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President's Corner



Water wars between Florida, Alabama and Georgia? Well, that is what newspapers as far away from the border as Atlanta, Tampa and Birmingham are editorializing. Chattanooga even got into the act when Georgia threatened to tap the Tennessee! Water resources issues are gaining in public awareness every day. The persisting drought in all three states helps to bring home the message that we need better information about water quality and quantity and how to protect them. And so the Florida Lake Management Society jumps into the fray with our next annual symposium in the Florida panhandle. We will be at the beautiful Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort (www.sandestin.com) June 3rd, 4th and 5th. This year we are also hosting the NALMS Southeastern Regional Lakes Management Symposium, in cooperation with the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance and the Mattie Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute, Okaloosa-Walton College. These groups are holding their Symposium at Sandestin immediately preceding the FLMS-Southeast NALMS Symposium. For more information, go to www.owc.edu/mattiekellyinstitute/env-symposium.cfm.

the County's world famous white sandy beaches. Borrowing from the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance website, (www.basinalliance.org/watershed-intro-lakes.htm), these lakes have been identified as globally rare and imperiled (S1/G2) by the Florida Natural Areas Inventory (FNAI). These natural ecosystems are only found in the Florida Panhandle, Madagascar, Australia, New Zealand and the Northwest Pacific Coast of the United States. Those of us who have that recurring nightmare about Okeechobee being completely dry when we wake up need to expand our horizons.

Second, there are some serious rivers connecting us with our sibling states – in addition to the Choctawhatchee (our conference center at Sandestin is located on the Choctawhatchee Bay), there is the Alabama-Coosa-Tallapoosa River Basin, the more famous Apalachicola-Chatahoochee-Fint River Basin, and several others. Building on the success of hosting last fall's NALMS International Symposium, this year our symposium will include much more regional issues such as reservoir-river systems, watershed management throughout the southeast, implementing TMDLs across state boundaries, estuarine boundaries and many other topics.

late! As an additional incentive, and to make the symposium more affordable, the FLMS Board has agreed to "buy down" the room rate at Sandestin for qualifying reservations. Or you can reserve a 2 bedroom townhouse for \$265 per night, which is really a good deal any time. See the FLMS web site for details. Also don't forget the activities on June 1st and 2nd - sign up for our workshops or plan to attend the Mattie M. Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute Annual Symposium to get a closer look at the world class environmental science being done in the area. I look forward to see you at Sandestin in June.

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Why come to the panhandle? Well, first it is beautiful, and I'm not just talking about Sandestin or the beach. Have you ever even heard of a dune lake? Well, Walton County has 15 of them, "strung like watery pearls" along

Abstracts are due March 7th - so if you are reading this after March 7 - you need to hurry to the FLMS website because you are



1st Annual Mattie Kelly Environmental Symposium on Choctawhatchee Bay

The Mattie M. Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute and the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance, both of Okaloosa-Walton College, are planning the first Annual Choctawhatchee Estuary Symposium in June of 2008. Our interests align with the mission of the Florida Lake Management Society, and as such, we have entered into a partnership with FLMS to coordinate our conference at the same location just prior to the **19th ANNUAL FLMS CONFERENCE & 2008 NALMS SOUTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE** at the Sandestin Resort.

The 1st Annual Choctawhatchee Estuary Symposium will be a chance for regional scientists to showcase their own research projects focused on the Choctawhatchee estuarine system, including the river tributaries and the unique coastal dune lakes, as well as a way to network and learn of other researchers working in the area. An additional goal of this event is to facilitate interest and involvement by the community in local aquatic environments. This event is being hosted in cooperation with the Florida Lake Management Society (FLMS) and an itinerary of events is outlined below.

Sunday, June 1, 2008

Choctawhatchee Estuary Festival — Fred Gannon State Park on Rocky Bayou in Niceville, FL (tentative location) from 11:00 a.m.–4:00 p.m. This event is free and open to the public.

The goal for the community event, *The Choctawhatchee Estuary Festival*, is to facilitate interest and involvement by the community in our local watershed's environments. Our vision for this event consists of family-gearred activities, such as fish printing on T-shirts and crab races, as well as more informative displays and lectures, such as a historic look at the Choctawhatchee River and Bay and a habitat restoration project of the Okaloosa Darter, a threatened species. Other displays might focus on local snakes, Red Tide, sturgeon population, and drinking water nitrate testing. We are currently in discussions with the Friends of the

Emerald Coast State Parks and would like to host the *Choctawhatchee Estuary Festival* at Rocky Bayou State Park. Rocky Bayou would present an ideal setting and would allow us to include several guided nature walks along the hiking trails throughout the day. The focus of such walks might include botany, bird watching, or mushrooms. Additionally, access to the shore would allow us to host guided kayak tours around the park area and lead seining exercises to look at local fish. We hope to attract participation by other local and regional groups in this event by encouraging groups to “host” a display or lecture at the Festival.

Monday, June 2, 2008

State of the Estuary (scientific meeting)—Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, Sandestin, FL from 9:00 a.m.–5:00 p.m. Please register in advance. The theme for this year's scientific meeting is *The State of the Estuary*, including the current status of the estuary as well as the current status of research on the estuary. This event will be a chance for regional scientists to showcase their own research projects focused on the Choctawhatchee estuarine system, as well as a way to network and learn of other relevant studies. We will host this meeting at the Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort. Topic themes might include: *water quality, habitats (population status and management & restoration strategies), and coastal development.*

Monday, June 2, 2008

An Evening with the Mattie Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute; Sandestin Golf and Beach Resort, Sandestin, FL from 5:30 p.m.—8:00 p.m. Please register in advance.

Keynote speaker:
Dr. Bryon Griffith, Director
Gulf of Mexico Program
U.S. EPA

Following the scientific presentations, we will host *An Evening with the Mattie M. Kelly Cultural and Environmental Institute* reception,

consisting of an evening banquet to spotlight the cultural and environmental heritage of the area.

We anticipate participation by a broad audience, including researchers from Florida's Panhandle (OWC, UWF, Eglin Air Force Base, FSU, Florida Integrated Science Center) as well as from the Alabama portion of the Choctawhatchee's drainage basin (Troy University, University of Alabama) and other regional institutions (Loyola University, University of Southern Mississippi).

Such a collaborative effort between our Institute and FLMS would prove to be mutually beneficial. We would benefit by reaching a larger audience and highlighting the research being done in our area to the broader community of Florida aquatic scientists.

Our events on Sunday, June 1 and Monday June 2 are open to FLMS participants and their families and would provide effortless opportunities to experience the local environment during the conference. So, please include this event in your travel itinerary as you plan for the upcoming **19th ANNUAL FLMS CONFERENCE & 2008 NALMS SOUTHEAST REGIONAL CONFERENCE** at the beautiful Sandestin Resort in the Choctawhatchee River Watershed.

For more information, or to register, please visit: www.owc.edu/mattiekellyinstitute/env-symposium.cfm.

Photo courtesy of Iron Creek Studios (www.ironcreek.com)



Coastal Dune Lake located in south Walton County, FL. The sand dunes located on the beaches provide the only separation

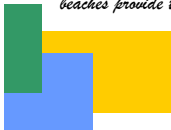


Photo Courtesy of Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance



Big Red Fish coastal dune lake in south Walton County, FL.



“regional scientists to showcase their own research projects focused on the Choctawhatchee estuarine system”





Love Your Lake Cost Share Program

*Love Your Lake
Deadline
March 1, 2008*

FLMS has created a cost-share program that funds lake, pond and shoreline projects demonstrating management techniques that help protect, preserve and restore Florida’s aquatic resources. Each year FLMS solicits grant proposals describing successful management projects. FLMS will provide matching funds for expenses incurred by the selected applicant. Expenditures may be in the form of labor or monetary contributions utilized in the program. Proposals are reviewed by a selection committee based on the

following criteria:

Monetary or labor match — programs encouraging community involvement are strongly recommended.

Location — project must be accessible to the public (may include large communities or neighborhoods—dependent on accessibility).

Signage — educational component explaining project.

Water quality enhancements — examples include xeriscaping, lake-water irrigation, environmental berm and swale, and other innovative erosion control techniques.

“Love Your Lake” project proposals must be submitted by March 1, 2008. Projects must be completed by May 1, 2009. If you have any questions, please e-mail Chuck Hanlon at chanlon@sfwmd.gov.

For more details about the “Love Your Lake” cost-share program, please visit www.flms.net.



Editor’s Corner

There are all kinds of exciting things happening with FLMS! These include the 2008 FLMS conference in Sandestin and the many new “Love Your Lakes” projects occurring throughout the state.

I encourage each of you to get involved with your local chapter. Don’t forget to spread the word about our new free student membership to all of the future limnologists out there.

The goal of the FLMS newsletter is to provide a method to inform all FLMS members of the activities and efforts throughout all of Florida. Please let me know of any other upcoming events, conferences or articles that you would like included in the newsletter.

Please send comments and information to:

Shannon Carter Wetzel

swetzel@seminolecountyfl.gov



Central Chapter Meeting: A Success!

The Central Chapter held its first meeting in over a year. The turnout was phenomenal and showed that the need and want for a local lake management forum is long overdue. It also helped that lunch was provided by FLMS to entice participation. I think it helped! There were over 45 local lake managers, stormwater professionals and consultants in attendance. The goal of the meeting was to bring together everyone involved in lake management, whether it’s stormwater, aquatic vegetation control, total maximum daily loads or some other issue. There were representatives from local County and City governments, SJRWMD, DEP, FWC and many others. As everyone knows, communication between agencies as well as with the public can be a challenge given all of the different groups working on various projects. The Central Chapter of FLMS can be a unifying organization by providing a forum where lake professionals can come together to share related projects, research studies, regulatory issues, basin management action plan strategies, etc... This first meeting provided a forum for the different local governments to give project updates. Amy Giannotti, DEP’s Bureau of Invasive Plant Management, provided an overview of the aquatic plant removal and maintenance permitting requirements. Ryan Hamm, Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, provided an update to the web based grass carp permit database. Thanks to all of those that helped organize and participated in the meeting. The next meeting is scheduled for May 20 at the Sylvan Lake Park Conference room. In an attempt to keep our attendees happy, we will be looking for sponsors willing to provide lunch for these meetings. Please contact FLMS if you are interested!





Coastal Dune Lakes



watershed contributions of dissolved organic matter. While these lakes are exposed to normal weather conditions, coastal dune lakes are tremendously impacted by hurricane activity (i.e., storm frequency, strength and duration).

biologically diverse systems with a dynamic nature.

The coastal dune lakes of Walton County are unique in their intermittent connection to the Gulf of Mexico. This periodic connection serves as control for flood-level waters by opening a conduit to the Gulf. When a lake reaches a critical pre-flood level, breaching water forms an outlet through the dune system and empties the lake water into the Gulf. Depending on tides and weather conditions, salt water and biota from the Gulf fills the void left behind by the lowered water level of the lake until equilibrium is reached and the opening eventually closes. This exchange forms a brackish water-body, creating a temporary estuarine ecosystem.

Plan early to extend your travel plans to make sure you have an opportunity to visit these rare ecosystems when you attend the FLMS and SE NALMS Regional Conference. Attend the FLMS workshop, sponsored by the Choctawhatchee Basin Alliance (CBA) and the Florida LAKEWATCH Program to learn more about the Coastal Dune Lakes on Monday, June 2, 2008. FLMS will be working with CBA to have a field trip available during the conference located just a few miles from the coastal dune lakes of south Walton County.

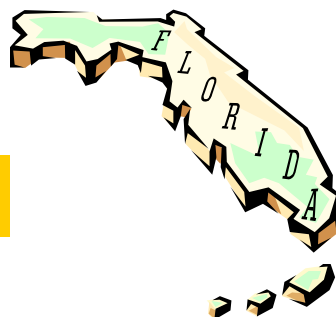
Walton County contains many ecological treasures, which attract visitors from all over the world, creating one of the fastest growing counties in the nation. There are 15 named coastal dune lakes in south Walton County along 26 miles of coastline. These coastal dune lakes are extremely rare. In Florida, they are found only in the Florida Panhandle. Around the world, coastal dune lakes also exist in Madagascar, Australia, New Zealand, the northwest Pacific Coast of the United States, and South Carolina.

Coastal dune lakes are generally found within two miles of the coast and are typically shallow and irregularly shaped. The water is composed of both fresh and salt water obtained from groundwater seepage (in both directions), heavy rain, and storm surges. Most of the dune lakes around the world are called freshwater lakes with varying periods of saltwater intrusion. Lake water is generally colored (e.g., tea or black colored) due to

Each of the coastal dune lakes has individual outlet characteristics, with outlet openings varying in length, frequency and duration. These openings occur based on each lake's critical water level, which is driven by droughts and rainfall. As a result, some of the lakes can be completely fresh-water, some brackish, and some salty, with varying degrees between stages. The changing condition of water chemistry in the coastal dune lakes makes them



A coastal dune lake discharging through the sand dunes into the Gulf of Mexico.



Florida Lake Management Society



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Contributor \$100

Check out the FLMS website
for Society updates!

www.flms.net

2008 FLMS Preliminary Sessions and Workshops

Workshops

- Use of Alum in Lake Management
- Practical Strategies for Emerging Microbial Contaminants (Fecal Coliforms and Harmful Algal Blooms)
- Using Florida's Water Birds to Monitor Wetland Restoration Success
- Shoreline Enhancement and Stabilization
- Aquatic Plant Identification and Monitoring
- Planning a Dredging Project
- Lake Watershed Planning Using Web-Based and Open Source Spatial Tools
- Unique Aquatic Habitats in the Panhandle: Coastal Dune Lakes (includes field trip)
- TMDL Implementation & BMAPs: Where to Begin

Sessions

- Estuaries
- Restoration Techniques
- Drought Effects in Surface Waters
- Aquatic Plant Management
- Volunteers in Lake Management
- Cyanobacteria and Toxic Algae
- Reservoir and River Management
- Recreational Issues
- Fish and Wildlife Issues
- TMDLs/Impaired Waters Rule



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