

GAINESVILLE

March 18-20, 2010



PRACTICUM PRESENTATIONS AND GRADUATION CEREMONIES

Graduation of the Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute, Class IX was held in Gainesville on March 18-20, 2010. Fellows presented results of their practica at the Hampton Inn-Downtown and graduation ceremonies were held at the Restaurant Ti Amo! in Gainesville. Graduation was well attended by leaders from UF IFAS, Food and Resources Economics Department, NRLI program staff, and NRLI Alumni representing all previous NRLI classes. The alumni were pleased to have the opportunity to visit with Drs. Roy Carriker and Burl Long; previous directors of NRLI. The current Director, Dr. Laila Racevskis, presented awards for Alumni of the Year and the Honorary Director's Award. Dr. Burl Long presented the 4rd Annual Burl Long Award. Congratulations to all fifteen NRLI Class IX graduates and to the award recipients!

The graduates of Class IX are now part of a network of 170 natural resource professionals in local government, state, and federal agencies, agriculture, private industry, and academia throughout the State of Florida who maintain contact through the NRLI Alumni Association.

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2009-2010 NRLI Class IX Fellows

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Adrienne Dessy
Scott Dudley
Joy Hazell
Jeffrey Hill
Christopher Johns
Gregory Lang
William Miller
Paul Monaghan
Shenley Neely
Robert Northrop
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This report forms part of a series written by current NRLI Fellows. Reports represent and are a product of the experiential learning process that is a highlight of the NRLI program and have not been formally peer reviewed.

Practicum Presentations

A significant element of each NRLI Class Graduation session is the presentation of the Fellows' Practica. The Fellows assume certain responsibilities when they are accepted into NRLI. Along with committing to participate in each of the seven working sessions, each Fellow agrees to work on a Practicum during his or her time in NRLI. Their Practicum can be a team effort with other Fellows or they can work on one alone. The Practicum should be related to a natural resource issue and should have a real-world outcome.

"Building Capacity for Collaboration: Advancing Forest Sustainability Within the Tampa Bay Watershed" By Rob Northrop, UF, Hillsborough County Extension



Rob Northrop presents his practicum

"LID Practices, Water Quality, and Behavior" By Paul Monaghan, UF Dept. of Agricultural Communication and Education and Emily Ott, McNeal and Yochim, P.L.

"Organizing Community Stakeholders to Create a Vision for Future Development in a Spring Protection Zone" By Shenley Neely, Levy County Planning Department

"Developing a Management Plan for the Blackwater River: Creating Watershed Partnerships" By Josh Wilks, Blackwater River Foundation



Josh Wilks presents practicum to NRLI Fellows and Project Team

"Shades of Green: Facilitating Better Understanding Between Differing Environmental Viewpoints" By Staci Braswell, Florida Farm Bureau Federation and Chris Johns, Tater Farm

"Outreach Meeting for the Coastal Wildlife Conservation Initiative" By Joy Hazell, UF Sea Grant and Tom Ostertag, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission

"Pathways to Sustainability: Fernandina Beach to Cedar Key and Beyond" By Adrienne Dessy, City of Fernandina Beach Planning Department, Greg Lang, Cedar Key Community Redevelopment Agency and Scott Dudley, Florida League of Cities

"Sustainable Volusia Local Government Alliance" By Ginger Adair, Volusia County Environmental Management

"Invasive Species Management and Cost Control by State Agencies" By Jeff Hill, UF Program in Fisheries and Aquatic Sciences and Will Miller, Southwest Florida Water Management District



Will Miller and Jeff Hill present their findings on the final day of NRLI.

The Graduates

Dr. Thomas Obreza, Interim Associate Dean for Extension presented the certificates to the graduating Fellows.



Ginger Adair, Natural Resources Director, Volusia County



Staci Braswell, Director of Government and Community Affairs, Florida Farm Bureau



Adrienne Dessy, Planner, City of Fernandina Beach



C. Scott Dudley, Lobbyist, Florida League of Cities



Joy Hazell, Sea Grant Agent, Florida Sea Grant and UF/IFAS Lee County



Jeff Hill, Assistant Professor, UF/IFAS, Program in Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences, School of Forest Resources



Christopher Johns, Assistant Manager, Tater Farms



Gregory Lang, Director, Cedar Key Community Redevelopment Agency



William Miller, Land Use Manager, Southwest Florida Water Management District



Paul Monaghan, Assistant Professor, UF/IFAS, Department of Agricultural Education and Communication



Shenley Neely, Planning Director, Levy County



Robert Northrop, Extension Forester, UF/IFAS Extension, Hillsborough County



Thomas Ostertag, Listed Species Conservation Ecologist, Fish and Wildlife Commission



Emily S. Ott, Legal Assistant, McNeal & Yochim, P.L.



Joshua Wilks, Watershed Coordinator & Planner, Blackwater River Foundation

The Speakers



Dr. Mark McLellan, Dean for Research at the University of Florida/IFAS, welcomed Fellows, Alumni and guests on behalf of UF/IFAS.



Dr. Tom Obreza, Interim Associate Dean for Extension, provided words of welcome on behalf of UF/IFAS Extension.



Dr. Rod Clouser, Professor with the Food and Resource Economics Department, provided welcome remarks on behalf of the Food and Resource Economics Department at UF and also shared some of his memories of meeting this year's class at our first session in Bradenton.



Joy Hazell, Sea Grant Extension Agent in Lee County, was chosen by the members of this year's class to serve as Class Speaker, and she shared some memories and impressions of the NRLI year on behalf of Class IX.

Roy Carriker Recognized for Distinguished Service



This year a special award was presented to Dr. Roy Carriker, Professor Emeritus in the Food and Resource Economics Department for Distinguished Service in Natural Resources Leadership. Dr. Carriker was the founding Director of the Florida NRLI program and has made significant contributions to natural resource economics and policy throughout his career. It is thanks to his leadership in natural resources that this program continues and that the NRLI Alumni network continues to grow.



Dr. Carriker was also designated an Honorary NRLI Alumnus by the NRLI Project Team and NRLI Alumni Association.



Director's Award

Since 2007, each year the NRLI Director presents an Alumnus with the Honorary Director's Award to recognize outstanding service to the NRLI program over the past year. This year's recipient was Bryan Fluech, NRLI Class VIII and Sea Grant Agent in Collier County. Bryan serves on the NRLI Alumni Association Board of Directors as Secretary. He has provided leadership and support to the NRLI program through his ongoing efforts in compiling and editing the quarterly NRLI Alumni Association Newsletter. He also initiated and organized the first NRLI Regional Alumni Meeting for the South Central District.



Laila Racevskis, Director of NRLI, presents Bryan Fluech with the Director's Award.

Burl Long Award



Burl Long presents Emily Ott with the Burl Long Award

Started in 2007, the Burl Long Award was established to honor one of the founding directors of the Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute. This award is a peer nominated award and given to the Fellow that their classmates consider to have learned and changed the most as a result of their participation in NRLI. This year the class elected Emily S. Ott for that distinction.

Alumni Award

This year's Alumni Award was presented to Stan Bronson, an alumnus of NRLI Class II. Stan is the Executive Director of Florida Earth Foundation (FEB). Florida Earth's mission is "to bring people together through education, outreach and facilitation to ensure Florida's environmental integrity and way of life". Being a non-advocacy organization, Florida Earth provides an "honest broker" service to Florida and brings people together by education and discussion on a fundamental theme of "stewardship". The Florida Earth Foundation was a direct result of Stan's NRLI Practicum.



Deb Burr, President of the NRLI Alumni Association presents Stan Bronson with the Alumni Award



Deb Burr presents Temperance Morgan with the Outstanding Achievement Award for Natural Resources Leadership

Outstanding Achievement Award

The NRLI Leadership Award is awarded annually by the NRLI Alumni Association to a person who has demonstrated outstanding leadership and service in resolving natural resource issues in the State of Florida. The first annual NRLI Leadership Award was presented to Richard Pettigrew for his work on the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan. Other past award winners include Charles Pattison, President of 1000 Friends of Florida, and Melissa Meeker, Vice President of Tetra Tech.

This year's NRLI Leadership Award recognizes a key leader in the plan to restore one of the world's largest wetlands, the Florida Everglades. Ms. Temperance Morgan is the Policy Director for Everglades restoration at the South Florida Water Management District. She has played a key leadership role in the *River of Grass Planning* process, beginning in January 2009. This planning process was initiated by the South Florida Water Management District's decision to acquire land from the United States Sugar Corporation. This acquisition was considered a key component to help restore Florida's Everglades.

Temperance has exhibited outstanding leadership and coordination skills through her work with the *River of Grass Planning* Process and has promoted the fundamental concepts of NRLI throughout her efforts to help restore Florida's Everglades.

Alumni Field Trip and Luncheon



Following Friday's festivities, the new Class IX alumni and approximately 20 other NRLI alumni went on a field trip to Rosie's Organic Farm. Rosie Koenig, owner, talked with the group about the importance of agriculture to the local economy and the benefits of organic farming. Chef Bert Gill, owner of Mildred's Big City Food, Big Deal Café and Restaurant Ti Amo! spoke about why he chooses to purchase locally, whenever possible, for his restaurants. This field trip was followed by the Annual Meeting of the NRLI Alumni Association. While hungry alumni ate a delicious lunch, provided by Mildred's Big City Food, the new appointees to the Alumni Association Board of Directors were confirmed.



Above top: Rosie Koenig talks with the group about her farm; Left: Rows of vegetables ready for harvest. Center: NRLI Alumni listen as Rosie talks about the importance of agriculture to the local community; Right: Deb Burr, Alumni Association President, conducts the Alumni annual meeting.



Alumni, NRLI Team Members, friends and family thoroughly enjoyed themselves in the lovely setting of Restaurant Ti Amo! during Friday evening's festivities

