



CHNEP Conservation Lands Workshop

Wednesday, September 7, 2016

Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center (75 Taylor St., Punta Gorda)

The CHNEP thanks the speakers who are donating their time and expertise and our sponsors, as of Sept. 1, including Mosaic, Charlotte County, Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center, Janet and Bruce Bunch, GE Foundation, Jelks Family Foundation, Punta Gorda Garden Club and the Friends of Charlotte Harbor Estuary, Inc.

Agenda

8:15 Registration

9:00 Welcome: Lisa B. Beever, Charlotte Harbor National Estuary Program (CHNEP)

9:10 Ecological Integrity: Managing Land in a Changing World: Edwin M. Everham III, Professor of Marine and Ecological Sciences, Florida Gulf Coast University
Conservation land management is complicated by shifting public and political expectations for these lands and their managers. Perhaps a greater challenge is the reality of climate change, invasive exotics, altered hydrology and changes in historic patterns of perturbation, with the resultant shifts in populations, communities and ecosystems. These "emergent ecologies" provide both problems and opportunities to the land manager.

9:30 Conservation on Private Lands in Florida

Chris Demers, University of Florida/IFAS School of Forest Resources and Conservation
The role of private lands in the conservation of various forests and habitats in Florida is critical. Some initiatives and programs that are helping with those efforts will be discussed, and a sample of landowners that are managing their lands for conservation objectives will be introduced.

9:50 Break

10:10 Mosaic's Conservation Easements: Shelley Thornton, Mosaic

Mosaic places un-mined (preservation) land and mitigation areas under a perpetual conservation easement. In addition, all lands associated with the off-site mitigation projects will be placed under a conservation easement. These conservation lands provide for wildlife corridors, connection to other conservation lands and a framework for future public and private land acquisition.

10:30 Mosaic's Burrowing Owl Translocation Program: William Brammell, Mosaic

Mosaic has been implementing a burrowing owl translocation program since 2006. The FWC's current policy is to collapse inactive (outside the nesting season) and allow the birds to disperse. Mosaic is conducting the only owl translocation program on private property in Florida in efforts to research whether translocation instead of displacement is a viable management option.

10:50 Lake Hancock Outfall Treatment Wetland

Janie Hagberg, PE, SWIM Program, Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD)
Lake Hancock is a 4,500-acre, nutrient-enriched lake located at the headwaters of the Peace River in Polk County. Water quality data has shown that the lake's discharge to the Peace River contributes a greater share of nutrients than any other major tributary to the river. Since 2003, the SWFWMD has been acquiring land and implementing projects around Lake Hancock aimed at improving water quality and increasing flow in the Peace River. Presentation will focus on one of the District's Lake Hancock projects — the Lake Hancock Outfall Treatment Wetland and will include an overview of the project history and construction.

11:10 Using Development to Restore Habitat: Amy Wicks, Kimley-Horn and Associates

The 91,000+/- acre ranch located in east Charlotte and Lee counties has long been an ecotourism destination in the area; but the lesser seen use of the ranch is agricultural. Many locals and tourists alike are unaware of the agricultural impacts that have taken a toll on the land and the ecosystem across the ranch throughout its history. Local developer Kitson and Partners purchased the land in a widely publicized land deal and has committed to demonstrating sensible sustainable development. Their approach to land development is utilizing unique approaches to restore habitats across the heavily impacted site and will be discussed in this presentation.

11:30 Sex, Grubs and Habitat: Florida Scrub-Jay Survival in Coastal Suburbs: Kate Borduas, Master Naturalist and Volunteer at Shamrock Park in Venice; and Brooke Elias, Parks Naturalist, Shamrock Park with Sarasota County Natural Area Parks, Preserves & Trails

Florida scrub-jay decline at this coastal scrub park has been stark. This presentation will review specific actions taken over the past two years, including community involvement, vegetation reduction, prescribed burning and environmental outreach on the current status of the two remaining scrub-jay families at this high-use, suburban park.

Noon Lunch

1:10 Using Landsat Technology to Identify Mangrove Restoration Needs: Lisa B. Beever, CHNEP

The CHNEP used free Landsat imagery to evaluate mangrove condition and changes of condition over the past 30 years. The resulting vegetation index was used to develop a catalog of mangrove restoration needs.

1:30 The Peninsular Florida Landscape Conservation Cooperative Planning ATLSS and Landscape Conservation Design: Steve Traxler, Science Coordinator for the Peninsular Florida Landscape Conservation Cooperative (PFLCC)

The PFLCC has developed climate change and urbanization impact assessments for species selected by stakeholders. These impact assessments will be used in the Southwest Florida priority land and water resilience project and the landscape conservation design associated with the Panther National Wildlife Refuge. Much of the results will be captured by the PFLCC conservation planning atlas.

- 1:50 Florida's Bonneted Bat: Research and Monitoring Efforts**
Wade Curley, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
The endangered Florida bonneted bat is known to occur only in south Florida. Recent research and monitoring efforts have increased our knowledge of bonneted bats, and conservation partners continue to work to protect and preserve this rare species.
- 2:10 Break**
- 2:30 Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) Programs and Services**
Israel Vega-Marrero, District Conservationist, and Walter Albarran, Area Conservationist
NRCS is the primary federal agency helping America's farmers, ranchers and forest landowners conserve the nation's soil, water, air and other natural resources to ensure the continued production of food and fiber. All programs are voluntary and offer science-based solutions that benefit both the landowner and the environment.
- 2:50 There's an App for That! New Florida Fish and Wildlife Reporting App:** Lauren Partridge, FWC
Fish and Wildlife Research Institute, St. Petersburg
The FWC has developed a new mobile app that allows users to report up to 50 different types of fish, wildlife and other outdoor-related incidents in Florida. Users can easily report on things such as fish kills, algal blooms, injured animals, bear and/or panther sightings, nonnative animals, pollution events, broken waterway signs and more. Users can quickly provide GPS coordinates and photographs to better document the type of incident they are reporting. This will provide another route of communication to the FWC for the public and will be a useful tool for teachers to use to help engage their students in citizen science. Ultimately, this app will decrease response times while also enhancing event response by the agency.
- 3:10 Identifying Watersheds Across the Gulf for Investment in Land Protection to Reduce Flood Risk** Christine Shepard, The Nature Conservancy Gulf of Mexico Program
To identify watersheds that are good opportunities for flood risk reduction, the following approach was taken: (1) Identify watersheds with a high probability of future flooding, using a random forests classification model and a suite of physical-based predictor variables; (2) Of those watersheds likely to flood, identify unprotected high conservation priority watersheds using Partnership for Gulf Coast Land Protection conservation vision footprint and Protected Areas Database; (3) Of those high conservation priority watersheds, identify watersheds with high opportunity to implement open space protection, using FEMA National Flood Program Community Rating System (CRS) data. The results of this study will be used to engage partners and stakeholders in some of the identified watersheds to identify and support land protection opportunities.
- 3:30 CHNEP: Engaging our partners**
Maran Hilgendorf, CHNEP
The CHNEP will introduce new initiatives to help the public better understand the natural environment of southwest Florida. We will also ask everyone to help update the program's *Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan*, a partnership plan to protect the environment of southwest Florida, and develop a literacy plan.

3:50 Thank you for participating in the fifth CHNEP Conservation Lands Workshop.

Please complete the survey at <https://www.surveymonkey.com/s/CHNEPConservationLands2016>. Whether or not the CHNEP is able to offer a sixth CHNEP Conservation Lands Workshop in 2017 will depend, in part, on your responses.

An email message will be sent to all who have registered to let you know when the presentations from today are posted on YouTube as videos. We anticipate they will be available before October.

The sixth CHNEP Conservation Lands Workshop is tentatively planned for September 2017, at the Charlotte Harbor Event & Conference Center. Would you also please help us determine the date for the 2017 workshop: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/CL2017dateinput?>

Immediately following the workshop, join us to **celebrate Lisa Beever's retirement as the CHNEP director**. She served as director from March 6, 2002, to Sept. 30, 2016. The celebration will be held at Fat Point Brewery (www.fatpoint.com, 611 Charlotte St in Punta Gorda two miles east of CHECC).