



Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

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**Commission Meeting
May 2-3, 2012
Crystal River, FL
Employee Introductions**

Division of Law Enforcement

Laura Simpson has served with the FWC since 2005. She is the North Central Region's Duty Officer Supervisor, working out of the Jacksonville Regional Communications Center. Laura was recently selected as the region's non-sworn "Employee of the Year." She is responsible for staffing the Jacksonville Regional Communication Center 24 hours a day, seven days a week.

Robby Creech has served as an FWC law enforcement officer since 2002, starting in Volusia County and presently assigned to Hamilton County. Robby has earned a reputation as an excellent officer and was chosen as the North Central Region's "Officer of the Year." Additionally, Robby serves his country in the Army National Guard and has been deployed in harm's way several times. Robby is also the proud new father of a baby girl!

Fish and Wildlife Research Institute

Kent Williges [pronounced *WILLI – GUS*] serves as the program leader for Upland Habitat Research & Monitoring. He holds a MS degree from Texas A & I University. His current research focuses on the response of plant communities to various disturbance mechanisms and restoration techniques. Specific projects include the effects of cattle grazing on native plant communities, restoration of scrub habitat, restoration of native ground cover in improved pastures, and developing best management practices for pine flatwoods ecosystems.

Ryan Butryn [pronounced *BOO-TRIN*] is a spatial analyst in the Information Science and Management section of the Research Institute. His duties include providing mapping and spatial analysis support to agency biologists and managers. He is a member of the

Imperiled Species Management Plan team and the leader of the Freshwater Adaption team. Ryan received his masters in Aquatic Ecology and Watershed Science from the University of Vermont and prior to joining the institute was a GIS analyst for the USGS Great Lakes Science Center and a research fellow at the US Department of Energy Brookhaven National Lab. Ryan grew up fly-fishing for mountain trout in upstate NY but has no complaints about now fishing for seatrout and redbfish on Florida's Big Bend.

Karl Miller has 10 years of experience with FWC and currently serves as FWRI's program leader for Upland Nongame Bird Research and Monitoring. Karl works on population dynamics and habitat relationships of a variety of avian species, including American kestrels and other birds of prey, various woodpeckers, Florida scrub-jays, and many songbird species. Karl received his Master of Science and Ph.D. degrees in Wildlife Ecology from the University of Florida. He serves on numerous professional boards, advisory committees, and teams, including FWC's Imperiled Species Management Plan team, the Florida Scrub-Jay Recovery Team, the Board of Directors of the Florida Ornithological Society, and the Editorial Board of The Wilson Journal of Ornithology. Karl has a deep and abiding love for Florida's wild lands but is just as passionate about honing his skills in traditional country and bluegrass music.

Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

Shane Walker – Shane is a Fisheries and Wildlife Biological Scientist III and manages Lake Panasoffkee, Potts and Flying Eagle WMAs in Citrus and Sumter counties in cooperation with the Southwest Florida Water Management District. He is part of the Half Moon WMA team assisting with prescribed fires. He also serves as an instructor on various sections of the Inter-agency Basic Prescribed Fire Course. Shane holds a B.S. degree in Wildlife Ecology & Conservation from the University of Florida and has been with the FWC for 8 years.

Robbie Lovestrand works in our Invasive Plant Management Section within the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation as a Regional Biologist. He earned a Masters degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from Texan A&M and has been with the Invasive Plant Management program for 23 years. He is responsible for overseeing and directing aquatic plant management activities in Hernando, Sumter, Marion, Levy and Citrus Counties. He also provides assistance to the section's upland Invasive Plant Management program. Robbie is volunteering as one of our team leaders for disaster response and is currently the Scoutmaster for Crystal River's local Boy Scout Troop 415.