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Stage Setting with Michael Minton

Our stage setting speaker for Session V was Michael Minton, an attorney in Ft. Pierce, a former board member for the South Florida Water Management District (SFWMD) and a member of the Committee for a Sustainable Treasure Coast. The committee was formed when agriculture returns were low, the citrus industry was reeling from the introduction of diseases like canker and crustacea and the challenges related to preserving resources in the face of the pressure to develop were becoming increasingly evident. Citizens were interested in maintaining an agricultural heritage and natural systems and in keeping large land holdings intact.

On March 30, 2004, State Senator Ken

Pruitt requested that Governor Jeb Bush put together a committee representative of key community leaders and stakeholders to study the challenges and opportunities facing the Treasure Coast and to recommend actions and tools that could be used to maintain a sustainable quality of life. The committee was commissioned by an executive order on May 25, 2004, and it included representatives from St. John's River Water Management District (SJRWMD), three cities (Ft. Pierce, Stuart and Port St. Lucie), three counties (Martin, St. Lucie and Indian River), the agriculture and development community, education, social services, etc. All in all, the committee was comprised of *(continued on page 2)*

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Stage Setting continued...

37 members, which was functionally divided into five groups representing community, government, environment, agriculture and development. The committee was able to negotiate and create a report in 18 months.

During the deliberation, of great importance was the need to find ways that people could continue in agriculture and be profitable. One plan was to use Transfer of Development Rights (TDR) and other concepts to create an intrinsic value in property that provided an incentive to maintain the property in agriculture and discourage its sale for development. Specifically, it was noted that the combination of future agricultural profits and income from the TDR must be equal to or greater than the land value for some alternative use, such as development. Some of the tools that the group used were rural land stewardship and clustering and density enhancements with entire natural systems protected.

The group developed a very complete set of plans, but, unfortunately, the funding for implementation was not provided. Presently, the plan is dependent upon a group of volunteers who are trying to put the plan into effect. ■

Boat Trip on

Before our trip on the Indian River Lagoon, Paul Millar, who has worked on the lagoon for 15 years and is the water resource manager for Martin County, gave us a brief overview of the lagoon. In 1989, it was known for having the most diverse ecosystem in North America. However, large discharges from Lake Okeechobee and storm water runoff caused it to become highly polluted. In response, Best Management Practices (BMP) were put into effect, above ground storage to drain uplands was implemented, Stormwater Treatment Areas were staged to clean water and natural storage was provided.

During the trip, our tour guides were Capt. "Chop" Lege, a volunteer for Audubon, and Jim David, director of St. Lucie County Mosquito Control District, which manages the coastal wetlands around the region. Jim was kind enough to regale us with tales of how the Mosquito Control District has completed extensive construction activities that have had a two-fold purpose: to control mosquito population in the salt marsh and to provide significant restoration benefit by improving flow through conditions in previously impounded areas.

Our trip on the river was replete with wildlife: pelicans, tri-colored herons, great-blue herons and even a number of dolphins that showed their fins and frolicked around the boat. The boat ride was very pleasant, and the weather and river were beautiful. ■

Negotiations

TRUST is very important in negotiations. Additional key components of negotiations include collaboration, concession, litigation, viable alternatives, willing parties, being prepared and keeping emotion out. To reach a win-win situation, people need to find common interests with others.

1. Separate the people from the problem, and focus on the problem.
2. Broaden the perspective; broaden the "pie."
3. Discuss interests, not positions.
4. Consider the best alternative to a negotiated agreement (BATNA) or a weak position (WATNA).

In negotiations, know if you are coming from a strong position (BATNA) or a weak position (WATNA). If negotiation breaks down, consider to what extent it is a real deal. ■



Indian River Lagoon boasts of various wildlife, as seen by the mussels that have been harvested.

Indian River Lagoon



Capt. "Chop" Lege tells about the lagoon while Jim David watches. Both were very knowledgeable about the surroundings.



NRLI Class VII Fellows and Project Team Leaders relax and enjoy as they absorb the sights and listen to their garrulous guides.

All photos on pages 2 and 3 by Laila Racevskis

Recap of Day 1

NRLI Session Five

(with sincerest apologies to T.S. Eliot)

By Beth Kacvinsky

Let us go then, you and I,
To where the Indian River is spread out before our eyes,
Like a silver ribbon upon the landscape.
Let us go, through certain biker filled streets
A therapeutic retreat
For restless Fellows thirsting for answers
And some type of sustenance, preferably wet.
Streets that carry us back to the Dockside Inn
To lead us to an overwhelming question
Oh, yes, let us ask what is it?
Let us go and make our visit!

In the room, the Fellows come and go
Talking of sustainable Treasure Coast.

The pervasive fog that permeates the Fellows' brains,
The yellow smoke that kept so many from our midst,
Overwhelms the Fellows as they
Linger within the room
While the aroma and taste of Mary's food
Sustains us for the afternoon

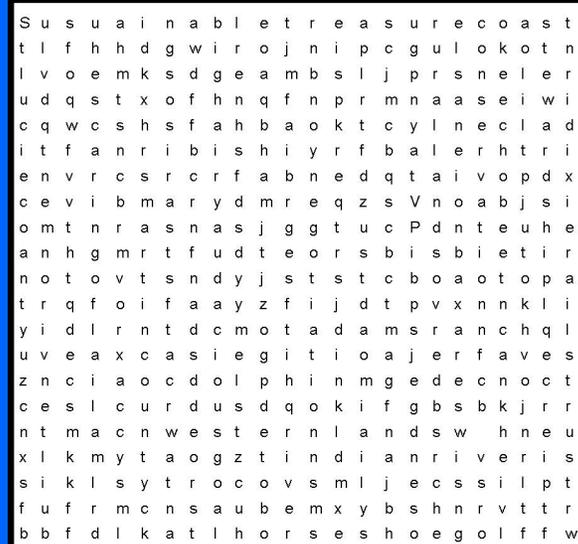
And indeed, will there be time?
Time to plan and steer development,
Will there be time, will there be time?
Time to be great stewards of the land and implement
The Plan.
Time to find new arrows for the quiver
and time for dolphins on the river
And is there time yet for a hundred indecisions
A hundred visions and revisions, before the people
come?
Shall we head to the west and shiver
In the early morning air?

In the room the Fellows come and go
Talking of the western lands.

Indeed, will there be time
To Wonder "Do we care?" and "Do we dare?"
Time to turn back and avoid the final crop
Time to redo our cities, bottom to top.
Will they say, the cause is lost?

Session V

Word Search



By Beth Kacvinsky

Sustainable treasure
Coast
Big, hairy audacious goal
Braford
Mary
Western lands
Negotiation
Conservation
Dolphin
Martin County
St. Lucie County
Indian River
River
Ethic

Okeechobee
Scaring of Laila
Rural lands
Horseshoe golf
Batna
Watna
Trust
Stewardship
Built environment
Ft. Pierce
Concede
Dixie Rails Trust

Do we dare disturb that universe?
That mass of people clamoring for their
Place in paradise
Can our agricultural be sustained
And natural lands be valued to remain
to support the deer and turkey that we saw?

In a minute there is time
For decisions and revisions which a minute will reverse

In the room the Fellows come and go
Talking of negotiation skills

Have we learned them all already?
Learned of the BATNAS and the WATNAS
Measured interests not positions
And heard the voices with their focus
On the problem not emotion.
And have we determined to presume?

And have we learned them all already
Learned to be prepared
To probe for the intrinsic value,
Expand the pie and separate
the people from the problem.

Have we learned them all already
Learned of principled negotiation,
Collaboration, litigation
Are the parties willing,
And how are we the same?

In the room the Fellows come and go
Talking of (big) hairy audacious goals.

And will it have been worth it, after all,
After the report, and overwhelming consensus
Among the talk of economic diversity and prosperity,
The built environment and natural systems
Will it have been worthwhile
To have squeezed the recommendations into a ball
Then rolled it to the shelf without questioning
And implementing
Or should they say, that is not what was meant at all.
Have we seen the moment of its greatness flicker?
Do they have the strength to force this movement to its crisis? ■

Photo by Dr. Laila A. Racevskis

Adams Ranch

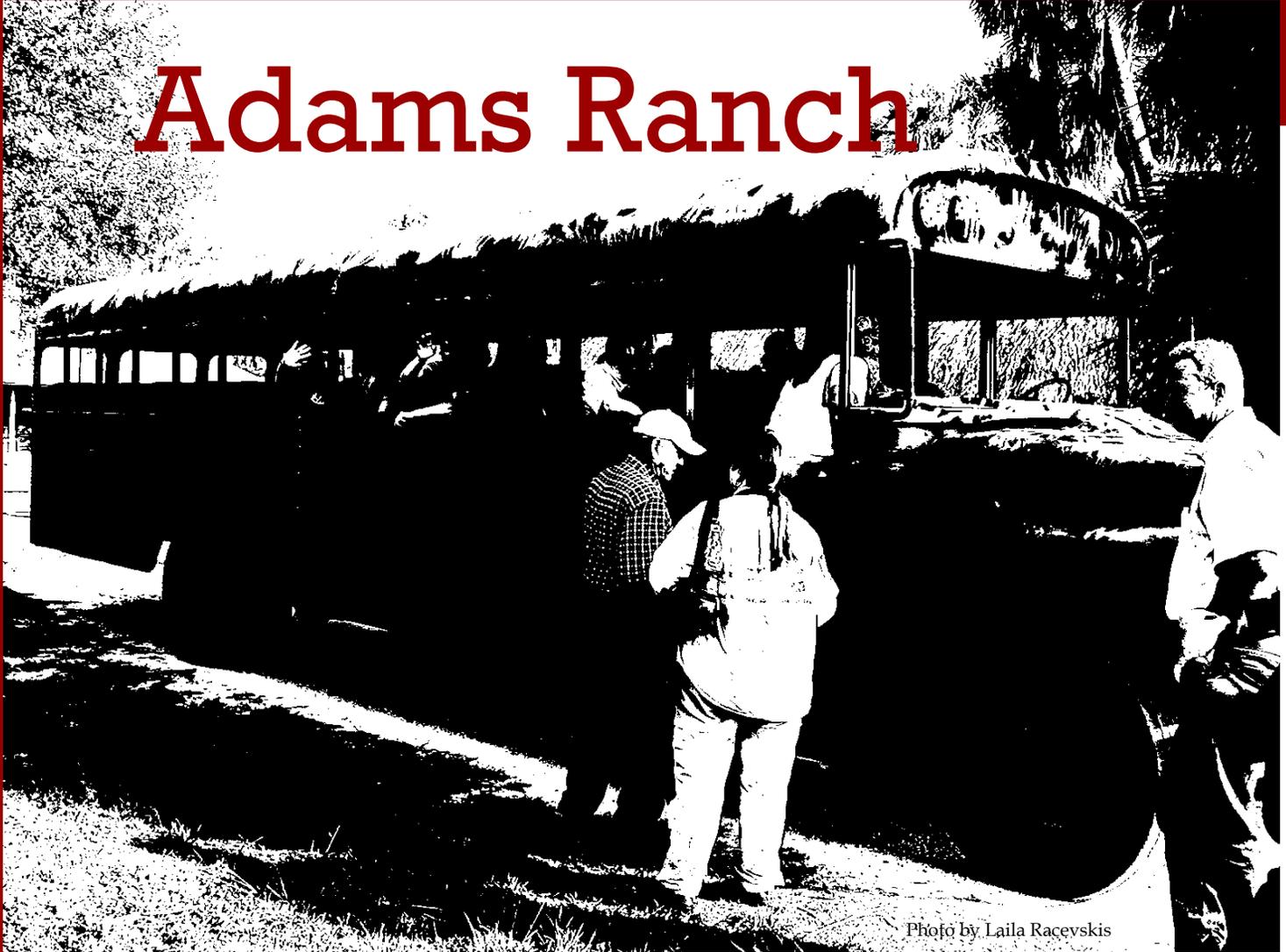


Photo by Laila Racevskis

Turkeys, deer, cows and gators! Oh my! As we traveled on the safari bus, which was once a school bus, the magic of Adams Ranch became apparent. The deeper we got into the land, the more removed from society we became. You couldn't help but wonder if this was what the original homesteaders experienced, i.e., minus the diesel bus. Our field trip for Session V was Adams Family Ranch located in the western area of St. Lucie County. The family ranch has been in the family for four generations and in operation for almost 70 years. Fortunately, it will remain in the family and continue to be a working ranch because of a state program called the Rural Land Stewardship Area (RLSA) program.

The RLSA program [Section 163.3177(11)(d), F.S.] was enacted by the 2001 Legislature to allow for the conversion of rural lands to other

uses through the application of innovative and flexible planning and development strategies and creative land use planning techniques. This program was intended to better protect environmentally sensitive areas, maintain the economic viability of agricultural and other predominately rural land uses and provide for the cost-efficient delivery of public facilities and services.

In essence, the program will:

- Continue agriculture business
- Provide employment
- Conserve natural resources
- Preserve a cultural icon
- Protect water and air quality



Photo by Laila Racevskis

Alto “Bud” Adams, Jr., talks with Fellow and NRLI Project Team member Wendy-Lin Bartels and Fellow Kathleen Mckee. The St Lucie County Board of County Commissioners (BCC) adopted the Rural Land Stewardship Area (RLSA) program in a 4-1 vote. Bud is now able to continue working on his ranch and to pass it on to future generations.

The innovative land use planning techniques employed included a mechanism to send the “credits” from Adams Ranch to a designated receiving area called Cloud Grove. The credits were based on a scientific analysis and eventually translated into density units, otherwise known as residential and non-residential units. The development rights invested in the credits were removed from Adams Ranch and sent to Cloud Grove, where the development rights will be applied in a sustainable manner. Adams Ranch will be preserved, and a new town will be developed in Cloud Grove. ■



Photo from Class VII

Club members of the Cow/Calf operation on Adams Ranch.

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Photo by Laila Racevskis

Not only the Adams family but also the livestock can enjoy the preservation of the ranch.

Stakeholder Panel

On Friday afternoon, we were privileged to have a stakeholder panel that included Dr. Richard Baker, mosquito biologist of the Pelican Island Audubon; Frannie Hutchinson, former St. Lucie county commissioner; Stacy Ranieri, of The Firefly Group; Lindsey Green, of the Committee for a Sustainable Treasure Coast; Nat Roberts, representative of Callery-Judge Grove and former head of the Indian River Citrus League; Peter Spyke, of the Arapaho Citrus Management; and Peter O'Brien, financial consultant and Indian River county commissioner.

It was a spirited discussion, as each of these individuals brought a different perspective to the table. The coming together of these disparate groups to present the report for a Sustainable Treasure Coast was admirable. However, we and also some of the stakeholders involved in the process were left with some very significant and troublesome considerations. Specifically, all the hard work that went into reaching consensus on a wide variety of issues, such as the future of agriculture, the

management of growth and water resources and the preservation of natural areas, merely became a report sitting on a shelf, relying on the development of a nonprofit organization to push forward its implementation.

There was evidence of an underlying tension within the panel, a little discussion of carrying capacity that had several of us on edge. Frannie offered some sage advice and noted that it was very important to keep a sense a humor to sustain yourself through all of the alternatives presented. She said that it will take all of the pieces of the pie to make this sustainable vision a whole and that the report's recommendations have not been brought back to the respective entities to be adopted. Discussion about the disapproval of the Callery-Judge development proposal also left the Fellows with the nagging question of what caused the proposal to fail. All in all, it was an excellent stakeholder panel and very well facilitated by Amanda Koonjeberry. ■