



2025 SFFGS/FLSAF SPRING SYMPOSIUM

LANDSCAPE AND WORKING LANDS CONSERVATION

April 15-16, 2025
Stern Learning Center
Austin Cary Forest



SCHOOL OF FOREST,
FISHERIES, AND
GEOMATICS SCIENCES



Join us for the 50th Spring Symposium! The Spring Symposium is a cooperative event of the University of Florida IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences (SFFGS) and the Florida Division Society of American Foresters (SAF). Forestry and natural resource professionals, private landowners, and others interested are encouraged to attend!

This year's event will be a round-up of ongoing conservation and land management partnership projects like the Florida Wildlife Corridor, Sentinel Landscapes, Regional Conservation Partnership Programs, and others. We'll also discuss new payment-for-ecosystem-services market opportunities and emerging wood product markets.

This will be a unique opportunity to enhance your understanding of working lands conservation efforts happening around the state, and find opportunities where you and/or your clientele can engage with these important initiatives. The meeting will also include FL Division SAF Awards, our social and dinner on April 15, and FL Division SAF Business Meeting on the morning of April 16. The full event agenda is in this information packet.

The 2025 Spring Symposium is approved for a total of **8.0 Cat. 1 SAF Continuing Forestry Education Credits**. Please make sure you **sign the CFE attendance records** provided at the end of each day of the event in order to get CFE credit.

Plan to join us for this fun and educational networking event. Registration details and link are on the next page.

2025 Spring Symposium Registration

SAF Member early bird registration by Mar. 14	\$115 full registration for current members of the Society of American Foresters (no Eventbrite fee)
Non-SAF early bird registration by Mar. 14	\$140 full registration (no Eventbrite fee)
SAF Member	\$125 full registration for current members of the Society of American Foresters (no Eventbrite fee)
Non-SAF Member	\$150 regular full registration (no Eventbrite fee)
Student SAF Member	\$35 (no Eventbrite fee)
Single-day registrations are also available (+Eventbrite fee)	
Refunds can be provided up to 7 days before the event starts.	

Register online at:

<https://2025-spring-symposium.eventbrite.com>



Questions about the 2025 Spring Symposium can be addressed to the event chair:

Chris Demers, cdemers@ufl.edu, (352) 846-2375

University of Florida IFAS is an Equal Opportunity Institution



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- TENTATIVE AGENDA -

Tuesday April 15 – Full Day Session	
7:00 – 8:00 am	Exhibitor Setup
8:00 am – 5:00 pm	Registration, Sign in (Patio Entrance)
Sponsor Exhibits	Chair: Kari Hurst, Florida Forest Service
8:00 am	Continental breakfast, exhibits, meet & greet (Annex and Deck)
9:00	Opening , Dr. Terrell “Red” Baker, Director, UF/IFAS School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences (SFFGS); Marshall Hilton, Chair, Florida Division Society of American Foresters (SAF) and Spring Symposium Co-Chair, Chris Demers, Spring Symposium Co-Chair, SFFGS Welcome and update from the School of Forest, Fisheries, and Geomatics Sciences
9:15	Keynote: Jim Strickland, Owner and Manager of Blackbeard Ranch “The Importance of Working Lands in Landscape Conservation”
9:45	Refreshment and Break
10:00	The Florida Wildlife Corridor – Moderator: Student, SFFGS
10:05	Dr. Tom Hoctor, UF Center for Landscape Conservation Planning “Florida Ecological Greenways Network (FEGN): Providing the Science Foundation for Landscape and Working Lands Conservation”
10:50	Dr. Hance Ellington, UF/IFAS Range Cattle Research and Education Center at Ona “Conservation and Landowner Assistance Initiatives”
11:20	Laila Racevskis, The Balmoral Group “Payments for Ecosystem Services: Design and Implementation”
12:00 pm	Lunch

Tuesday April 15 – Continued

1:00 pm	Sentinel Landscapes of Florida – Moderator: Student, SFFGS
1:05	David Wolfe, Florida Defenders of Wildlife Sheila McNamera, Central Florida Regional Planning Council <i>“Sentinel Landscapes in Florida: advancing sustainable land use practices around military installations and ranges”</i>
2:30	Refreshment Break
2:45	Regional Conservation Partnership Programs (RCPPs) – Moderator: Student, SFFGS
2:50	Susan Carr and Susan Koehler, Alachua Conservation Trust <i>“RCPP Accomplishments: Easements, Management Contracts, and Outreach”</i>
4:30	Florida Division SAF Awards , Scott Sager, SFFGS and Marshall Hilton, F4 Tech Sponsor Recognition , Kari Hurst, Florida Forest Service
5:00	Social on Deck
5:30	Dinner by Hills BBQ

Wednesday April 16 – Morning Session

7:30 am	Continental Breakfast
8:00	FL Division SAF Business Meeting , Florida Division Society of American Foresters
9:15	Land Management Partnerships and Emerging Wood Markets – Moderator: Student, SFFGS
9:20	Diane Alix, The Nature Conservancy Christian Wanamaker, SFFGS <i>“Apalachicola Regional Stewardship Alliance and Citizen Science Initiatives”</i>
10:00	Kimberly Tillman, Alachua Conservation Trust <i>“Gulf to Atlantic Restoration Partnership”</i>
10:40	Jeff Peters, Sterling Solutions <i>“Building the Future: Sterling’s Impact with Mass Timber”</i>
11:30	Conclusion

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Please make sure you sign the CFE attendance record provided at the end of each day.

Roland T. Stern Learning Center
University of Florida Austin Cary Forest Campus
10625 NE Waldo Rd
Gainesville, FL 32609

From I-75: Take Exit 387 (Newberry Road) east to Waldo Road (SR 24). Turn left (north). Approximately 8 miles later, you'll see a sign on the right-hand side indicating the Austin Cary Forest.

From I-10: Take Exit 343 (US 301) south. Continue south for approximately 40 miles through the cities of Starke and Waldo. From Waldo, take SR 24 south toward Gainesville. Turn left at Austin Cary Forest.

There is a stone wall and a gate at the entrance to the Austin Cary Forest. Head through the gate and stay straight, passing the front buildings and vehicles, to the Loop Road. Follow it around for about 1.5 miles, noting the signs to turn right toward Lake Mize and the Learning Center. Parking is available in several areas near the Learning Center.



Hotel Information

For those needing overnight accommodations we have a block of rooms with a special event rate set up at the Best Western Gateway Grand Hotel in Gainesville. Contact the hotel directly to make a reservation. This hotel is about 30 minutes from Austin Cary Forest.

Best Western Gateway Grand Hotel, Gainesville, FL

4200 NW 97th Boulevard, Gainesville, FL 32606

(located off SR-222 at I-75 exit 390)

A block of rooms is reserved at a special price, **\$125.00** for a 2-Double or King Suite, at the **Best Western Gateway Grand Hotel and Conference Center** in Gainesville.

Call the hotel directly at **(352) 331-3336** to make a reservation. Please mention group block name **SFFGS Spring Symposium** to get the special rate. A credit or debit card is required at time of booking to guarantee reservation. This block of guest rooms is being held at the special rate for a limited time. ***Please reserve your room by March 28, 2025.***