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CREW News

Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed

23998 Corkscrew Rd. Estero, FL 33928 <http://crewtrust.org> Phone: 239-657-2253
crewtrust@earthlink.net **Fall 2011**

Thank You, Donors

Jim Goodwin Memorial Fund

Thank you to the generous people who have made contributions to the CREW Trust in memory of CREW's long-time land manager Jim Goodwin.

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- Bill & Ann Wollschlager

Jim Goodwin: 1951—2011

When the CREW project began in the early 1990's, Jim Goodwin became its first full-time land manager. He worked tirelessly to restore and manage the land so it would store water, provide wildlife habitat, and offer the citizens of southwest Florida a magical place to hike, learn, and connect with nature. Jim retired from CREW and the South Florida Water Management District in September 2010. Sadly, on July 19, 2011 we learned that Jim had passed away. For many people, visiting the CREW Trails will always be a reminder of Jim's hard work.

Because Jim had dedicated so much of his life to CREW, his wife Layne Hamilton chose the CREW Land & Water Trust to be the beneficiary of memorial donations in Jim's name. His good friend Jim Schortemeyer is working with CREW to establish a plan for using the Jim Goodwin Memorial Fund in an appropriate way to honor Jim. The Jim Goodwin Memorial Fund currently totals \$3100. If you'd like to make a donation, you can do so at our web-site <http://crewtrust.org>.



- 2011-2012 Season -

New Things to Do at CREW!

Hold on to your hats! The 2011-2012 season at CREW is going to be a whirlwind of fun and activity! The trails have been quiet this summer with only the bravest of hikers out to commune with the mosquitoes, heat, and humidity. But we know all that will change soon. We have a jam-packed slate of events, hikes and fabulous activities planned for you.



"There's something for everyone this year at CREW", says Environmental Education Specialist, Deb Hanson. "In addition to our usual guided hikes, we're offering a brand new Strolling Science Seminar Series for adults, a revised and updated school program that incorporates technology use on the trails, a journal workshop with Dr. Bill Hammond, two geocaching experiences, special things to do with kids, and even a nature-based literacy night under the

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CREW Staff

Brenda Brooks, Executive Director
 Deb Hanson, Envir. Ed. Specialist

Sign up for our environmentally friendly electronic version of the CREW newsletter by emailing your request to crewtrust@earthlink.net. Thanks!!

CREW Science:

A tale of two perspectives: Effects of prescribed fires in the slash pine forests of the CREW

by Dr. Charles (billy) Gunnels

Wildfires have been front and center in the news for the past 10 months. Since November 2010, over 3.5 million acres have been destroyed by a series of wildfires throughout Texas. Not surprisingly, there has been considerable finger pointing in the face of such devastation, and much of that criticism has been directed at a Texas government that slashed their forestry budget. See – the reduced budget not only limited the ability of Texas to contain and then stop these wildfires (over 35% of these fires are still burning uncontrolled as of 6 September 2011), but the slashed budget also kept Texas from preventing these devastating fires in the first place. Unfortunately for Texas, the use of prescribed fires was also reduced because of budget cuts. Somewhat counter intuitively, creating a small fire intentionally in the form of a prescribed burn reduces the intensity of future wildfires by limiting the amount of dead vegetation that provides fuel. Texas now burns because of poor preparation.

Fortunately for us, Florida has continued to fund prescribed burns, including burns in the CREW. This past July and August, the CREW burned 721 acres of slash pine (*Pinus elliottii*) forest along the Marsh Trail as well as the Cypress Dome Trail and areas to the south. These prescribed burns did exactly as intended. These fires reduced the amount of ground vegetation available to future wildfires. But, the benefits did not stop there. Two scientific papers about prescribed fires in slash pine forest report additional benefits to the ecology of the CREW.



In addition to reducing the amount of fuel available for future wildfires, prescribed fires also improve the survival of the very trees that are burned – seriously. Prescribed fires benefit burned trees. Menges and Deyrup (2001) determined that slash pines were far more likely to survive a prescribed burn if the fire took place after a short interval between burns. In their study, only 40% of trees died in areas that were burned within the past 20 years versus a 70% tree mortality if the area was burned over a longer interval. In addition, areas that were burned after 25 fire-free years were far more susceptible to beetle infestations, which resulted in additional tree mortality. On a side note, this study took place at Archbold Biological Station in the Lake Placid area of Florida. Go visit. This place is spectacular.

Prescribed fires also affect the chemistry of a forest. For example, prescribed fires release carbon and nitrogen and other nutrients. This effect would seem to be harmful in an era where most people are concerned about global climate change. However, a recent study by Lavoie et al (2010) shows that this effect is both short-lived and minor. In the study, carbon and nitrogen were released from the groundcover and soil after the burning of saw palmetto and other forest floor vegetation. However, 70% of these elements were recovered after a year, and all of the carbon and nitrogen returned to the vegetation and soil after only 6 years. Recovered carbon and nitrogen was also coupled with resilient understory vegetation. Grasses, herbs, and palmettos returned rapidly in part because of the freed nutrients that were liberated by the prescribed burn.

Go out to the CREW to see a changed forest as a result of prescribed burns. Then return every few months to see an ever changing and recovering slash pine forest. We have an amazing, resilient forest.

[Lavoie, M., M. C. Starr, T. A. Martin, and H. L. Gholz. 2010. Effects of a prescribed fire on understory vegetation, carbon pools, and soil nutrients in a longleaf pine-slash pine forest in Florida. *Natural Areas Journal* 30:82-94.](#)

[Menges, E. S. and M. A. Deyrup. 2001. Postfire survival in south Florida slash pine: interacting effects of fire intensity, fire season, vegetation, burn size, and bark beetles. *International Journal of Wildland Fires* 10:53-63.](#)

THANK YOU FRIENDS of CREW!

New and renewed memberships since
June 2011

BCF Management Group LLC—Brian
Farrar

Boyd Blihovde*

Dotty & William Brown

Pete & Malena Corradino

Florida Gulf Coast University

Jim & Nancy Humphrey

Ron & Sherry Inge

Kristen Kneifl*

Passarella & Associates

Wendy Rex

Edward Samuel

Bill Spikowski

Glen & Laura Stacell

Larry Trobough*

Laura Wewerka

* denotes new members



(Continued from page 1)

stars.” Be sure to check out all the dates and the details on the insert included with this newsletter or by going to our newly designed website at <http://crewtrust.org>.

The **Strolling Science Seminars** are specifically for adults and are designed to engage participants in citizen science so that you can use what you learn to help monitor changes in habitat and wildlife populations through a citizen science project of your choosing. Each monthly 3-hour seminar will be held at the CREW trails and includes walking lectures, hands-on activities, and demonstrations about specific topics related to the watershed. Seminar leaders are experts in their fields—professors as well as working biologists and land managers. You can attend one or more seminars or all six to earn a certificate of completion.

Moms and dads will be delighted to share nature with their kids during three specially designed events just for families: **Read the Sky: Stargazing and Storytelling** combines astronomy and reading, including booklists to take home. **Sunset Sunday with S'Mores** means a short hike and lots of fun around the campfire. **Birds, Bugs, and Bears** is a senses-on exploration of critters at CREW.

Our geocaching heroes—Kenny Jenkins, Milla and Pete Corradino will direct two **Geocaching Days** at the trails. There's always a special surprise in store—even for experienced cachers! We're hosting four **Full Moon hikes** this year. There's no more magical way to explore CREW than under a full moon, but these fill up fast, so register early!

Saturdays are all about adventure at CREW. We're offering a **Bike Tour**, a **Love in the Wild hike**, and we're kicking off this season with a new **Fall Wildflower Hike**. The fall flowers and grasses are different from those blooming in spring and this year's summer burns may bring us some blooming surprises.

Journal during a day-long workshop with Bill Hammond, and mark your calendars now for our **Musical Night with Nature Concert** (March 24) and our annual **Wildflower Festival** (March 30-31). You can register for many of our events online now, too. So come on out. We can't wait to see you on the trails this season!

CREW and the Trust for Public Land —Then and Now

by Becky Nielson, TPL

The Trust for Public Land (TPL), under the guidance of Joel Kuperberg, opened its second office in Tallahassee, Florida, in 1975. The then two-year-old organization had completed only a handful of conservation projects, all in California, but its leaders already had a keen sense of where its unique approach to conservation might be needed next. In the 1970s Florida, like California, was a big and beautiful state undergoing rampant growth that threatened to despoil the very natural wonders that were attracting new residents.

In the 1980s, southwest Florida was a major focus for TPL following its successful acquisition of the 49,800-acre Aerojet property, which became part of the Everglades National Park buffer. SW Florida was also the focus of many other agencies including the Water Management Districts, FWCC, Audubon, and the SWFL counties. It was clear at that time that there was an urgent need for cooperation between both private and public groups to leverage resources and eliminate duplication of efforts. In 1989, Joel Kuperberg began creating a cooperative acquisition group in order to be organized and strategic with these endeavors. From this, the Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed Trust, Inc. (CREW) was formed. Ever since, CREW has continued to preserve the water resources and natural communities in and around the watershed and TPL has worked to conserve land for people to enjoy as parks, gardens, and other natural places, ensuring livable communities for generations to come.

Recently, CREW and TPL, along with numerous other partners, have begun work toward the preservation of the 4,000-acre Edison Farms tract located within the CREW boundary. With such a landscape-level property, acquisition and long-term management could not be accomplished without this type of partnership. These partnerships are essential and vital in order to be successful, but they also enrich our common history and legacy. Since 1972, the Trust for Public Land has helped protect over 3 million acres of land.

THE
TRUST
for
PUBLIC
LAND



Join the "Friends of CREW"

When you become a "Friend of CREW", you are helping to ensure the quality of life for your community, your children, and future generations by protecting our vital water resources and wildlife habitat. Please consider returning this Membership Form to CREW along with your contribution. More information at <http://crewtrust.org>.

Membership Levels (please select one)

- | | | |
|---|--|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Preserver (\$5,000 and up) | <input type="checkbox"/> Southern Bald Eagle (\$1,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> Bobcat (\$50) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Panther (\$3,500) | <input type="checkbox"/> Swallow-tailed Kite (\$500) | <input type="checkbox"/> Families (\$35) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Woodstork (\$2,000) | <input type="checkbox"/> Ghost Orchid (\$100) | <input type="checkbox"/> Individuals (\$25) |
| | | <input type="checkbox"/> Students (\$10) |

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(Providing your email address helps us get CREW information to you quickly – we do not share your information with other organizations.)



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You can also follow us on Twitter
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SAVE the Dates!

Golf registration form available at <http://crewtrust.org>

CREW Stanley Hole Golf Tournament
October 14, 2011

Nov. 5, 2011
Trail Clean Up Day
Pre-registration required.
Call 239-657-2253

Strolling Science Seminars
Fun for grown-ups...

Dates: Nov. 5, Dec. 2, Jan. 6, Feb. 4, Mar. 2, and Apr. 6



Corkscrew Regional Ecosystem Watershed
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