



Increasing Agricultural & Environmental Collaboration for Conservation

Presented By:

Delsina Trigoura
Geoffrey Patterson
Heather Obara
John Hall

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Issue Summary

Agricultural properties are oftentimes not considered beneficial for conservation by the public and there is division between the environmental community and agricultural community regarding natural resource issues, such as water quality, water quantity, and wildlife habitat.



The goal of this project is to work towards building a bridge between conservationists and agriculturalists, fostering collaboration and understanding to address shared challenges surrounding land and water stewardship.

Relevant Parties

The Project Team invited representatives from the agricultural and environmental sectors to participate in a 90-minute workshop around this issue.



Creed "Trey" Greer

Board of Directors, Alachua Conservation Trust

Jake Fojtik

Assistant Director of Government and Community Affairs,
Florida Farm Bureau

John Jopling

President, Ichetucknee Alliance &
Interim President, Florida Springs Council

Philip Watts

Operations Manager, Full Circle Dairy

Susan "Suzy" Koehler

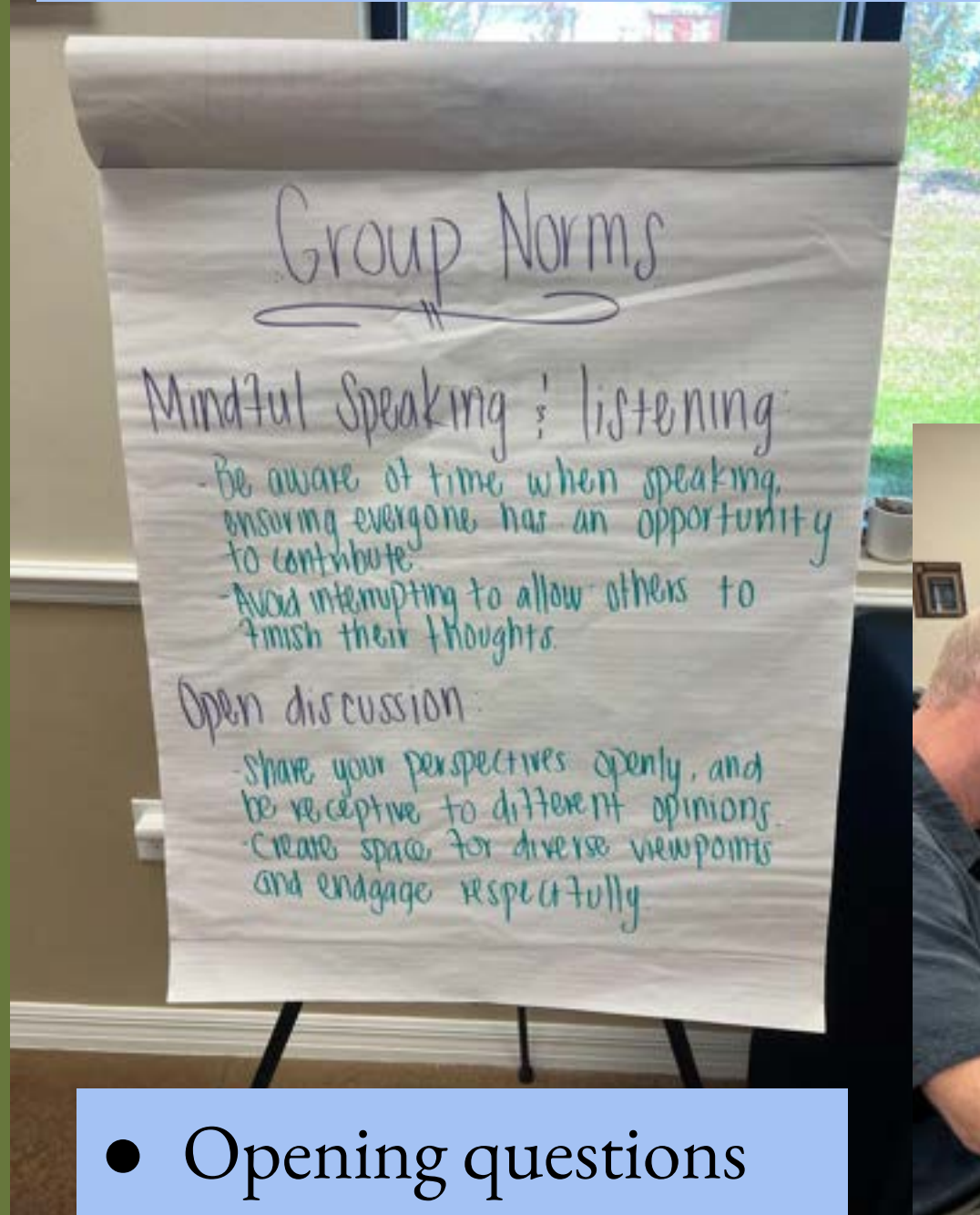
Regional Conservation Partnership Program Coordinator,
Alachua Conservation Trust

Wesley Carter

President, Loncala LLC &
Vice President, Florida Forestry Association

Techniques

- Setting group norms from beginning



- Opening questions



- Harness individual thinking



- Create connections



- Visual aids

Outcomes

- Very Impactful Interactions
 - Identified need to build trust and self-police bad apples within their own industries
 - Organically recognized the potential for partnership
 - Ended with several ‘cliff hangers’
- Highly Successful Overall
 - “We should be the strongest allies in the state; we want essentially the same thing.”



Lessons Learned

KEY TAKEAWAYS;

- Pre-planning > **meeting** < follow-up/next steps
- Quality vs. Quantity: Less is More
- Facilitating the Flow of Dialogue
- Collaboration to Solve Complex Issues

WHAT WORKED WELL:

- Personalized Communication/Invites
- The Right People in the Room
- Logistics & Process Agenda

WHAT WE WOULD DO DIFFERENTLY:

- Have a more “concrete” next step/action item
 - i.e. scheduled future meeting/communication



Next Steps

- Implementing Suggestions from Workshop

- Expanding the bubble
- Self-regulation
- Focus on problem-solving
 - Be allies, not enemies
 - Perception vs. reality
 - Look at financial impacts
 - Regulations

- Alachua Conservation Trust Strategic Conservation Plan

- Create additional opportunities to learn from each other & build trust

- Working group
- Join associations & attend each other's regular meetings
- Field trips





Sawdust Spring, Columbia County

Thank You!
Questions?

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