



## PUTTING IT ALL TOGETHER GRADUATION AND PRACTICUM PRESENTATIONS

**G**raduation for Class XII Fellows of the Florida Natural Resources Leadership Institute was held on April 11-12, 2013 in Gainesville, Florida. Over two days the Fellows presented and discussed the results of their practicum projects before concluding Friday afternoon with summary reflection on how the 9-month program had impacted them as natural resource professionals. NR LI Class XII concluded with an evening reception sponsored by the NR LI Alumni Association and finally the annual graduation banquet and awards ceremony, held this year at the Florida Museum of Natural History.

The banquet and awards ceremony was held Friday night and celebrated the successful completion of the NR LI program by of this year's graduating Fellows, many of whom were joined by family and friends. Also in attendance were leaders from UF IFAS, the IFAS Food and Resources Economics Department, the NR LI program staff and alumni representing all 11 of the previous NR LI classes. Alumni enjoyed the opportunity to visit with each other as well as NR LI founder Dr. Roy Carriker, UF Senior Vice President for Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources Dr. Jack Payne and IFAS Dean for Extension Dr. Nick Place.

Each year special awards are handed out as part of the graduation ceremony. Executive Director Bruce Delaney presented the 7th Annual Burl Long Award graduating Fellow M.J. Carnevale and Alumni Association President Leslie Corelli presented the Alumni of the Year award to Dr. Paul Monaghan and the Robert Teitz Natural Resources Leadership Awards to Dr. Laila Racevskis. Class XII selected Fellow Jack Dougherty to represent them as class speaker. Congratulations to all twenty-one NR LI Class XII graduates and to the award recipients! The graduates of Class XII have now joined a network of more than 220 Florida natural resource professionals from local government, state and federal agencies, agriculture, private industry and academia.



Dr. Nick Place and his wife, Debbie visit with NR LI Fellow Scot Eubanks, of the Florida Farm Bureau during the reception at NR LI Graduation. *Staff photo.*

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## 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 collaborative effort with other Fellows or they can work on it alone. The Practicum should be related to a natural resource issue and have a real-world outcome. Below is a list of 17 practica presented by this year's Fellows. More about each presentation can be found at <http://nrli.ifas.ufl.edu/practicaXII.shtml>.

***"Assessing Coastal Resiliency in Pinellas County, Florida"***, by Libby Carnahan, UF IFAS Sea Grant Extension, Pinellas County and Ramona Madhosingh-Hector, UF IFAS Extension, Pinellas County

***"Developing the Winter Haven Research Cooperative"***, by M. J. Carnevale, The City of Winter Haven

***"Solving Florida's Derelict Vessel Problem"***, by Jack Daugherty, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

***"Assessing the Florida Farm Bureau's CARES Program"***, by Scot Eubanks, Florida Farm Bureau Federation and Jacob Larson, Larson Dairy, Inc.

***"Natural Resource Adaptation Action Area"***, by Whitney Gray, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and The Florida Sea Grant

***"Conservation Champs: Reviving a Program"***, by Stacie Greco, Alachua County Environmental Protection Department

***"FWC Bass Regulations Review"***, by Alexander Gulde and Allen Martin, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

***"Silver Glen Springs Stakeholders: Finding Common Ground for the Future Management of the Glen"***, by Mike Herrin, USDA Forest Service, National Forests of Florida, Ocala National Forest

***"Utilizing Volunteer Scorers for the Florida Buck Registry – An Evaluation of Need"***, by Scott Johns, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

***"Expanding the Green Volusia Program..."***, by Katrina Locke, Volusia County Environmental Protection

***"Catalyzing New Interdisciplinary Research: building bridges between genomes and ecology"***, by Bette Loiselle, University of Florida, Tropical Conservation & Development Program

***"Coordinating Collaborative Scientific Advice to Inform Everglades Restoration Planning"***, by Andrew LoSchivo, U. S. Army Corp of Engineers

***"Marine & Estuarine Habitat Restoration in Northwest Florida"***, by Maria Merrill, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

***"Perspectives on Climate Change Among Natural Resource Agency Professionals"***, by Bob Progulske, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Ondine Wells, UF Graduate Student, UF IFAS School of Natural Resources and the Environment



## THE GRADUATES

Dr. Jack Payne, UF Senior Vice President for Agricultural Sciences and Natural Resources and Dr. Nick Place, UF IFAS Dean for Extension presented the graduates with their certificates.



Libby Carnahan, UF IFAS Sea Grant Extension



M J Carnevale, City of Winter Haven



Jack Daugherty, Florida Fish and Wildlife



Scot Eubanks, Florida Farm Bureau



Whitney Gray, Florida Fish and Wildlife



Stacie Greco, Alachua County Environmental Protection



Alex Gulde, Florida Fish and Wildlife.



Scott Johns, Florida Fish and Wildlife



Jacob Larson, Larson Dairy, Inc.



Katrina Locke, Volusia County Environmental Protection



Bette Loiselle, UF Tropical Conservation and Development Program



Andrew LoSchiavo, US Army Corp of Engineers



Ramona Madhosingh-Hector, UF IFAS Extension



Allen Martin, Florida Fish and Wildlife



Maria Merrill, Florida Fish and Wildlife



Bob Progulske, U.S. Fish and Wildlife



Eleanor Sommer, UF IFAS School of Natural Resources



Sarah Thompson, UF College of Design Construction and Planning



Ondine Wells, UF IFAS School of Natural Resources



Jen Williams, Florida Fish and Wildlife



Not Pictured at graduation, Mike Herrin, US Forest Service



## DISTINGUISHED SPEAKERS

NRLI was honored to have three distinguished speakers from IFAS Administration speak at the graduation ceremonies. Dr. Jack Payne, UF Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources, Dr. Nick Place, Dean and Director for Extension, and Dr. Rodney Clouser, Associate Chair for the Food and Resource Economics Department



Above. Dr. Jack Payne, Senior Vice President for Agriculture and Natural Resources congratulates the NRLI Fellows on their accomplishments and welcomes family and friends to the graduation ceremonies.



Above. Dr. Nick Place, Dean for Extension, congratulates Class XII on behalf of Extension.



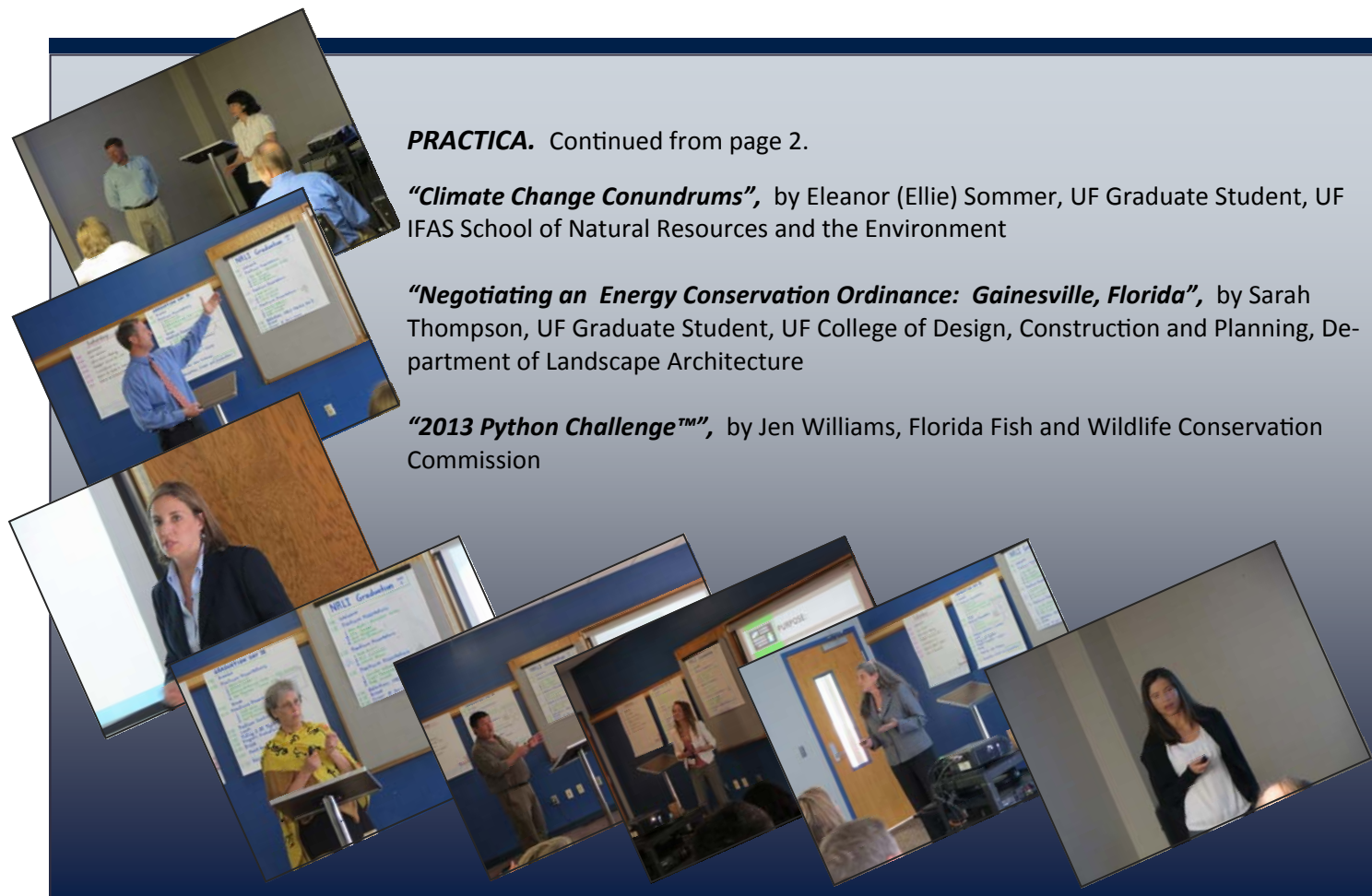
Dr. Rod Clouser welcomes guests and Fellows to graduation and to the "Gator Nation". Dr. Clouser challenged the Fellows to find their passion, reflect on what they are best at and discover their driving force

**PRACTICA.** Continued from page 2.

**"Climate Change Conundrums"**, by Eleanor (Ellie) Sommer, UF Graduate Student, UF IFAS School of Natural Resources and the Environment

**"Negotiating an Energy Conservation Ordinance: Gainesville, Florida"**, by Sarah Thompson, UF Graduate Student, UF College of Design, Construction and Planning, Department of Landscape Architecture

**"2013 Python Challenge™"**, by Jen Williams, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission



# AWARDS

Each year the Natural Resources Leadership Program Alumni recognize leaders for their contributions to the Natural Resource Leadership Institute program. This year Dr. Laila Racevskis was presented with the Bob Tietz Award in Natural Resources Leadership and Dr. Paul Monaghan was the recipient of the Outstanding Alumni Award. In the words of Alumni Association Director Leslie Corcelli:



**Bob Tietz Award:** "Laila's leadership and commitment to NRLI has created a perpetual legacy all her own. We fellows, what we do and what we carry forward, are her legacy. I can say with confidence that those of us who had the privilege of Laila's direction during our fellowship will carry forward our NRLI experience in perpetuity. That is Laila's legacy as NRLI director. I hope that in the future, NRLI will continue the dedication, passion and commitment that Laila brought to the program. Whoever follows Laila has big shoes to fill and I know that wherever she goes next, the world will be a better place for her presence there."



**Outstanding Alumni Award:** "During his fellowship, Paul has been truly dedicated to the NRLI mission of finding "Collaborative Solutions for Natural Resource Challenges". Since graduating from

Class 9 he has voluntarily participated with the Project Team in NRLI sessions and been an active member of the Alumni Association Board of Directors. In addition he has created professional development training sessions to increase Alumni Association memberships--- memberships that lead to scholarship funds for future NRLI fellows. This year mentored 11 fellows in their Practica. Paul has also used the skills and contacts he developed in the NRLI program to partner on multi-stakeholder engagement projects including an urban tree planting project in Tampa, a boater behavior program in Lee County and a storm water nutrient initiative in Manatee County. All these programs were created with fellow NRLI alumni. Paul is someone who tirelessly gives back to NRLI; we should all aspire to succeed like him."

## ALUMNI AWARDS



## BURL LONG AWARD

This award was established in 2007 to honor one of NRLI's founding directors, Dr. Burl Long. The recipient of the award is chosen by his/her classmates. This year the award was presented to M.J. Carnevale. The NRLI Project Team and alumni look forward to M.J.'s continued success as a rising leader in natural resource issues in Florida

## CLASS SPEAKER

The graduating class selects a Class Speaker to represent them at graduation. Class XII chose Major Jack Dougherty. Jack delivered a truly moving and inspirational speech that summarized the Fellows' NRLI year while exhorting his classmates to continue applying NRLI skills in their work and lives.





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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.*

## **Alumni Field Trip and Annual Meeting**



The Alumni Association annual meeting and field trip were held at the Santa Fe Canoe Outpost. Our contact at the Outpost set us up with canoes and kayaks. The group paddled up river to the River Rise area. River Rise is where the river emerges above ground in O'leno State Park after having flowed underground for three miles. The river was a

peaceful paradise with abundant wildlife and we even saw a few gators and eagles. While we paddled, Jennifer Mitchell from the Alachua County Environmental Protection Department provided us with background information on the Santa Fe River and some of the nearby springs. After the paddle, we enjoyed gourmet sandwich lunches courtesy of The Great Outdoors Restaurant in High Springs. The trip was beautiful, fun and relaxing and all who attended are extremely thankful to Nicole Wulff-Dodds for her expert planning.

### *Beautiful Day on the River*

