing concepts, assess community or organizational needs, foster participation in a program, or test survey questions or educational and marketing materials. The focus group technique uses a group interview process to gather information on diverse stakeholder perspectives and is led by a moderator. During the process, group interactions stimulate discussion which often provides information different from that which can be obtained from individual interviews or surveys. Typically, focus groups have 6-8 participants who are either randomly chosen or who are selectively chosen because of a shared experience or opinion of interest to the researcher.

To introduce Class XIV Fellows to focus groups and tips for designing effective interview questions, Paul Monaghan led a mock focus group with 5 Fellows. During the mock focus group, Paul modeled effective interviewee techniques, asking an icebreaker/introductory question followed by effectively designed open-ended and probing questions. Fellows then applied the lesson by developing their own focus group questions in small groups.



Joy Hazell and Bruce Delaney discuss meeting content and process with Fellows.

Photo by Jessica Ireland.



Paul Monaghan conducts a mock focus group with 5 Fellows while other Fellows observe.

Photo by Jessica Ireland.

Curriculum Focus cont'd

Planning Collaboration: The Timeline Tool

Timelines help groups of people gather, share, organize, and analyze information. When used in a participatory fashion, timelines can engage stakeholders in discussion and help to bridge differing perceptions of a given situation. The participatory timeline tool is an interactive technique that can help individuals and groups reflect on events through time, thus gaining perspective on what has occurred and why. The tool can be used to facilitate discussion in systematic and non-threatening ways. In its simplest form, a long piece of butcher paper is placed on tables and participants create a handwritten timeline of an event or issue, noting key moments from their own perspective. Participants write down key experiences and use dots or other markers to note especially important moments or actions.

To demonstrate the timeline activity in action, Joy Hazell led Fellows in a timeline activity that encouraged them to reflect on their experience in NRLI thus far. Fellows then discussed ways to use the timeline tool in their own work. Timelines can help a group create a shared history and can reveal flash points and key events. Discussion questions used to debrief a timeline in a conflictive situation may include: what have you learned about the conflict from the timeline; what have been the most significant events in escalating this conflict and why; how have events affected relationships among the parties; why do you think the parties acted the way they did; what outside forces were at play; and does this analysis suggest possible solutions or avenues for de-escalation? (FAO, 2002).



Fellows create a timeline of their NRLI experience.
Photo by Jessica Ireland.

Circle of Conflict II: Data & Structural Issues

During the October session in Ocala, Jon Dain introduced Fellows to the “circle of conflict,” a tool for thinking about how competing interests, relationships, structural issues, data/information concerns, and clashing values can exacerbate or be the cause of conflict (CDR Associates, 2007). At that session, Fellows examined two components from the circle: values and relationships. Relationships issues can be caused by negative history, misperceptions, mistrust, and/or miscommunication. Values differences are rooted in beliefs about what is right/wrong or good/bad—differing moral philosophies.

During this session, Jon facilitated a discussion with Fellows about two additional conflict roots, data issues, and structural problems. Conflicts over data can occur when there is too much or too little information; when misinformation leads to inaccurate conclusions; when there are disagreements regarding the meaning of data; or when there is a lack of agreed upon criteria for determining relevance and/or use of information (CDR Associates, 2007). Structural issues refer to the way a situation is “set up.” Structures that inherently pit people against each other may include lack of resources; time constraints; geographical separation; roles; and misaligned rules/policies (ibid). Not all conflicts are due to clashing interests, and identifying other important sources like differences in worldview, strained relationships, problems with information, and underlying structural problems can help natural resource professionals work more effectively across organizations and sectors.

Mid-program Review

Session 4 marks the midway point of NRLI Class XV. To reflect on experiences and skills learned, Fellows participated in an activity called “brain writing” in which they divided up into small groups and brainstormed everything they could remember doing or learning in terms of NRLI concepts, skills, readings/videos, techniques/tools, relationships, classroom activities, field trips, stakeholders, and speakers and guides. Fellows numbered off and rotated among tables equipped with flipchart paper and markers which were used to record their answers. The groups rotated a total of four times and continued to add to the charts at each station. Upon finishing the group rotations and looking over the sum total of their learning, Fellows were asked to think about and discuss two things from the lists that have really made an impact on them in their professional lives.



Fellows “brain write” during the mid-program review. Photo by Jessica Ireland.

Session 4 Fellows' Article

Chad Rischar & Angela Collins (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 Chad Rischar and Angela Collins.

Woo-eee! NRLI fellows acquire new skills as they navigate the Wildland-Urban Interface (WUI)

The goal of Session 4 was to interface and understand the conflicts surrounding the Wildland Urban Interface (WUI). The setting for the weekend's focus was very appropriate—Duval County, Florida.

Even the hotel was a perfect example of WUI.

Several new box store strip malls surrounded our hotel and even more were under construction, literally throughout the session. Immediately behind our hotel was a shrub swamp with a manicured strip of St. Augustine grass leading right up to the edge of the willows and buttonbushes. This concept of WUI is apparent, and it seems to be gaining traction. WUI is a reality and we, as natural resource leaders, need to understand the conflict and seek to minimize the effects. Not all of us had been exposed to the threats and complications of WUI, so an interviewing strategy was conducted to familiarize the Fellows with critical issues, pragmatic examples, and potential strategies for dealing with these interface issues. Delicately woven into the interview exercise were tactics to foster better listening and interviewing skills. This dialogue and discussion became an opportunity to hone and frame Fellow's skills for the upcoming stakeholder panel exercise.

Friday morning began with a field excursion to Julington-Durbin Conservation Area in southern Duval County. This roughly two-thousand acre tract consists of dynamic ecological communities both upland and wetland, but foremost, requires a concerted and coordinated strategy for proper long-term land management. Why do you ask? Aside from the St. Johns River to the West, Julington-Durbin is nearly completely surrounded by residential and commercial developments and development has not declined. This property is a prime example of the challenges that WUI presents to land managers and the surrounding public. Our tour leader, Matt Corby, NRLI Alumnus, Class XIII, addressed several specific examples of land management techniques that have been employed to reduce the impacts to both natural systems and local residents. The initial hurdle for this property related to fire and smoke. Prescribed fire is a fundamental tool in the toolbox of land managers because it reduces the fuel loading and, consequently, diminishes the chances for devastating wildfires. Prescribed fire is also a major component of the onsite sandhill restoration process, another land management goal for the management team. Through education, coordination, and execution, prescribed burning is an available tool for ecological restoration, fuel reduction, and the prevention of wildfires to the surrounding communities. Matt discussed the process for achieving these goals in detail and provided several examples of the planning process that led to the successful outcome.

The field trip was followed by a stakeholder panel comprised of regulators, natural resource managers, and homeowners who were directly affected by WUI within the region. In typical NRLI fashion, we used an alternative technique to conduct the stakeholder panel. Rather than exposing the panel to the entire class, NRLI Fellows were broken into small groups and assigned to an individual stakeholder, allowing for a more focused conversation. NRLI Fellows then reported back to the entire group the information gained during this intimate interview process. This method allowed each Fellow to ask more questions and practice recently observed interview skills and provided a technique to pull more information from stakeholders who may be less outspoken in front of large groups.

We kicked off the evening with a visit to Clark's Fish Camp. Talk about WUI! Wild things of all forms abounded over urban diners, and Fellows were encouraged to practice their animal identification skills as they enjoyed their meals. Their website boasts that they have the largest private collection of taxidermy in America. Dinner was fabulous and even non-native fellows are sure to return here for additional woo-eee(!) moments.

The conflict between urban sprawl and wild areas is a common thread in Florida, and Duval County provided an excellent illustration of the issue. The entire three day session was packed full of information—from interview techniques to 'how to run a meeting that is not crappy,' Fellows were exposed to a new suite of skills. It was also an opportunity to reflect on the skills and strategies that have been covered previously. The timeline tool was introduced and allowed Fellows to practice the utility of creating a timeline. December is a bye month for NRLI, so we hope everyone enjoys the holiday season. We are already looking forward to Session 5 in Key Largo!



Fellows see the wildland-urban interface firsthand during the tour of Julington-Durbin Preserve. Photo by Jessica Ireland.

Fred Rondeau

Captain, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



Olin “Fred” Rondeau was raised in a military family traveling and living throughout the United States. Through his travels and various regions he has resided, Fred has gained the necessary abilities to communicate effectively in diverse groups. Fred is

a devoted Christian who enjoys staying active in his church. He sings in the choir and coaches’ church sports to youths in his community. Devoted to his wife Ashley and his six children, he is definitely a family man. Fred loves the outdoors and stays active in sports, participating mostly in softball and bowling.

After attending Greenville College in South Carolina, Fred graduated from George Stone Law Enforcement Academy in 1995. Shortly after, Fred was hired on by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (formerly known as the “Florida Marine Patrol”) as a law enforcement officer and attended the state law enforcement academy in Tallahassee, Florida. After graduation, he was stationed in Naples, Florida. In 1997, he transferred to Pensacola, Florida. Continuing his career in law enforcement, Fred has continued to educate himself and continues to take technical and advanced training courses. He has worked his way through the ranks and now serves as a Captain in Pensacola, supervising a four county area.

Andrew Kohler

Land Management Specialist, St. Johns River Water Management District



Andrew Kohler is a Land Management Specialist for the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD), working out of their Palm Bay office. He covers territory from Highway 520 south to Indian River County in the Upper Basin of the St. Johns River. Managing land for the district involves protecting and restoring a wide variety of habitats and ecosystems and making them

available to the public for activities such as hiking, hunting, camping, and boating. Born and raised in Florida, he has grown up and lived in the area where he now works. Andy earned his bachelor’s degree from the University of Florida’s College of Agriculture, where he studied Natural resources & environmental science and Soil & Water Science. Andy has worked for St. Johns since 2000. He began as an environmental Scientist and transitioned to land management almost 10 years ago. As an Environmental Scientist, he focused on water quality and studying the changes occurring marshes.

Andy enjoys every part of Florida outdoors, from working outside to spending time and being outside with his family as much as possible. He enjoys fishing, camping, kayaking and hiking. Andy lives in Indialantic with his wife, Kim, and their two children, Andrew (12 years old), and Erin (9 years old). Andy is happiest when he is in the keys with his family, which is where you will find them on most vacations.

Shelby Krantz

Coordinator, Southeast Climate Consortium,
University of Florida



Shelby Krantz grew up in Jacksonville, Florida spending much of her time outdoors in the surrounding natural areas with her family camping, canoeing, and hiking. These experiences shaped her care for and love of the natural environment, and she became interested in global social justice and environmental issues at an early age. With these passions in mind, she pursued a combined degree at the University of Florida, receiving a Bachelor of Science in Forest Resources and Conservation in May 2013 and a Master of Science in Forest Resources and Conservation with a certificate in environmental education and communication in May 2014. After completing her degree, she began working as the Coordinator for the Southeast Climate Consortium, a multi-disciplinary, multi-institutional, multi-state team conducting diverse activities to engage stakeholders and provide timely, relevant, and reliable products and information to help manage their climate-related risks.

Aside from academic and professional life, Shelby loves to spend time with her family and friends—preferably outside or enjoying great food. She enjoys hiking, cycling, and canoeing in and around Gainesville and the great state of Florida and traveling to enjoy new culture, music, food, and environments.

NRLI Alumni Spotlight

Alexander Gulde

NRLI Class XII

Wildlife Assistance Program Administrator, Wildlife Impact Management Section, FWC Division of Habitat and Species Conservation



Alexander serves as the FWC's statewide Wildlife Assistance Program Coordinator, a position he assumed in April 2013. In this role, Alexander leads a team of Wildlife Assistance Biologists who provide education, conduct outreach activities, and deliver technical assistance to resolve and mitigate human-wildlife

conflict. Alexander and his team are committed to providing the best possible customer service, delivering lasting solutions to human-wildlife conflict situations, while protecting the state's fish and wildlife resources for current and future generations.

Alexander began his career with FWC in 2006, serving as the Division of Law Enforcement's Policy Development Coordinator. Alexander is actively involved in his community. He is a volunteer member of the United States Coast Guard Auxiliary and serves as a Flotilla Staff Officer for Public Education, coordinating the delivery

of boating safety courses to boaters in the Tallahassee area. During election years, Alexander works with the Leon County Supervisor of Elections Office to ensure that all eligible voters in the county can cast their ballot. Alexander also serves as an Assistant Troop Leader with the Girl Scout Council of the Florida Panhandle, Troop 66.

Prior to joining FWC, Alexander worked as a Legislative Policy Analyst for the Florida Legislature's Office of Program Policy Analysis and Government Accountability (OPPAGA), as a Budget and Management Analyst for Broward County government, and as a Performance Auditor for the Montana Legislature. Alexander earned a Bachelor and Master of Arts in Political Science from the University of Montana, and a Master of Science in Environmental Engineering Sciences from the University of Florida. Alexander is a Alumnus of the University of Florida's Natural Resources Leadership Institute, Class XII.

Alexander was born and raised in Germany, and is a veteran of the German Armed Forces. He attended college in Munich before moving to the United States in 1999. Alexander became a US citizen in 2007. He lived in Montana and South Florida, and now resides in Tallahassee with his wife Virginia and his daughters. Alex and his family are avid hikers, kayakers, and novice but enthusiastic anglers, and love exploring Florida's great outdoors.

Looking Forward

Class XV Sessions 5-8

Dates	Topic	Location
January 7-9, 2016	Sea level rise	Key Largo
February 4-6, 2016	Endangered species & recreation	Crystal River
March 10-12, 2016	Agriculture south of Lake Okeechobee	Clewiston
April 7-9, 2016	Graduation & practicum presentations	Gainesville

Class XVI (2016-2017)

We are currently accepting applications for NRLI Class XVI (2016-2017)! The application deadline is April 1, 2016. Class size is limited; applicants are strongly encouraged to apply as early as possible.

For additional information, including a complete schedule and application instructions, please visit the Class XVI page on the NRLI website (http://nrli.ifas.ufl.edu/NRLI_classXVI.shtml) or contact Jessica Ireland, NRLI Program Coordinator.

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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, Technical Assistance Specialist, Office of Environmental Resource Management, United South and Eastern Tribes, Inc.

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, Graduate Landscape Architect, Gulf Coast Community Design Studio

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Collaborative solutions for natural resource challenges