

Forum Information

Forum Purpose:

To discover better ways to link good science with sound ecological policy and broad public education for making informed, intelligent, and cost-effective choices on ecosystem management and restoration.

Forum Focus and Goals:

The Forum focused on science, policy and educational topics pertinent to Ecosystems Management and Restoration. Emphasis was placed on finding management and policy solutions through linkages, which included bringing together people within agencies and institutions to study, manage, and restore natural resources. The first day of the Forum focused on Ecosystem Management, while day two focused on Ecosystem Restoration issues.

The primary goals were:

- 1) To increase awareness of current projects, educational programs, and policies.
- 2) To facilitate discussions that would identify needs and issues.
- 3) To create working groups to continue efforts that address these needs.

Additional Benefits:

Each Forum registrant received a printed copy of the Forum program and a compendium of abstracts for all volunteered oral and poster presentations. In addition, each Forum registrant received a multi-media computer CD ROM containing the final conference summary, abstracts of the Keynote Speakers, Theme Speakers, State Panelists, Theme Reporters, and Gatorback Reporters (Forum Commentators); video clips of selected speakers, and an electronic copy of the original Forum program and abstracts of the volunteered presentations. Videotapes of the four keynote speakers, the two state panel discussions, and the synthesis session presented by the reporters are available through the UF/IFAS Media Library at P.O. Box 110190, Gainesville, FL 32611-0190. Phone: (352) 392-0437.

Forum Organization:

Each day, the Forum was opened by a Plenary Session in which two invited keynote speakers provided overarching (national or global) perspectives on policy and science. Then, the attendees selected one of three concurrent Theme Sessions for a closer examination of specific ecosystem types (Uplands, Wetlands, Coastal/Marine, Invasive or Exotic Species). Each Theme Session was opened by an invited Theme speaker to set the stage and was followed by six volunteered papers. A Poster Session featuring approximately 60 posters was exhibited during both days of the Forum. Posters played a significant part in the Forum, and on Day 1 a guided tour was conducted. Ample opportunity was provided to interact with the poster authors.

Day I closed with another Plenary Session focusing on two integrating themes (Integrating Land & Water Management; Water Quality Impacts on Coastal Ecosystems). For each of these issues, discussion was led by invited panelists. On Day 2, the Forum closed with a Plenary Session in which invited panelists summarized the major issues and needs identified in the six theme sessions.

Conference Format:

The conference format included oral presentations and posters. Specific attention was devoted to these activities, and time was set aside to ensure interactions between presenters and attendees. Posters were displayed on both days, however authors were expected to be present only during the poster session.

Discussion Sessions - The focus of the discussion sessions was to identify key issues and needs in ecosystem management and restoration. A facilitator was assigned to each session and was responsible for generating a report.