



Shades of Green: Facilitating Better Understanding Between Differing Environmental Viewpoints



Chris Johns
and
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NRLI Class IX

Who We Are

Chris Johns

- Assistant Manager, Tater Farms

Staci Braswell

- Director of Government and Community Affairs,
Florida Farm Bureau Federation



Background

The Florida Department of Environmental Protection (FDEP) in partnership with the St. Johns River Water Management District (SJRWMD) has developed and is beginning to implement a Basin Management Action Plan (BMAP) for the Lower St. Johns River

- A BMAP is the “blueprint” for restoring impaired waters by reducing pollutant loadings to meet the allowable loadings established in a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL).
 - Represents a comprehensive set of strategies, including but not limited to:
 - permit limits on wastewater facilities,
 - urban and agricultural best management practices,
 - conservation programs,
 - financial assistance, and
 - revenue generating activities.
 - The plan is designed to implement the pollutant reductions established by the TMDL and is developed with the input of local stakeholders.



Background

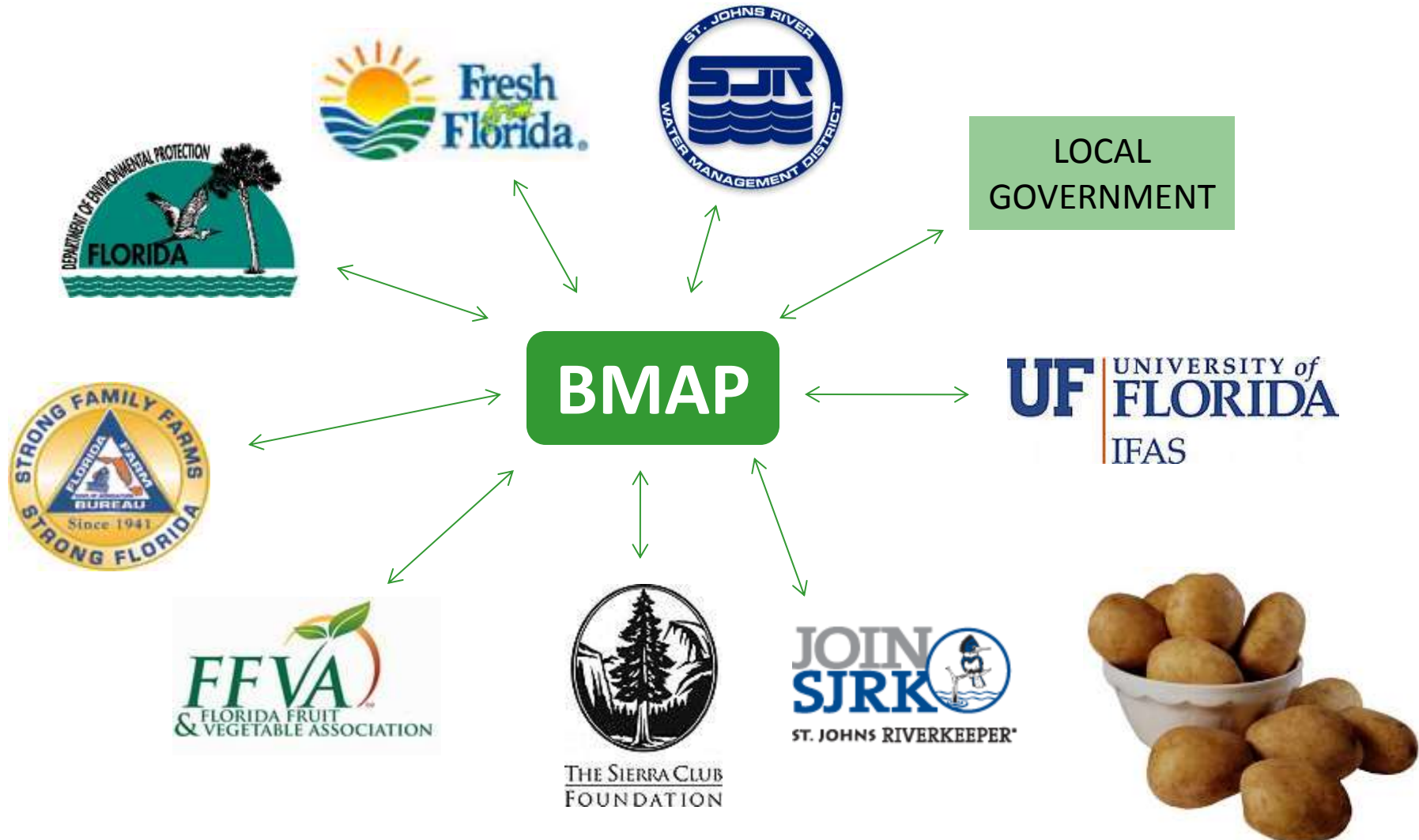
BMAP = Mandatory Agricultural Best Management Practices (BMPs) or water quality monitoring

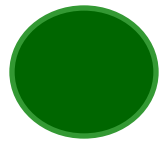
- An agricultural BMP is a practical, cost-effective actions that producers can take to reduce the amount of pesticides, fertilizers, animal waste, and other pollutants entering our water resources.
 - Typically voluntary.
 - Designed to benefit water quality while maintaining or even enhancing agricultural production.
 - Developed and adopted by The Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services (FDACS)
 - FDACS on occasion has partnered with the University of Florida/Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (UF/IFAS) to research and develop BMPs .

UF/IFAS has researched & proposed a vegetable BMP, which has been adopted by FDACS, with fertilizer rates which potato growers in the tri-county area see as unattainable for adequate potato production.

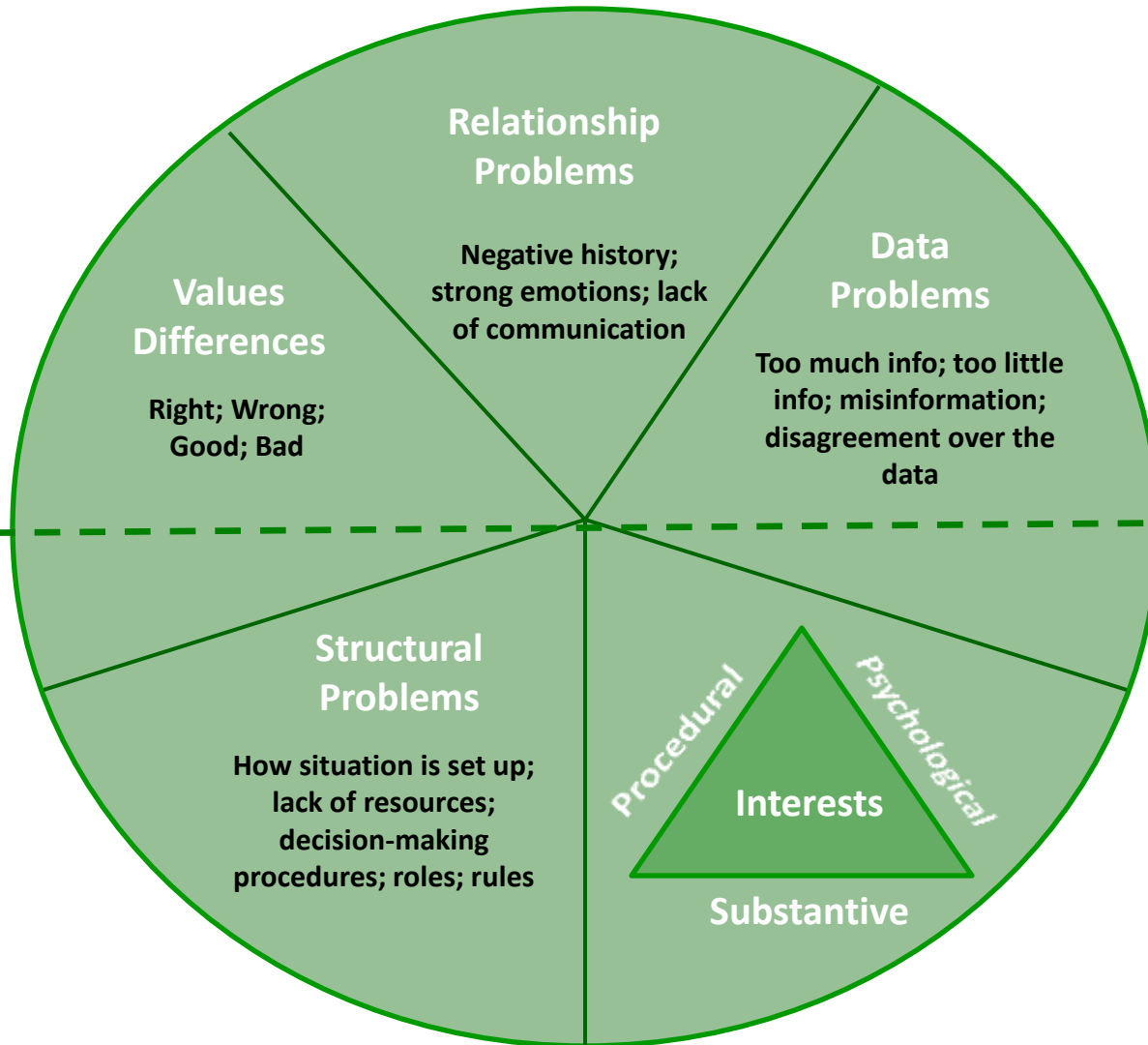


Stakeholders





of Conflict / ▲ of Interests



Refers to ways that problems are manifested that may cloud the issues. Focus tends to be emotional, and the resolution strategies must involve allowing people to express themselves and to feel heard and understood

Represents those elements of conflict that can be addressed by finding a good solution or reaching an agreement. Involves negotiation and problem solving



The Plan...Tater Tour Time

Agricultural Tour in Hastings, Florida

- May 2010, 5 to 7 members of environmental organizations in Northeast Florida, including:
 - Florida Wildlife Federation
 - St. Johns Riverkeepers
- May 2010, 5 to 7 members of the regulatory community, including:
 - FDEP
 - FDACS
 - SJRWMD
 - Local Government



Framing

Attempt to frame the discussion in such a manner that fosters a cooperative open discussion between opposing stakeholders

- **Emphasis on not leveling accusations or placing blame**
- **Focus discussion on the future, not past. Past too contentious.**



Goals and Objectives

Clear up misconceptions between environmental groups and the agricultural community through improved communications.

Provide a forum which will allow environmental groups and the agricultural community to share their unique perspectives and respective challenges.

Provide a forum which will allow regulatory agencies and the agricultural community to share their unique perspectives and respective challenges.



Preparation and Planning

Date Selection

- Planting v. Harvest
 - More to see at harvest time
- Legislative Session
 - Regulatory agencies most likely unavailable during legislative session



Preparation and Planning

Working with Local Extension Agent

- Date
- Invitation List
- Field Tour Locations
- Use of UF/IFAS Facility



Preparation and Planning

Agenda Drafting

Agenda Topic and Related Activities	Timing	How (Steps)
Welcome at IFAS Extension Office	9:00 am – 10:00 am	Welcome Have everyone introduce themselves Present Goals & Objectives Pre Survey
Break	10:00 am – 10:15 am	Provide water, juice, soda for participants
Travel Time	10:15 am – 10:25 am	Vans provided by UF/IFAS to travel to Blue Sky Farms
Tour Blue Sky Farms	10:25 am – 11:05 am	Danny Johns will lead the tour of his potato operation
Travel Time	11:05 am – 11:20 am	Vans provided by UF/IFAS to travel to Barnes' Greenhouses

Preparation and Planning

Agenda Drafting, cont.

Agenda Topic and Related Activities	Timing	How (Steps)
Tour Barnes' Greenhouses	11:20 am – 12:00 pm	UF/IFAS Staff will lead tour of Barnes' Greenhouses
Travel Time	12:00 pm – 12:15 pm	Vans provided by UF/IFAS to travel to Local Restaurant for lunch
Lunch	12:15 pm – 1:45 pm	
Travel Time	1:45 pm – 2:00 pm	Vans provided by UF/IFAS to travel to Tater Farms
Tour Tater Farms	2:00 pm – 2:40 pm	Frank and Chris Johns will lead the tour of their potato operation

Preparation and Planning

Agenda Drafting, cont.

Agenda Topic and Related Activities	Timing	How (Steps)
Travel Time	2:40 pm – 2:50 pm	Vans provided by UF/IFAS to travel to Local Extension Office
Break	2:50 am – 3:00 pm	Provide water, juice, soda for participants
Meeting/Discussion at Extension Office *	3:00 pm – 4:00 pm	

* Agenda will be created for the hour long Meeting/Discussion at Extension Office with environmental groups.

* Agenda will be created for the hour long Meeting/Discussion at Extension Office with the regulatory agencies.

Preparation and Planning

Invitation Drafting

- Who, What, When, Where and Why
- Brief description of NRLI
- Brief description of the purpose of NRLI practicum project
- Practicum goals and objectives
- Contact information for questions or clarification
- Letter to environmental organizations
- Letter to regulatory agencies



Preparation and Planning

Survey Drafting (Pre and Post Survey)

1. What is your perception of the tri-county Agricultural community with respect to how they value/treat the St. Johns River?
2. What do you think about any efforts the tri-county agricultural community are making in order to reduce adverse impacts their practices have on the environment and the St. Johns River?
3. In your opinion, what other changes could farmers make in order reduce/minimize their impact on the environment and the St. Johns River



NRLI Toolbox

Tools Used in Practicum:

- Circle of Conflict/Triangle of Interests
- Framing
- Agenda Matrix

