

Workshop Summary

Monday, December 8, 2008, 9:00am-12:00pm

Florida's Cooperative Conservation Blueprint: A Scientifically Based Statewide Ecosystem Services Program for Private Lands

Workshop Organizers:

Stan Bronson, Executive Director, Florida Earth Foundation

Workshop Presenters:

Tatiana Borisova, Economist, University of Florida IFAS

Thomas Eason, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Tom Hactor, University of Florida GeoPlan Center

John Oetting, Florida Natural Areas Inventory, Florida State University

Laila Racevskis, Economist, University of Florida IFAS

The goal of this workshop is to provide an overview and understanding of the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission's Critical Lands and Waters Identification Project and the Cooperative Conservation Blueprint Project. An educational workshop showing how Florida's Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, in conjunction with the Century Commission for a Sustainable Florida, has developed a public-private partnership to develop and incentivize private land owners to engage in ecosystem services projects. CCB is based on the Critical Lands and Water Identification Project (CLIP), which is a scientific analysis of the entire state's areas of ecological significance conducted by the GeoPlan Center at the University of Florida and Florida Natural Areas Inventory at Florida State University. The workshop will show how that scientific data can be incorporated into a practical plan for ecosystem services utilization on a comprehensive scale.

Agenda Topics:

1. Description of the Critical Lands and Water Inventory Project
2. Discussion of Ecosystem Services Efforts and Economics
3. Discussion of the Cooperative Conservation Blueprint Project
4. Update on Findings in CCB Process
5. Panel and Audience discussion

Discussion:

Florida has significant conservation issues that have resulted in the most aggressive public land purchase program of any state. The Florida Forever Act allocated \$3B over a ten year period from 2000 until 2010. In 2008, the Florida Legislature renewed its commitment to land preservation by another \$3B commitment for the next ten years. However, it has become quite evident that the increased value of land over the last several years limits the amount of acreage that can be acquired. Incentives can play a significant role in leveraging the private sector in making the decision to be engaged in conservation activities and projects. As a pre-cursor to that effort it is essential to find those lands that are critical to water recharge and storage, wildlife habitat, carbon sequestration and other conservation concerns.