Director's Letter

On Tuesday July 19, 2011, a fire at the Austin Cary Memorial Forest completely consumed the SFRC Conference Center and all of its contents. Since being built in 1986, the Conference Center had been used by SFRC students, faculty, and friends to support our teaching, research and extension programs. It also served the broader community in Gainesville and North Florida. Every year more than 7,000 people from numerous organizations utilized the building for their meetings and special events such as Women’s Club, Alachua County Commission, Alachua County Sheriff, Gainesville City Council, Santa Fe College, other community events and private weddings.

The Conference Center served as a place where people from north central Florida could have their event in a serene forest, enjoy the lake and also learn a little about why forests are important in their lives.

We have been truly inspired by the outpouring of support from alumni and the community and the overwhelming enthusiasm to create a new learning facility that will serve future generations. We conducted a survey of recent users of the former Conference Center and received many good ideas about how to shape the new ACMF Learning Center. We have met with an architect and the Planning Committee and have tentative floor plans developed. The tentative plans are very exciting with a slightly larger facility that includes a large conference room, a classroom that seats 30 students, a library and an entry/gallery that will be a showcase of forest memorabilia and art work.

The cost to build the new ACMF Learning Center will be significant and we will need all of your help to make this vision a reality. Jack Vogel is heading the Development Committee to raise funds for this project and we will be in touch soon to seek your support.

Tim White

School Plans 75th Anniversary Celebration

2012 marks the School’s 75th anniversary, and there are big plans to celebrate the contributions of SFRC students, alumni, faculty and staff, and the stakeholders we serve. Friday March 23rd and Saturday March 24th will be the first annual SFRC Spring Celebration – a School-wide opportunity to socialize with alumni, recognize 75 years of accomplishments, and look to the future.

Friday events will include opportunities for alumni from the various SFRC programs to socialize – geomatics will host the traditional trap and skeet shoot; forestry and natural resources will take a canoe trip down the Santa Fe River; and fisheries will host a fish fry. Saturday events will bring all three programmatic areas together for a golf tournament, 5K run/walk at the Austin Cary Memorial Forest, and field day events, as well as an afternoon barbeque and recognition event, honoring award winners and our 2012 graduates.

Check http://sfrc.ufl.edu/Spring_celebration for details - we’ll be posting more information as the event draws near. Contact Scott Sager with specific questions, or to find out how you can help – 352.846.0846/ sasager@ufl.edu.

Tim White

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We hope you’ll plan to attend!

The School of Forest Resources & Conservation Newsletter is published to inform alumni and friends. Comments and information to share should be directed to the Main Office: phone - (352)846-0850, fax - (352)392-1707, email - sfrc@ifas.ufl.edu. Visit our website at www.sfrc.ufl.edu
Fulfilling Our Mission...

The SFRC has approximately 120 undergraduates studying one of three majors: Forest Resources & Conservation, Geomatics, or Natural Resource Conservation. The SFRC has approximately 150 graduate students pursuing masters and doctoral degrees.

Students Compete in National Competitions

The SFRC had two student teams this year that competed in national competitions.

Six UF students represented the Gator Nation by winning the inaugural GeoChallenge, which was held in Milwaukee at the 2011 Annual Conference of the American Society for Photogrammetry and Remote Sensing. SFRC graduate students Li Bai and Charles A. Nettles, III were members of the six-person interdisciplinary team guided by faculty advisors Don A. DeWitt and Ann Abd-Elrahman. The challenge was to use GIS analysis to find an optimal location in New Hampshire for a 90 MW capacity wind farm while minimizing cost and addressing the impacts the wind farm would have on the selected location.

RESEARCH

As the winning team, the UF group received $250 for their student chapter, a GIS refer- ence book for each member, and publica- tion of their paper in the ASPRS journal. (Bai, L., R. Patarasuk, Y. Chen, Chandra, C. Nettlemann, and S. Arana, 2011. Multi-Criteria Approach for Wind Farm Site Selection in New Hampshire. Photogrammetric Engineer- ing and Remote Sensing. Vol. 77, No. 7, pp. 654-661.)

Every year the Society of American Forest- ers hosts a student Quiz Bowl competition during its national convention. The School of Forest Resources & Conservation has consistently participated in the Quiz Bowl, and even though the convention was held in Honolulu, Hawaii, five students took time off from fall semester to represent the SFRC. Jared Beauchamp, student chapter chair, Mudrick of Callahan Timber, Inc., forestry co-chair, Justin Wesson, Stephanie Lely, and Alex Whann competed in the event.

Extension

The SFRC has 15 Extension Specialists throughout the state who implement University of programs aimed to help stakeholders and policy makers better understand, manage and conserve natural resources. You can search the following databases for topics of interest to you: http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/index.p.

Artificial Reefs

For more than three decades, Florida Sea Grant and UF/IFAS have contributed to the evolution of the state’s artificial reef building community through research, scientific conferences and outreach activities. In- deed, many coastal county-based extension faculty are involved in some activity related to artificial reefs.

Artificial reefs not only provide habitat for popular sport fish and other marine life: recen- t UF/IFAS work showed that, in one year, they pulled more than $253 million into six coastal counties of the state’s economy. For example, Florida’s 2,500 documented artificial reefs are located. Bob Swett, the SFRC associate professor and Florida Sea Grant extension specialist who led the effort, said he was struck by the contrast between the income generated and the small amount counties invest in reefs — ranging from $20,000 to $60,000 a year for each county. “That shows me that there’s a lot of bang for the buck in terms of what they get out of their artificial reef programs,” said Swett. Knowing this is particularly relevant in times of tight bud- get constraints and tough programmatic decisions by local governments.

Extension specialists Swett and Chuck Ad- amas, IFAS researchers Sherry Larkin, Alan Hodges and Thomas Stevens, and marine agents from the six counties, collaborated with local and state reef coordinators to conduct the research/extension project, which was funded by the U.S. Fish and Wild- life Service, the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, the West Coast Inland Navigation District and the participat- ing counties.

The report and extension fact sheets for each county can be found under publica- tions on the Florida Sea Grant website (fsagrant.org).

Alumni

The Oregon State Board of Higher Education unanimously elected Matthew Donegan (’90, pictured left), of Forest Partner- ners, as its new Board president.

Tamara L. Cushing (’96), assistant professor and extension forestry specialist in forest economics and business at Clemson University, received the Young Forester Leadership Award, one of seven national awards from the Society of American Foresters (SAF).

Students

Two of Leda Kobziar’s PhD students, Adam Watts and David Godwin, won the first-ever competitive Graduate Research Innovation grant award from the Joint Fire Science Program.

George-isms

- Even a 3-legged horse can help pull the wagon ...
- A rising tide floats all boats, but oars paddling in different directions leads to a boat adrift ...
- What good is a spare tire if there’s no air in it? ...
- Even a blind pig finds an acorn once in awhile ...
- You won’t get on base if you don’t swing the bat ...

Appreciation for our Supporters

Without the support of our friends we could not maintain our level of academic excellence. Thank you to the following for their contributions to the School’s Unrestricted Fund: William MacKay (’57), George (’54 & Arlene Park, Diane Tyrone (’78), Joseph Shiver (’84), Ryan LaPorte (’92), James Rath (’84), Carol Wild (’93), Douglas Shipley (’03), Christine Wilson (’07), Roger (’76) & Janie Bollinger, Janet Hinchee (’74), Dennis (’75) & Charlene (’78) LeBlu, Steve (’52) & Laura (’53) Lowimore, Roy Lima (’78), and William Cleckley (’78).

The SFRC has more than 50 faculty who are awarded approximately $28 million annually in external grants and contracts to conduct problem-solving research in geomatics, fish- eries and aquatic sciences, and forest re- sources and conservation.

Pines to Biofuels

In the US, southern pine trees are widely planted for naturally accumulate signifi- cant amounts of turpentine and gums (terpenes) in their wood, making them an excellent crop for direct production of biofuels. Florida’s 2,500 documented artificial reefs are located. Bob Swett, the SFRC associate professor and Florida Sea Grant extension specialist who led the effort, said he was struck by the contrast between the income generated and the small amount counties invest in reefs — ranging from $20,000 to $60,000 a year for each county. “That shows me that there’s a lot of bang for the buck in terms of what they get out of their artificial reef programs,” said Swett. Knowing this is particularly relevant in times of tight bud- get constraints and tough programmatic decisions by local governments.

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