Educational Tour Opportunity – Friday, December 14, 2012

Payment-for-Water Services Projects on Ranchlands in the Northern Everglades (Tour is Limited to 38 People)

Itinerary:
7:30 am  Morning refreshments
7:45 am  Load bus
8:00 am  Bus departs Marriott Hotel
8:00-11:00 am  Guide on board will narrate through watershed and include NE-PES description
11:00-11:30 am  Picnic lunch on Buck Island Ranch
11:30-2:30 pm  Tour of two water management projects
2:30-5:30 pm  Bus returns to Marriott Hotel

Description:
The journey from the Marriott Hotel will take tour participants from the southern to northern Everglades watershed and a guide on-board will discuss points of interest. The journey destination is two on-ranch payment-for-water services projects: one at the MacArthur Agro-ecology Research Center (MAERC) at Buck Island Ranch (BIR) and the other at Lykes Bros. West Waterhole (WWH).

Buck Island Ranch (BIR) and Lykes WWH are two of eight participating ranches in the pilot project, the Florida Ranchlands Environmental Services Project (FRESP); a project initiated in 2005 by World Wildlife Fund, ranchers, researchers, and state and federal agency partners. MAERC scientists have been involved in monitoring hydrological services and data management since 2005.

The water management project at BIR is now enrolled in the Northern Everglades Payment for Environmental Services program (NE-PES) offered by the South Florida Water Management District. NE-PES is a payment for ecosystem services (PES) program that fosters on-ranch water management practices that are both economically viable and compatible with ecosystem restoration.

Upon arrival at Buck Island Ranch, we will enjoy a picnic lunch with research program director, Dr. Betsey Boughton. Background information from the FRESP/NEPES project will be provided.

In addition to learning about ranchland biodiversity, wetlands, and the rich cultural history of the area, the tour will include:

- A swamp buggy tour of the water retention project at Buck Island Ranch
- A tour of the nearby nutrient retention project at Lykes West Waterhole
- An introduction to the instrumentation and skills used to document, report and manage hydrological services

Recommended Clothing:
Dress for walking—long pants, lightweight long sleeved shirt, hat and sunscreen.

Food provided:
Lunch, water and snacks.

Driving Distance:
Buck Island Ranch is located in Lake Placid, FL, approximately 143 miles from the Marriott Harbor Beach Hotel.

Cost of Tour:
$75.00 per person
Tours includes transportation to the tour site and between ranches, lunch, water, snacks and any applicable admission fees. Any shopping or additional meal activities offered are on your own.

For Questions about the Tour Site, Contact:
Betsey Boughton, MacArthur Agro-ecology Research Center, Director of Research
Phone: (863) 699-0242 ext. 2  Email: eboughton@archbold-station.org

For Questions about Tour Logistics, Contact:
Angelica Williams, UF/IFAS Office of Conferences & Institutes
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For more information on MAERC, please visit www.maerc.org
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