

## **Minutes of meeting of Natural Area Advisory Committee: 8 December 2005**

Thursday, 1:15-2:30pm, EYN 1015. Members present were Mark Brown, Mark Clark (chair), Don Dickson, Donald Graetz, Susan Jacobson, Erick Smith, and Tom Walker. NATL TA Kevin Ratkus also attended.

### **1. General update**

Mark Clark reported on the status of the collaboration with Emmer Development in regards to the management of stormwater from a proposed development of the property immediately east of NATL-east.

Tom Walker reported on recent progress in the control of exotic invasive plants and in the restoration of the upland pine ecosystem

### **2. Assistantship activities**

Kevin Ratkus reported on his activities (see attached handout). *[No digital copy received]*

### **3. Minigrants**

Tom Walker reported that the final report for the historical-ecology minigrant and a preliminary report on the ant-community minigrant were posted at <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/minigrants.htm>. Aided by a list of the projects that NAAC approved as suitable in October 2004, the committee discussed plans for soliciting proposals to be funded by the \$1000 that remains in the minigrant fund. Four projects were identified as of particular importance to NATL's information infrastructure, and it was agreed that an announcement of the 2006 Minigrant Program would be posted at <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/minigrants.htm>.

### **4. NATL administrative and financial oversight by SNRE**

Mark Clark reported on the status of plans for the School of Natural Resources and Environment to assume administrative and financial oversight of NATL beginning with the 2006-07 Fiscal Year. He passed out a prospectus that is posted at <http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/NATLprospectus.doc>. It included a proposed budget of \$25,000.

### **5. CITF improvement funds**

Mark Clark reported that proposals for the use of the \$500,000 in Capital Improvement Trust Funds to be spent on UF Conservation Areas are being evaluated by a student committee. Funds seem likely for the fencing improvements that NAAC listed as needed last spring and for the long-sought self-guided nature trail with access from the Florida Museum of Natural History, Natural Area Park, and NATL's academic assembly area.

### **6. NAAC oversight of campus Conservation Areas**

Mark Clark reported that UF's Office of Sustainability had inquired if NAAC might be willing to assume an advisory role in the management of all campus Conservation Areas. The group discussed the possibility but no action was taken.

**7. Establishing an award to recognize NATL “Super Volunteers”**

Tom Walker proposed that it would be appropriate for NAAC to recognize those who, as volunteers, contributed greatly to the development and maintenance of NATL. He proposed that Ken Prestwich be recognized as the first such volunteer and passed out the attached sheet documenting Ken’s contributions. The group viewed the idea favorably and agreed that the matter should be pursued by email so that all NAAC members could participate. Tom volunteered to see that that was done.

## Ken Prestwich's volunteer work in the Natural Area Teaching Laboratory

Ken Prestwich is an Associate Professor in the Biology Department of the College of the Holy Cross in Worcester, Massachusetts. His PhD is from the Zoology Department, University of Florida. You can find more about Ken by going to his home page at <http://www.holycross.edu/departments/biology/website/biofaculty/bear.html>.

Every year since before the start of NATL, Ken has worked in my laboratory for a month to six weeks in May and June. Since 1995, most days during each visit, Ken works an hour or more doing what needs to be done next in NATL. From 1995 through 2002, I did not log Ken's work except occasionally when he reached some goal. Starting in 2003, in anticipation of making this proposal, I incorporated most of his work in a log of "actions taken" in NATL (<http://natl.ifas.ufl.edu/NATLlog2.doc>). Here is some of what he has done:

1995-1997 Help girdle laurel oaks in north block of public-area upland pine.

May 1997 Helped plant grass and forbs in public area upland pine

1998-2001 Extensive cutting and girdling of laurel oaks in the northern block of restricted-area upland pine. Accomplished so much that I started calling that area the "Prestwich tract."

1999 Ken and wife Cathy were the principal planters of the myrtle hedge along the west edge of DPI Trail.

2002 Extensive cutting and girdling of laurel oaks in the southern block of restricted-area upland pine

2003 Principal volunteer in planting 248 "one-gallon" longleaf pines in the public-area upland pine

2004 Principal volunteer in planting, mulching and watering 15 trees of 11 species in eastern portion of Natural Area Park and in planting 295 clumps of wire grass in the public-area upland pine.

2005 (24 May to 8 July) Principal volunteer in clearing 48 areas in public-area upland pine each of which was suited to receive 6 grass-stage or ready-to-shoot longleaf pines and in planting 288 such pines. Also principal volunteer in planting 50 two-gallon clumps of wire grass in north block of public-area longleaf pine. Planted three additional trees in Natural Area Park and fertilized and re-applied mulch to trees planted in 2004. Pruned the wax myrtle hedge along DPI fence. Worked on trail between Powell Hall service drive and NATL.

2005 (15 Nov to ca 10 Dec) Ken is on sabbatical this year and has recently returned to Gainesville for a few weeks and is once more working most every day in NATL.

Attachment to minutes of 8 December 2005 NAAC meeting

## **Fall '05 NATL Assistantship Summary**

Ideal assistantship: SNRE

Land Management/Restoration Ecology/Env. Ed.

- Many meetings (beginning)
  - Acquainted with NATL
    - Worked closely with Dr. Walker & Dr. Clark
    - Management Plans/Projects
    - Personnel
  
- NATL Sign Bids
  
- Coord. “Make a Difference Day”: Center for Leadership & Excellence
  - Trash Clean up/Water Quality Ed
  - Lesley L.: WAVE
  - Over 40 volunteers
  - Clean Central Marsh/Sinkhole Pond
  - Filled dumpster: ~4 cyd
  
- Jan/Feb: Center for Leadership & Excellence
  - Coral ardisa removal
  - Invasive Species Education
  
- Gen. Maintenance
  - Patrol trail
    - inappropriate uses of NATL, feral animal, trash, limbs
    - Kiosk maintenance
      - Cleaning
      - Helped digital images for Kiosk Update
  - Brochures
  
- 50 Meter Grid Stake: Prep for Re-surveying
  - Walker: Identify stake conditions
  - Clark: Clear trails along grid lines

- NATL Introduction
  - Suburban Ecology labs (Botany)
  - Architecture
  - Restoration Ecology
  - Any chance I get to plug NATL (listserve/class/conversation)
  
- CITF
  - Interpretive Trail
    - Meetings/Dr. Jacobson's class presentations
  - SEEP Boardwalk
    - Design
    - ADA / EH&S
  
  - PPT Presentation (finishing touches)
    - SNRE web site
    - Dept. Meeting: NATL Introduction
  
  - Future Projects
    - Boardwalk
    - Interpretive Trail
    - Perimeter Fence
    - Weir (SEEP)
    - More outreach: Student/Faculty
    - Control Burn
    - Restoration Ecology Class : Hands on Project
    - Invasive Plant Removal : Volunteer