To commemorate the SFRC’s 75th anniversary, we hosted the first annual Spring Celebration on March 23 and 24, 2012 (see photos inside). What an enjoyable time it was for nearly 300 students, alumni, families, and folks who attended. On Friday, people chose between several options of fun things to do: canoe-kayak trip, graduate symposium, or trap/shot, followed by socials and mixers in the evening. Saturday began with 100 runners at the Austin Cary Forest (ACF) for our first-ever Flatwoods 5K. Post-race, folks had the option of the annual Golf Tournament or a variety of field days and events. Later in the day, everyone gathered on Lake Mize at ACF for barbeque, drinks, a bonfire, and square dancing under the pines. Sincere thanks to all who helped plan the event and to all of you who came.

This year’s event was so enjoyable and well-received that we plan to make the SFRC Spring Celebration an annual gathering where current and former students, families, and friends of the SFRC can renew old acquaintances, meet the faculty, and just spend a day or two enjoying the Florida springtime together. So, please mark your calendars for April 5 and 6, 2013 for the 2nd Annual SFRC Spring Celebration. Details will be forthcoming and we hope you can attend.

With the loss of the conference building to fire, the Spring Celebration took place under a temporary tent. Many people asked about how we are progressing with the fundraising for the new Learning Center at the Austin Cary Forest that will replace the lost building. We are happy to report that we are more than half way to our goal of raising $1.5 million to create an expanded, state-of-the-art facility that will serve future generations of students, alumni, working professionals, youth, and the general public (see below). Once constructed, we expect to exceed 25,000 visitors per year including classes, outdoor youth programs, professional meetings, and social events.

We still need to raise approximately half the funds to make this vision a reality and we are hoping that you will help. Within a month, you will receive more information about the project and a call for donations. We hope that you share our passion for this project and will give as much as is comfortable for you. Together, we will create a Learning Center where all visitors will enjoy their event in a serene forest and learn about the many important roles that forests play in our lives. 

Tim White


director’s letter

Students

NRC major, Michelle “Cheley” Goodfellow, was named one of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences’ 2012-2013 CALS Ambassadors. She will work to create awareness of academic programs and career opportunities in food, agriculture, and natural resources among students, teachers, advisors, and the general public throughout Florida.

Kyle Wilson, SURF President, was named the 2011-2012 GSC Outstanding Graduate Student Leader. This University-level award recognizes Kyle’s leadership qualities, such as providing mentors to “at-risk” middle school kids for science fair projects, that benefit UF student population and greater community.

Faculty

Jiri Hulcr (right) has just joined us this summer seminar as the latest addition to our SFRC faculty. He’s a Forest Entomologist and his lab is housed right here in Newins-Ziegler Hall; so watch out for new bugs!

Bill Lindberg has accepted the position of Graduate Coordinator for the SFRC Fisheries & Aquatic Sciences program.

Taylor Stein received the NACTA Teacher Fellow Award from the NACTA (North American Colleges and Teachers of Agriculture), which recognizes individuals whose efforts represent the very best in agricultural higher education. Taylor’s passion for teaching, learning, and all aspects of higher education, make him deserving of this award.

The SFRC is now on facebook. Please log on to our page for School updates, more pictures, and to connect with your fellow alumni, students, and friends.

Littlest New Editions to the SFRC...

So far this year, 2 SFRC couples welcomed the newest editions to their families into the world. Melissa Kreye (CIFOR Staff) and Jesse Kreye (IFAS PhD Candidate) had their son, Raleigh. Leslie and Husband Jesse Kreye, just before midnight on April 10, 2012. He was a whopping 10 lbs. and 7 oz.

Attention Alums: We want your email address! Please send it to sfrc@ifas.ufl.edu
SFRC College Challenge offered to high school STEM scholars

SFRC teamed with the North East Florida Education Consortium (NEFEC) to provide a Pilot Summer College Experience for high school STEM scholars on Conservation Biology & Forest Management. This 4-day event (June 11-14) was organized by SFRC’s Prof. Bob Buschbacher to expose students to college-level teaching, regional land management issues, and natural resource management careers. Regional academic and agency conservation professionals contributed their time and expertise, engaging with students throughout the course. The course opened in Morningside Nature Center with nature observations and discussions of the values that protected areas can provide. Later that day, bear biologists Walt McCown and Brian Schieck of the FWC demonstrated bear trapping, tracking, and DNA analysis, making a link between protection of this umbrella species and conservation corridors.

The next day, Ramesh Buch of the Alachua County Forever program guided us through contrasting protected areas, Cofrin Park and Barr Hammock. Students considered the uses and values of small urban parks versus large and wild habitat, then designed an evaluation rubric for comparing candidate properties for acquisition. Student teams presented competing proposals to Mr. Buch and we then discussed the actual procedures and criteria used by Alachua County Forever. On Wednesday, we were hosted by Scott Sager at SFRC’s Austin Cary Forest (right). We were able to discuss habitat management while visiting a controlled burn in progress and a range of plantations. We also considered forests’ roles in regional and global processes of water and carbon dynamics while visiting the Ameriflux Network research tower. We were able to survey a biomass plot, measure tree height, calculate volume and take corings. We spent the final day on campus at Newins-Ziegler Hall. Students reflected and reported back on what they had learned in conservation, ecology and forest management. We also made a visit to the Center for Landscape Conservation Planning where Michael Volk showed various conservation corridor initiatives and brought in the added element of adapting conservation planning to climate change.

As a final product, students produced a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting the social, economic and environmental values of management forests versus protection forests (right). They concluded that an ideal solution would be a large reserve with a mix of use and protection, essentially re-creating the Biosphere Reserve concept. According to NEFEC Program Development and Training Specialist Sharon Kinard, “The student evaluations of the week provided excellent input and the overall result was all students rating the experience at 4 or higher out of a 5-pt scale. One student found the experience so informative she believes she has found a future study/career path in conservation.” Prof. Buschbacher concluded that pedagogical and conceptual approaches he uses in Brazil and elsewhere in South America with academics and conservation professionals (Amazon Conservation Leadership Initiative) can be adapted and applied to this totally different audience.