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The Fierce Green Fire: Vol. 4 Issue 6

Wofford College Environmental Studies Program

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The Fierce Green Fire

A Newsletter of the Wofford College Environmental Studies Program



Morning at the campsite along the Pacolet River

Volume 4, Issue 6



Buddhist monks visiting Spartanburg last week dispersed sand from their intricate mandala into the Lawson's Fork Creek at Glendale Shoals, symbolizing impermanence in life.

Undiscovered Tributaries

An aerial view of a watershed's landscape shows a network of streams, each accumulating water, nutrients, sediment, and living organisms from the smaller streams -- tributaries -- that flow into it. Ground water also provides important, mostly unseen connections. But these physical components are not the whole story -- our minds and our culture contribute just as much to the nature of a watershed, but these influences are often unspoken and even unrecognized.

This year's *Thinking Like a River* symposium provided an opportunity to think about some of these influences as we conversed and paddled with our visiting speakers Margo Farnsworth, Hal Crimmel, and Jon Calabria. Thursday afternoon, Margo and Jon provided perspectives stemming from careers in river conservation and restoration, respectively. With students from the Introduction to Earth Systems lab, along with environmental studies majors and members of the Spartanburg community in attendance, Jon kicked off the session by showing photographs of impaired streams in need of restoration, and examples of

successful practices. Margo emphasized metaphorical tributaries: how our interactions with rivers teach us about supply and demand, vigilance, efficiency, adventure, and sustenance. The question session brought out many issues about working *with* communities as they try to improve river health and partnerships.

Margo Farnsworth's current career has taken her into the world of biomimicry -- using the "genius" of natural organisms and systems to help us devise creative solutions to modern dilemmas. She spoke about this to an enthusiastic class of Environmental Science students.

Friday evening, Hal Crimmel spoke of the "disappearing" rivers in the west, and the importance of getting students into these environments to understand the issues first-hand as well as experiencing the joy of the wild when rivers run as they should.

Paddling on the Pacolet and Broad Rivers over the beautiful weekend gave us spectacular opportunities for informal discussion. We will treasure the memories!



Thinking Like A River symposium participants on Goat Island during their overnight float trip down the Pacolet River.

WOFFORD

Upcoming Events and Opportunities

- October 10th **“Trashed”**: A docu-feature film presented by Jeremy Irons. 7:00pm in the Barrett Room, Downtown Library. Panel discussion will follow.
- October 19th **Drum Circle**: Goodall Environmental Studies Center amphitheater, 7:00pm-9:00pm.
- October 21st **Fierce Green Fire Meeting**: Next meeting in BSA 1 at 8:30pm.
- October 23rd **Author Talk and Book Signing**: Author Eric Rutkow will be at the Barrett Room, Downtown Library, 5:15pm-6:45pm. His first book, *“American Canopy: Trees, Forests and the Making of a Nation”* tells the extraordinary story of the relationship between Americans and trees across the entire span of the nation’s history.
- October 26th **National Prescription Drug Take-Back Day**: 10:00am-2:00pm. Drop off any old medication at the Sheriff’s office or Spartanburg City Hall. Check www.ariverremedy.org for more information. Also look for Spartanburg Citizens for Recycling on Facebook.
- October 31st **Deadline for Applications for SC Wildlife Federation Scholarships**: Full time students currently pursuing environmental education at South Carolina schools of higher education are eligible for these scholarships. Winners will be announced in December 2013 and scholarships will be given at the awards banquet in February 2014. Anyone interested should see Dr. Savage for more information.
- November 2nd **2nd Annual Shoals Fun Run**: Join us in Glendale! 5K race starts at 10:00am. Register by October 17th to be guaranteed a t-shirt. For information and registration, visit <https://www.wofford.edu/environmentalstudies/shoalsfunrun.aspx>

PROFILE OF THE WEEK:

Columbia University – Environmental Science and Policy MPA

Columbia University offers a Masters in Public Administration degree in Environmental Science and Policy (ESP) through its School of International and Public Affairs (SIPA). Their goal is “to cultivate a new profession that manages earth systems in ways that will ensure the long-term viability of life on our planet.”

The MPA-ESP is an intense 12-month program that was begun in 2002 as a joint effort by SIPA and Columbia’s Earth Institute. Their website states, “Graduates are creating a new profession of earth systems problem-solvers.”

The program emphasizes practical, hands-on learning to prepare students for leading positions in sustainability. Graduates leave with the skills and training to address the environmental challenges facing our planet.

Candidates are asked to apply by the November 1st early decision application deadline.

See Dr. Savage if you are interested in learning more about this program and the fellowship opportunity. You may also visit the website, <http://mpaenvironment.ei.columbia.edu/>.