

SHARE:

[Join Our Email List](#)

Winter 2021



## News & updates from your ANREP colleagues

### In This Issue:

President's message

#### ANREP Updates

- ANREP conference update
- Award nominations due
- Award judges needed
- NREEF focus group update
- Professional development & conference opportunities

#### Conferences

- PILD
- NEES+NSS

#### Featured Articles

- Water resource survey informs program development
- Revitalizing inchelium red garlic

- Promenade of palms
- Georgia 4-H pollinator ambassador program
- Stony coral tissue loss disease observer training
- Celebrating Florida's trees and greenspaces
- Georgia invasive species card deck
- Targeting homes for water conservation efforts

#### Retirements

#### ResourceExchange

- Natural resources university podcasts
- RREA webinar: generational succession planning
- gathering and growing wild edibles
- MN forestry educational needs assessment

#### IdeaExchange

- Edible landscapes collaboration wanted

#### Editor's comments

[Visit ANREP Website](#)

***Follow ANREP on Twitter***



## President's Message



### **Hello ANREP Colleagues!**

On January 1, 2021, I officially became your 26th ANREP President. I am honored to serve the association as President and will do my best to make those who have preceded me proud of my efforts. I am looking forward to working with our Board of Directors and committee leaders. On an individual basis they are all highly accomplished and smart, when working collectively they rise to another level. I want the membership of the association to have confidence that the interests of ANREP professionals are well served by this group of remarkable people.

#### **Alicia Betancourt**

2021 ANREP President  
(305) 453-8747

County Extension Director &  
Community Development  
Agent  
UF/IFAS Extension Monroe  
County

Before I outline my plans for the year, I would be remiss not to express my gratitude to Lara Milligan for her work as ANREP President. Her accomplishments during this past year – including handling a pandemic – have been appreciated by the entire association in ways that mere words are inadequate to express. We were fortunate to have her as our President. Thank you, Lara, for your leadership and unwavering commitment to the ANREP.

These are challenging times with COVID-19. We have all adjusted keep up with the everchanging environment – both in our professional and personal lives. As I begin my presidency, I recognize the importance of adapting to our new normal. I also recognize that we all play our role in history and that the duty of leadership is to meet the challenges that present. In this spirit, I have a few goals that I would like to highlight.

Ensure that the association remains in a good position during this stressful time to allow it to continue to deliver on its core mission.

Now more than ever, the Extension community relies on the associations to provide educational, networking, and other services that ultimately help us improve the lives of our residents.

We must remain fiscally responsible during this time of health and economic stress, while still providing our membership with the resources they need.

Use the opportunity created by the change that has forced upon us to experiment with technology to continue to deliver on ANREP's core mission in the future.

Finally, we have identified some priority areas that we will focus on this year and we would love to have your help. The priorities identified by the board are; updating the strategic plan and policy and procedures handbook, launching a new member friendly web platform and reinvigorate the ANREP committees. If you can chair or help with a [committee](#) contact us at [anrep@anrep.org](mailto:anrep@anrep.org).

Thank you for your confidence in my ability to serve you for 2021. Let's have a great year!

## ANREP Updates



**ANREP 2021 VIRTUAL CONFERENCE**

May 24-26, 2021

Place-Based and Future-Focused:  
fulfilling the land grant mission in an  
evolving landscape

### ANREP 2021 Registrations Opens March 1st!

Registration will open March 1st on the [conference website](#) – registration for both ANREP members and non-members is \$150, and a special \$35 student registration fee is available (current status as a student is required).

This year's virtual conference will be hosted using the Whova platform. Registered participants will receive a link to access the conference and all associated resources in May.

### Check Out the ANREP 2021 Program

The [current conference program](#) is now posted to the conference website! Check out the wide range of topics that will be presented by clicking on the links for ignite presentations, oral presentations, workshops, and posters. We're excited to see all of the great information that our colleagues will be sharing!

Participants will have access to recorded presentations and resources before, during, and after the conference dates; live Q&A, interactive workshops, and group meetings during the conference. There will be many opportunities to network and socially engage with ANREP members from across the country through live video and the conference platform.

### Film Night May 25th: The West is Burning

[THE WEST IS BURNING](#) raises awareness about the conditions of forests in the western U.S. Told through a full-feature documentary, filmmakers examine the history of forest management and litigation that led to the current conditions which are causing catastrophic fire nearly year-round. The film explores the urgent need to act now, and the potential to generate positive change in our forests, watersheds, and communities, both rural and urban.

Join us for a showing of the documentary and panel discussion during the ANREP 2021 conference on May 25th from 4-6pm Pacific/7-9pm Eastern. Hope to see you there!

### For More Information

Check the [conference website](#) for more updates as they become available. Communications will also be sent through the ANREP listserv, ANREP newsletter, and to all accepted presenters and registrants for the original 2020 dates. Please contact the Planning Committee with any questions by emailing [Shannon Murray](#).

## 2021 ANREP Award Nominations Due February 19

Click the button below to download this year's ANREP Awards Program guide. The guide describes the awards available, dates to be aware of, judging criteria, and helpful hints to submitting awards. Review the attachment carefully - the awards process was updated in 2020 with more opportunities to be recognized for your work! Recognition from your peers is always a good CV booster and it just plain feels good too!

To apply or nominate a colleague for an ANREP award, please complete the [online application form](#) in its entirety. All awards must be submitted online.

**The deadline for the receipt of award submissions is February 19 2021 5:00 PM EDT. Late nominations will not be accepted.**

Please email any questions regarding electronic submission of your entry to [anrepweb@anrep.org](mailto:anrepweb@anrep.org).

For further information or questions about the awards program, please contact:

ANREP Awards Co-Chairs

[Victor Blanco](#)

[Tim Daly](#)

Nomination deadline: February 19, 2021

Notification of awards: March 24, 2021

## ANREP Awards Program Guide

### Award Judges Needed!

We need about **30 judges** to evaluate this year's award nominations! So far, only a couple of ANREP members have volunteered.

Please help us. Your task will consist of reviewing 1-2 awards categories generally over two-three weeks in late March. **This is a great opportunity to see what your colleagues around the country are up to while helping out your professional organization.** If you are new to ANREP it is also a great way to see how to write up a nomination if you plan to nominate yourself or a colleague in the future. But wait there is more! You can put this as a service position on your CV.

Now that I know you can't wait to sign up, please email [Victor Blanco](#) or [Tim Daly](#) to get your name on the list. The more judges that sign up, the fewer awards each of us have to review.

### Focus Groups Give Direction to NREEF

The [Natural Resources Extension Education Foundation \(NREEF\)](#) conducted regional focus groups last fall to gather wisdom from ANREP members. Group participants discussed the challenges that natural resources extension professionals are facing, and their ideas for meeting these with positive action. Also addressed was how NREEF should focus its fundraising and programs to meet its mission of supporting natural resources extension professionals. The findings are now in and a summary is shown below. If you want to be involved in the NREEF mission, visit our [website](#) or contact any of the Trustees for more information.



## SUMMARY

## 2020 NATURAL RESOURCE EXTENSION EDUCATION FOUNDATION (NREEF) FOCUS GROUPS



### What was the goal?

To learn about the **challenges** Extension natural resources professionals are facing, *especially with COVID-19, budget constraints and social unrest*, **tools and training** they need to meet these challenges, and **suggestions** for issues and messages that would resonate with potential donors to support NREEF's mission.



### Who participated?

32 Extension professionals were part of lively discussions in four regional focus group sessions.



### What did they say?

- Covid changed how Extension natural resources professionals do their work, forcing technology adoption and redesigned programs. Some of those changes were positive, such as expanded audiences, and will remain after the pandemic recedes.
- Responding to social change, participants spoke authentically about the need and efforts to expand diversity, equity and inclusion in their program efforts.
- There were few regional differences in responses. Similar themes emerged in all four regional sessions.



### Great ideas!

Participants view NREEF as a potential source of resources, *primarily for professional development*. They generated great funding ideas - fellowships, staff support for ANREP initiatives, training to develop online communities and more. There were many suggestion for target audiences to increase fundraising opportunities, falling into three categories - Extension professionals, foundations and industries.



### Next steps

The focus group discussions emphasized that NREEF has more work to do to clarify our mission, define our uniqueness, and market ourselves. Many were unclear on what the foundation is and hopes to achieve. "NREEF sounds wonky, or something having to do with coral reefs," said one participant. **NREEF trustees intend to use participants' suggestions to focus the foundation's mission and develop a clear fundraising campaign for 2021 and beyond.**

TO LEARN MORE ABOUT THE NATURAL RESOURCE EXTENSION EDUCATION FOUNDATION VISIT [NREEF.ORG](https://www.nreef.org)

## ANREP Professional Development Webinar & Conference Opportunities

The ANREP Professional Development Committee would like to invite any ANREP members to forward professional development opportunities (webinar or otherwise) that may benefit the membership to Committee Chair, [Norm Haley](#) so that they may be shared with the membership in upcoming newsletters. Thank you!

Spring Webinar Opportunities

## 2021 Conference Opportunities

## Upcoming Conferences

### Public Issues Leadership Development PILD Conference April 12-13, 2021



Registration for the [Extension Public Issues Leadership Development \(PILD\) Conference](#), to be held virtually April 12 & 13th, opened February 2nd.

Early registration is \$100 and runs through April 2nd, regular registration is \$150 April 3-9th, and late registration is \$200 starting April 10th. Speakers include Dr. Waded Cruzado, President of Montana State University and Dr. Chuck Hibberd, Extension Dean & Director Emeritus, University of Nebraska, Lincoln.

PILD is sponsored by JCEP (Joint Council of Extension Professionals) and is conducted by and for Extension professionals. This year's conference theme is "Building Our Future Together". Through speakers, workshops and panels, participants will learn how to communicate and engage with stakeholders and elected officials in advocating for Extension at the local, state, and national level. Please join us for the 2021 PILD Conference.

### National Extension Energy Summit & National Sustainability Summit

Work continues on the [2021 National Extension Energy Summit and National Sustainability Summit](#) scheduled for October 4-6 at the Penn Stater Hotel on the campus of Penn State University. Penn State Extension is the official host of the Summits which will again be held jointly following the success of the 2019 event in Tampa. The [National Extension Energy Initiative \(NEEI\)](#) and [National Network of Sustainability Education \(NNSLE\)](#), both ANREP-supported initiatives, are helping organize the joint event.

The Summits will have both energy and sustainability tracks with a full schedule of keynote speakers, panel discussions, and breakout sessions in which educators and specialists can give presentations about their programs and successes. Project teams are also encouraged to schedule pre- or post- conference team meetings to help maximize the value of the time spent. Meals, poster sessions and break times will all be included to maximize opportunities for networking informally with fellow extension professionals.

Penn State is a regional leader in energy and sustainability, and will be a great venue for discussing and developing our vision for these important extension programs. Site tours will again be a highlight, with visits to several nearby examples of energy and sustainability activities. When the list is finalized, it will likely include visits to biomass thermal facilities, anaerobic digesters, research labs, biomass crop sites, innovative water quality systems, and local farms that are setting the regional pace for energy and sustainability innovation.

You can stay up-to-date by visiting <https://www.nationalextensionsummits.com>. A call for abstracts will be issued in late February with acceptances made by May 15th.



## Featured Articles

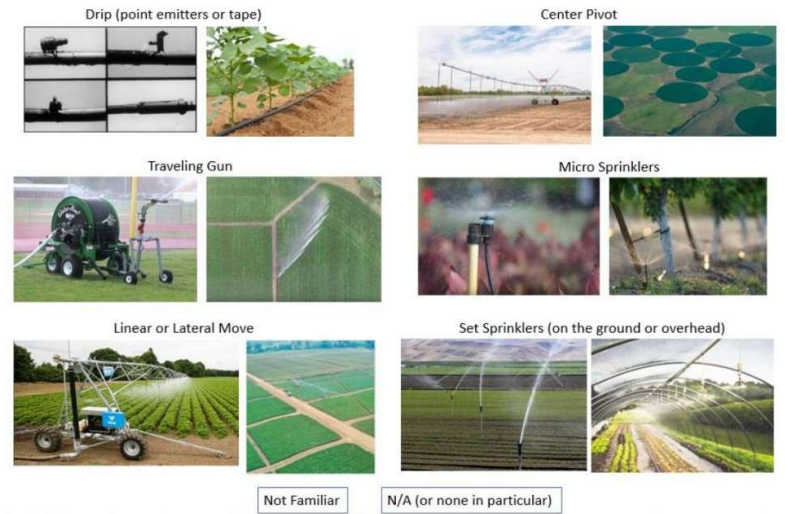
### **Water Resource Survey of Extension Agents Assists with Program Development**

Water resource Extension programming needs change with resource use and water quality concerns across populations and land use patterns. To assess water resource Extension programming needs, a survey of University of Georgia Agriculture and Natural Resource agents was conducted in spring, 2020. Agent's views on content delivery format, water topic relevance, irrigation systems, drinking water supplies, and water-dependent activities were recorded. The survey was distributed using Qualtrics and responses were collected over two months.

Agents were asked to rate the relevance of 20 different water topics to their county. Topics included well water safety and treatment, home water analysis reports, groundwater availability for drinking, groundwater quality (contamination), groundwater availability for irrigation, groundwater quality for irrigation (nutrients/elements), aquifer information, surface water quality, onsite wastewater treatment, stormwater, flooding, soil conservation, ponds, livestock watering, landscape irrigation, crop irrigation, irrigation scheduling, aquaculture & hydroponics, water conservation, and drought. Agents were also asked to choose which form of outreach and content delivery they prefer for each water topic. The methods of outreach were grouped into the following: A. Education curricula/fact sheets/informative bulletins, B. Formal presentations/seminars/trainings, C. Social media/blogs, D. Newspaper articles/newsletters, E. Topical advice and/or site visit for individuals, and F. Hands on assistance or technical applications.

*Agents were asked to select any agricultural irrigation systems predominantly used in their county.*





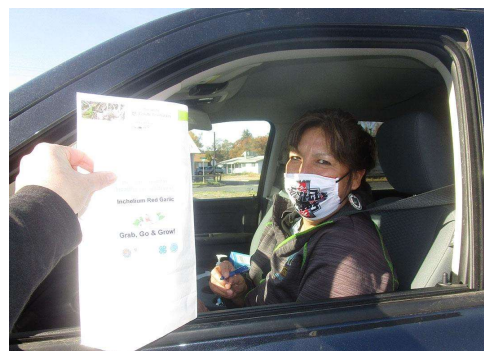
Another set of questions addressed agent’s familiarity and opinions of local water usage and water sources. They were asked to rank the significance of the following water dependent activities in their county: A. Industrial/manufacturing, B. Lawn landscaping/home garden/golf course/parks C. Agricultural products, D. Recreation on the water, E. Municipal water treatment, and F. Other. Some agents provided feedback afterwards, recommending drinking well-water be included in the list of activities. Agents were asked to categorize their knowledge of local water supplies, water industries, and governmental water management agencies, to determine if they needed assistance with regional networking and resource identification.

To determine the need for water resource programming related to agriculture, agents were asked which types of irrigation or frost protection systems are predominantly used in their county: drip irrigation, traveling gun, center pivot, linear/lateral move, set sprinklers, or micro sprinklers. Agents were also asked which agriculture sector they help clients with the most: Poultry & Eggs, Livestock, Honeybees, Aquaculture/Aquaponics/Hydroponics, Row & Forage Crops, Ornamental horticulture, Vegetables, Forestry & Products, Fruits & Nuts, and Urban Agriculture/School or Community gardens. Each of these sectors have different water resource requirements and require specific extension programming content. The responses to this question could also help direct non-water related agriculture programming.

The survey results showed some differences between counties and across urban/rural delineations. The results can help in planning and creating water related Extension programming in Georgia. The survey framework might be useful in your state or district to gather opinions from agents on water resource programming needs. With some editing, similar survey questions could be developed for other natural resource topics. Knowing which agriculture sectors are popular for clients can also guide your programming efforts, whether they are water related or not. The survey can also be used again years from now to measure changes in programming needs.

Submitted by:  
**Martin Wunderly**  
 Area Water Agent  
 University of Georgia Extension

## Revitalizing Inchelium Red Garlic on Colville Reservation



Inchelium Red Garlic is a little-known variety, and many people are not aware of the history of this variety. It is the oldest strain of garlic grown in North America. It originated on the Colville Confederated Tribes Reservation, in the community of Inchelium, Washington, located in Northeastern Washington state. It was growing in Inchelium far before the arrival of English settlers, in the 1700's.

Fall is the perfect time to plant garlic! Garlic needs to be planted in the fall for a July/August harvest in the following year. Colville Reservation WSU Extension embraced this opportunity to provide an event to re-introduce the Inchelium Red garlic variety back to the community and revitalize this native food!

Colville Reservation WSU Extension received a \$75,000 grant from [Native American Agriculture Fund \(NAAF\)](#). The title of the grant is "Healthy Food for Healthy Generations". This grant focuses on providing outreach education about healthy traditional foods. These funds were leveraged with funds from the Colville Reservation FRTEP (Federally Recognized Tribes Extension Program) project, which is a USDA NIFA funded project. What better way to generate interest in growing food than to re-introduce the garlic variety that originated here and is native to the local communities! As knowledge of the Inchelium Red garlic is limited, this project provided opportunities to help re-energize and re-invigorate the garlic on the Colville Reservation. This project provides for the exploration of growing garlic and, also, allows reservation residents to reap the health benefits from eating a more localized strain of garlic.

To distribute the garlic, two drive-thru events were held: One in Nespelem, WA on October 29; and one in Inchelium, WA, on November 3. A short survey was provided to each participant. Once survey was completed, participants received a bag containing a garlic bulb, a handout with planting and care instructions, information outlining health benefits of garlic, and recipes and cooking instructions.

"This project has been very well received," stated Linda McLean, Director for Colville Reservation WSU Extension and FRTEP Outreach Educator. She went on to say, "From our marketing campaign, our initial Facebook post, about the workshop, was shared 130 times. It reached 19,788 people and received 2,123 engagements. We received inquiries from as far away as Kansas, Arizona, Canada, and from across Washington state."

As a result of these drive-thru events, one hundred seventy-nine (179) people received bulbs of Inchelium Red Garlic. Each bulb averages 12 cloves, and when planted, each clove will produce a new bulb. This should equate to a harvest of 2,148 bulbs or approximately 480lbs of garlic in the 2021 garden season.

McLean went on to speak about the economic opportunities that could be associated with growing garlic. "Inchelium Red is not largely grown commercially. This is a prime income opportunity for beginning farmers/ranchers to develop a crop that is unique to the Colville Reservation. They could market through farmers markets or sell direct market to restaurants or grocery stores. There is also another option for Native producers. They could connect with [Intertribal Agriculture Council \(IAC\)](#) to work with the American Indian Foods program and possibly develop their garlic product as Made/Produced by American Indians."

The initial evaluation data is as follows: 142 participants completed the survey. 53.5% were not aware that Inchelium Red Garlic existed. 17.5% of participants had never planted a garden. 97% of participants stated that they would share their new-gained knowledge and 89% of participants stated that they would be sharing knowledge with youth. Follow-up surveys will be conducted in 2021.

*Submitted by:*

[Linda McLean](#)

*Washington State University Extension*

## Promenade of Palms

A Central Florida city completed a huge park improvement project to the tune of \$4.5 million in 2018. The park boasts tennis and basketball courts, playgrounds, pathways, exercise equipment, a splash pad and amphitheater, pavilions, and a prominently located promenade of palms. The community was proud of the park, but the promenade of palms was always looking paltry.

A former City Commissioner, a landscaper himself, noticed the palms never really established, so he and the park director contacted UF/IFAS Extension Seminole County. They described 16 silver date palms; some looking fine and some on the brink of death. The county agents made a site visit. Almost the entire park was planted with native plants, and sticking out like sore thumbs, were 16 exotic palms planted in a uniform pattern. The best of the selection looked frazzled and nutrient deficient, and the worst warranted concern prompting disease diagnostics.

The three horticulture extension agents in Seminole County teamed up to tackle the diagnostics. The agents took soil samples to test for nutrients and drilled for trunk core samples to test for disease. NO DISEASE DETECTED. Interesting. The soil samples told the rest of the story. The best soil sample had a pH of 7.8 which is quite high, and the rest of the samples were creeping into mid 8 ranges. Compounding the issue was soil compaction. The soil where the palms were planted was hard as concrete! This soil condition can only be tolerated by certain plants.

The issues observed on the exotic and very expensive palm trees were consistent with high pH and compact soils. The leaves showed micronutrient deficiencies. After consulting with soil scientists, it was determined that it was unreasonable to drop the pH with sulfur and too expensive to amend the entire area with improved soil. A chelated iron product and good nutrient management could potentially limp the trees through, but the Seminole County horticulture agents ultimately recommended right plant, right place. In this case, the agents recommended the humble Florida native sabal palm which is tolerant of a wide range of pH and wet to dry conditions.

The sabal palm seems too southern and not enough stately for some, so the city resisted taking the UF/IFAS recommendation for years. As predicted, the 16 stately Sylvester palms worth about \$7000 per tree before install continued to decline for 2 years. The city stayed in touch with UF/IFAS the entire time, and in 2020, the realization that right plant, right place would lead to long term landscape resilience, the city replaced the phoenix palms with the Florida native sabal palmetto, a \$400 alternative.

This entire situation can be avoided in landscapes big and small. Test your soil before you plant. Select the right plant for the right place. Use other Florida Friendly Landscaping practices and work with professionals who are certified in Green Industries Best Management Practices!

Submitted by:

**Tina McIntyre**, **Hannah Wooten**, and **Kaydie McCormick**  
UF/IFAS Extension

## The Georgia 4-H Pollinator Ambassador Program

As 4-H programs began to emerge in the early 20th century, the premise behind these clubs was for youth to learn practical, life-enhancing skills related to agriculture. County Extension professionals invested time, efforts, and resources, educating youth using emerging information from land-grant universities. Their outreach work often affected the entire family because young people shared their new knowledge and skills with those around them. Over a century later, 4-H programs and Extension professionals still have the opportunity to impact youth and families through innovative and issue-based program efforts related to agriculture and natural resources.

National 4-H Council and Corteva Agriscience awarded the University of Georgia's Grady County 4-H Club a \$14,000 grant to educate their community about the importance of pollinators and install a pollinator teaching garden. As pollinator species continue to face various factors that affect population health, this new program quickly became the "buzz" around the small town. Coordinated by Extension professionals at the county, district, and state level, the three phases of the project included: training 4-H teens to be content teachers, educating youth and adults in the roles that pollinators play in the ecosystem, and installing a demonstration garden.

Grady County 4-H Agents Deron Rehberg and Lisa Pollock recruited middle and high school youth to serve as 4-H Pollinator



*Grady County 4-H Pollinator Ambassador dissecting a flower during training.*



*Grady County 4-H Pollinator Ambassadors creating flowers for pollination simulation experience.*

Ambassadors. Kasey Bozeman, Extension 4-H Specialist for Science Programs, coordinated trainings for the ambassadors. Youth dissected flowers to learn their parts, modeled the pollination process, and created anatomy diagrams of insects and other pollinating animals. Discussion focused on how pollinators affect an ecosystem's overall health and our food supply. Additionally, 4-H Pollinator Ambassadors learned best practices related to natural resource education.



*Teaching materials used by Grady County 4-H Pollinator Ambassadors.*

Under Rehberg and Pollock's direction, these youth provided monthly lessons at the public schools in Grady County, teaching students about how pollinators affect our ecosystems and food supply. To date, seven Pollinator Ambassadors have led nearly 650 students in various activities designed to increase their knowledge about pollinators' importance. These youth have read pollinator-related stories at the local library and provided online storytime for families at a distance.

In late November, 4-H youth installed a pollinator garden at the Shiver School in Grady County. Utilizing support from Shiver School FFA and Quail Forever, over 400 students and adults participated in the planting field day – spreading seed and participating in various hands-on demonstrations. Students planted native pollinators to attract bees, butterflies, birds, moths, bats, ants, and lizards.



*Exhibits and materials shared during pollinator garden installation field day.*

Participants received wildflower seeds, a trowel, and literature about starting a pollinator garden at their homes. "The pollinator planting site will serve as an example of what families can plant on their property to attract various pollinators. Planting a pollinator garden doesn't have to be complicated," says Rehberg.

Melinda Miller, Southwest District 4-H Program Development Coordinator, and Jenna Daniel, Extension 4-H Specialist for Grants and Fund Development, supported this project as well. This core team of five Extension professionals with varied knowledge and skills regularly met to review timelines and expectations and discuss programming modifications due to COVID-19. Despite a global pandemic, the team has prevailed and exceeded the goals of the grant project. "I'm so excited that Grady County 4-H was selected to be part of this national agriculture educational effort. The expertise of Extension agents Deron Rehberg and Lisa Pollock shines through the pollinator habitat partnership. They are exceptional 4-H youth development professionals who embed the 4-H essential elements (independence, belonging, mastery and generosity) in their total program," says Miller. The team shared their successes at the virtual Southeastern Environmental

Education Alliance conference and plans to continue to share the lessons learned and promising practices at other events.

Submitted by:

**Kasey Bozeman**

4-H Specialist

## **UF/IFAS Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Underwater Observer Training in Florida's Coral Reef**



*Maze coral with stony coral tissue loss disease. Credit: Ben Edmonds, College of the Florida Keys.*

Two years ago this month, a student at College of the Florida Keys was the first to report and photograph the spread of stony coral tissue loss disease off Key West, Florida at the Eastern Dry Rocks. He was able to identify the disease because he was trained by Florida Sea Grant agents Shelly Krueger and Ana Zangroniz and completed the UF/IFAS Extension Stony Coral Tissue Loss Disease Underwater Observer Training course. Stony coral tissue loss disease is devastating Florida's Coral Reef and the Caribbean from the Bahamas to St. Lucia and affects more than half of the 45 species of stony corals that live in our region. Thankfully, staghorn and elkhorn coral are not susceptible.

After infection, the disease rapidly kills young colonies and corals that are hundreds of years old. These reef-building corals are vital for the habitat they create for hundreds of species of fish, invertebrates, and marine animals. Healthy coral reefs support jobs and the economy through tourism and fishing, and protect the land from hurricanes and storm surges. Since four of these stony coral species are already listed under the Endangered Species Act, it is critical that scientists and the public work together to save these beautiful animals.

Stony coral tissue loss disease was first identified in 2014 near the Port of Miami and rapidly spread up and down Florida's Coral Reef. Unfortunately, the disease continues to spread and is extant in nearly all of the Florida Reef Tract (except for the Dry Tortugas) and 16 countries in the Caribbean, most recently Roatan, Honduras. The pathogen(s) have not been identified but an alphabet soup of federal, state, and local governments, nonprofits, and the University of Florida are working non-stop to defeat stony coral tissue loss disease. Zoos and aquariums throughout the US are holding rescued corals to preserve genetic diversity. While the situation is urgent, it is not too late to save these incredibly important ecosystems. Corals are resilient if given the chance and the enabling conditions for their growth and survival.

The citizen science training developed by Florida Sea Grant agents has been used to document the spread of the disease and coral recovery in South Florida and the Caribbean by snorkelers and SCUBA divers. Volunteers are trained to identify and

photograph the susceptible species and report these data to the Florida Department of Environmental Protection Southeast Florida Action Network (FDEP SEAFAN.net), which scientists monitor to track the extent of the disease and coral recovery. Learn more at the Florida Keys National Marine Sanctuary Coral

Submitted by:

**Shelly Krueger**

UF/IFAS Monroe County Extension

## A Good Dose of Green: Celebrating Florida's Trees and Greenspaces

National Institute of Health (NIH) studies have shown that community greenspaces positively impact two important public health issues: obesity and mental wellness. Environmental psychologists have also published reports on the role greenspaces play in enhancing mindfulness and reducing stress levels. This concept is further explained by Attention Restoration Theory, exploring the concept that exposure to nature and natural surroundings produces a restorative effect, relieves mental fatigue, improves cognitive function, and contributes to increased creativity and higher productivity.

Because greenspaces promote social interaction and reduce social isolation, as well as facilitate health-promoting activities including physical exercise, relaxation, and psychological recovery from attention fatigue, stress, and anxiety, the value greenspaces provide to a community is regarded as exponentially greater than their real estate value.

As a follow up to NIH and World Health Organization (WHO) recommendations promoting the benefits of greenspaces on psychological and physical wellbeing, some healthcare studies have considered the effect of prescribing 'doses' of greenspace interaction to improve mental health. The studies specifically measured the relationship between the amount of time spent on activities in green environments and the impact on participants' disposition and self-confidence.

To provide residents in Sarasota, FL with a good dose of green, our ***Treejuvenation Florida*** UF/IFAS urban forestry Extension program hosted a *TreeQuest*. *TreeQuest* is a scavenger hunt for native trees in local greenspaces, held each year to celebrate Florida Arbor Day. Participants search for tagged trees and answer clues on the various benefits derived from specific urban trees e.g., pounds of carbon sequestered annually. Participants are also invited to take selfies with their favorite tree on the scavenger hunt. Since our first *TreeQuest* held in 2018, 96% of participants (n=207) responded that they increased their knowledge on the benefits of urban trees, and 64% indicated they intended to plant a tree.

In addition to the Florida Arbor Day *TreeQuest*, other urban forestry Extension projects hosted by our ***Treejuvenation Florida*** program include *Adopt-a-Tree*: National Arbor Day tree planting demonstration events; *Talking Trees*: experiential summer youth workshops; and *Tree Trail Tours*: guided tree-centric nature walks in greenspaces each October.

Submitted by:

**Marguerite Beckford**

Commercial Horticulture Agent

UF/IFAS Extension Sarasota County

## Coastal Georgia CISMA Reaches New Audiences with Invasive Species Card Decks



Inspired by Jim Ekins at the 2018 ANREP Conference in Biloxi, Jessica Warren, University of Georgia County Extension Coordinator and Agriculture and Natural Resources Agent in Camden County, worked with the Coastal Georgia Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) to create and produce invasive species playing cards as an outreach and education tool. Jessica has served on the Coastal Georgia CISMA steering committee since 2015.

CISMA partners were able to pool resources and utilize funding from a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant as well as funding from the Sapelo Island National Estuarine Research Reserve to produce the cards for distribution. Each card has the Coastal Georgia CISMA logo on the back and an image, name and brief description of an invasive plant on the face. Cards were assigned rank based on the level of threat that they pose. As coastal Georgia counties are near two state lines and house or are adjacent to three major ports (Savannah, Brunswick, Jacksonville), invasive species education is an important and ever-evolving topic. The playing cards offer a passive learning tool to help engage audiences that may not usually take an interest in these topics. For example, many decks have been distributed at the Kings Bay Naval Submarine Base in Camden County where mechanics and machinists are utilizing the cards on their breaks. This group has given feedback such as, “I didn’t know that was from China” and “I always thought that belonged here.”

Card decks are available for free from any of the CISMA partners.

*Submitted by:*

**Jessica Warren**

*County Extension Coordinator & Natural Resources Agent  
University of Georgia Extension-Camden County*

## The Importance of Targeting Homes for Water Conservation Efforts



H<sub>2</sub>OSAV is a University of Florida IFAS Extension Program working to help measurably reduce water use. Utilities across Florida, along with their Water Management Districts, work with our program. By enriching the metered water data provided by our partners, we can find valuable insights and patterns. As part of our Extension work, we share our insights about water consumption, development, and the effectiveness of individual conservation programs. We also provide support directly to the utilities in the form of custom analyses, interactive tools, and targeting assistance.

One of our biggest efforts is helping our partners determine which homes to target for certain conservation programs. For example, with toilet rebate programs, we recommend targeting homes built between 1960 and 1994. Any homes older likely have already had to replace their toilets, and any newer homes were already built with more efficient toilets.



In addition, it's critical to target homes that have high water use. With our research, we see that in many areas, the highest quartile homes are using more than twice the average amount of water. Bringing these users down to even the average amount of water use could result in millions of gallons of water savings.

In July 2020, one of our partner utilities received funding to install smart irrigation controllers and efficient irrigation heads for 100 of their residential customers. H<sub>2</sub>OSAV has been providing guidance and technical support to help them target users with high landscape irrigation (more than five times the average). With this focused effort, the target group could see a reduction of as much as 120,000 gallons of water per day. If savings persist over 5 years, as expected, this will be one of the most cost-effective water conservation programs ever implemented in Florida.

With population rising, we need to prepare for the increase in new homes and overall water consumption. Homes using at or below the average amount of water are unlikely to see significant reductions in water use. Targeting homes for conservation programs is more cost-effective and leads to the greatest amount of water savings.

Submitted by:

**Nick Taylor & Kaitlin Robb Price**  
UF/IFAS Extension, University of Florida



## Retirements

*Editor's note: This is a new feature in the newsletter where we can honor the retirements of our ANREP members. You can submit 3-4 sentences and we'll post those announcements here.*

### **Mark Megalos**



Farewell to Dr. Mark Megalos, who retired from NC State University effective December 31, 2020. Just prior to retirement Dr. Megalos was recognized by EcoForesters with a Lifetime Achievement award for his 34 years of service to the citizens of North Carolina and beyond. Over his 34 years of service, he strived to maintain a science-based approach to Extension and Engagement, resolving conflicts and challenges that face family forest landowners, the forest industry, and the general public. His focus on the long-term economic, environmental, and social viability of forestry in North Carolina, made significant impact on the well-being of the landowners, industry and citizens of the state. Even though Dr. Megalos is retired from NC State he has not slowed down on behalf of family forest owners. He has moved on to a new role as the Executive Director of the National Woodland Owners Association. Reach Mark at: [execdirector@nationalwoodlands.org](mailto:execdirector@nationalwoodlands.org)

### **Mindy Habecker**



Mindy Habecker, Natural Resources Educator with UW-Madison Division of Extension- Dane County, retired on Feb 2, 2021. An educator with Dane County Extension for nearly 32 years, Habecker worked across various disciplines including agriculture, community and organizational development, and natural resources education. Mindy had been very involved with ANREP serving on the executive committee and facilitated ANREP through strategic planning. Mindy's legacy will live on through the many public projects, publications, gardens, interpretive signs, and other educational resources created during her career. She has a remarkable body of work and it demonstrates her desire to help others and improve Dane County and the State of Wisconsin.

### ***Jerry Iles***



Jerry Iles retired September 2020 after 20 years with Ohio State University Extension, during which he was an active member in the Ohio Association of Natural Resource Outreach Professionals and National ANREP. Jerry specialized in watershed management and water quality issues and served on the North Central Regional Water Network and has been recognized for his work on citizen water quality monitoring. Jerry plans to travel in his retirement and we wish him all our best!

## ResourceExchange

### **Natural Resources University Podcast Network**



**Natural Resources University** is a podcast network focused on delivering science-based natural resources information to landowners and managers. This network builds off the successes of the Deer University podcast (Mississippi State) and is a result of a RREA Focus Grant.

The network includes 4 podcasts lead by various extension specialists. And each podcast focuses on natural resource topics relevant to landowners and managers.

[Deer University](#)

[Fire University](#)

[Habitat University](#)

[Pond University](#)

You can listen to any of the podcasts wherever you get your podcasts (Apple, Spotify, etc.). We are hoping to continue to grow the network to include various other natural resources topics relevant to landowners and managers. And many of you might see an email in your inbox in the near future about joining us on one of the shows as a guest.

*Submitted by:*

***Jarred Brooke***

*Extension Wildlife Specialist*

*Purdue University*

## WEBINAR: Strengthening RREA Programing Through Enhanced Connections: Generational Succession Planning

Forest and range landowners struggle with planning for the next generation to take on their legacy of caring for the land and earning a living from the resources. Extension has a role in working with landowners, natural resource professionals, and professional advisors by providing advice, contacts, and creative strategies to help transition land into the future. [Attend the next RREA Webinar, Tuesday February 23 at 1:00 EST](#) to hear how three leaders are helping forest and range landowners prepare for tomorrow. Featured speakers include Shorna Allred (Cornell Univ), Allyson Muth (Center for Private Forests at Penn State), and Jeff Tranel (Colorado State).

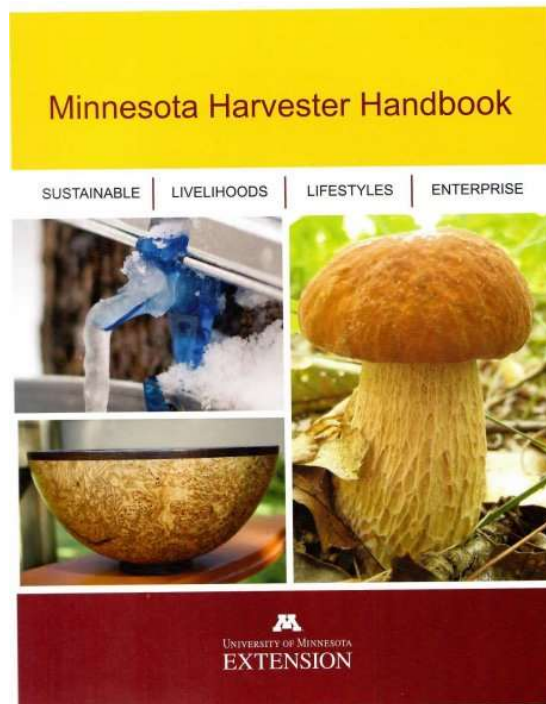
### [REGISTRATION](#) [MORE INFORMATION](#)

Submitted by:

[Kris Tiles](#)

University of Wisconsin-Madison Extension

## Gathering Wild Edibles or Growing in your Backyard



ANREP members who like to get out in the great outdoors and gather edibles and decoratives from the wild will enjoy the [Minnesota Harvester Handbook](#) as a resource for northern climates. There is also a [website](#) which reviews woody plants that produce edibles that can be grown in urban landscapes may also be of value to Extension Educators from Horticulture to Forestry.

Submitted by:

[Gary Wyatt](#)

University of Minnesota Extension

## University of Minnesota Extension Forestry publishes educational needs assessment

The University of Minnesota Extension Forestry Team recently published an [educational needs assessment](#) for its

**UNIVERSITY OF MINNESOTA EXTENSION**



**NATURAL RESOURCES - FORESTRY**

## Educational needs assessment of tree and woodland programs in Minnesota

### Results from a 2020 study

February 2021

University of Minnesota Extension Forestry:  
 Matthew Russell  
 Charles Blinn  
 Emily Dornbeck  
 Angela Gupta  
 Jeff Jackson  
 Nate Meyer  
 Eli Sagar  
 Kaitlyn Wilson  
 Gary Wyatt

tree and woodland programs. It describes interests in woodland topics, learning preferences during and after the COVID-19 pandemic, and how our audience identifies with key words. The most popular topics that learners were interested in were woodland management, wildlife, and tree and plant identification.

Submitted by:

**Matt Russell**

Associate Professor and Extension Specialist  
 University of Minnesota

## IdeaExchange



### Food Forests and Edible Landscapes - Collaboration Wanted!

Have you been educating your clientele about edible landscapes and/or community food forests? During COVID more families are interested in growing their own food in vegetable gardens and in backyards with woody trees and shrubs producing fruits and nuts.

A food forest, also called a forest garden, is a diverse planting of edible plants that attempts to mimic the ecosystems and patterns found in nature. Most food forests have perennial vegetative and woody plants producing vegetables, fruits and nuts. I am interested in trees and shrubs that produce fruits and nuts.

In Minnesota, we have been working with an increasing number of communities and individuals interested in Food Forests and edible landscapes. If you have been working in this area and would like to share your work and resources, please contact me. Thanks!

**Gary Wyatt**

University of Minnesota Extension

## A Word from Your Editor



The last time I put together the newsletter, we were hurtling towards the end of 2020 and hoping a calendar change would bring new fortunes. Well, 2021 has certainly packed a lot into its first 45 days! It's a bright, sunny day today but the temperature is hovering around -13. I know colleagues 150 miles to my north were enduring -30 (and colder) this morning. It looks like a lot of the country is experiencing wild weather right now but hopefully things moderate soon.

I'm excited to include the retirement section in the newsletter. After hearing of a couple of retirements by chance, it made sense that this is a way we can celebrate the careers of our ANREP members. Congrats to Mark, Mindy, and Jerry as they move on to other interests after long Extension careers. We wish them the best and hope we still get to see and hear from them on occasion.

Thanks to all who submitted content for this edition. It's always a pleasure reading about your work and the great partnerships you support. The next newsletter will arrive in your inboxes around **May 15**. You can send me content any time. Please try to keep articles to 600 words or less and the more complete/formatted (i.e. in a Word document) the better. If you're sending photos, attach those separately to your email, don't just embed them in the document. And please send captions and photo credits if you have them.

**Chad Cook | University of Wisconsin-Madison Division of Extension**  
[chad.cook@wisc.edu](mailto:chad.cook@wisc.edu)