

2010 NRES Alumni Newsletter

KANSAS STATE UNIVERSITY
NATURAL RESOURCES & ENVIRONMENTAL
SCIENCES



May 2010
No. 6

The NRES Program in 2009-2010

Greetings from the Natural Resources and Environmental Sciences (NRES) secondary major! The 2009-2010 academic year has been a challenging one for higher education in the state of Kansas. With a projected budget shortfall of several hundred million dollars, the Regents institutions, including Kansas State University, have suffered numerous budget cuts and hiring freezes. Unfortunately, the NRES program has not been immune from these cuts. Our modest operating budget was cut for Fiscal Year 2010 (which ends on 30 June), and we face even larger cuts in the upcoming fiscal/academic year. Some of those cuts could threaten the future viability of the secondary major. Fortunately, the NRES board is committed to seeing this highly successful secondary major remain an option for Kansas State University students interested in natural resource and environmental issues. Working with administrators across the campus, the board and I remain optimistic that funding for NRES will be forthcoming from the colleges that have supported the program in the past and from the university in the upcoming academic year.

The NRES program remains one of the largest secondary majors on campus. As of this writing, 111 students were enrolled in the NRES program. In calendar year 2009, 36 students joined the NRES program and 22 students completed their

K-State degree with the secondary major. Since the program began in 1991, 539 students have completed the NRES secondary major.

I would like to recognize the K-State faculty members who supported the NRES program over the last year as instructors of the capstone course and members of the board of directors. In the fall semester, Jim Steichen (Biological and Agricultural Engineering) and Chuck Martin (Geography) served as instructors of the capstone class. This spring, Heather McRae (History), Elizabeth Dodd (English), Kevin Price (Agronomy and Geography) and Kyle Mankin-Douglas (Biological and Agricultural Engineering) taught the class. As you can see

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by the range of departments represented in the course, students had a true multi-disciplinary experience. The NRES board members for this academic year are Doug Goodin (Geography), Lisa Harrington (Geography), Shawn Hutchinson (Geography), Stacy Hutchinson (Biological and Agricultural Engineering), Tim Keane (Landscape Architecture), Kevin Price (Agronomy and Geography), Mickey Ransom (Agronomy) and Jeff Williams (Agricultural Economics). Thanks to all who supported the program this year with their expertise and time.

Finally, in these trying financial times, the continued financial support of Provost M. Duane Nellis and Provost Ruth Dyer and the Colleges of Agriculture (Dean Cholick), Arts and Sciences (Dean Spooner), and Engineering (Dean English) is much appreciated. Without this support, the program would cease to exist.

To our many NRES alumni, please let us know what you are doing by completing the survey found at the end of this newsletter. We enjoy hearing from you!

Charles W. Martin
NRES Director
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(cwmgeog@ksu.edu)

NRES Student Focus

As a student preparing to pursue a graduate degree in soil and environmental science, I feel the NRES program was a key part of increasing the flexibility of my undergraduate education and helping me develop the broad, multidisciplinary perspective required to deal with issues relating to the environment.

The NRES curriculum provided me with the opportunity to transcend the boundaries often created by different academic disciplines and to orient my undergraduate education around the goal of becoming equipped to address complex and pressing issues facing society. As a part of the program, I was able to develop of basic understanding of many fields, aside from my major, by taking classes from over twelve departments. By working with students from different majors on our NRES capstone project, I was able to learn a lot about the values and limitations of the perspective my particular area of study gave me, and I was able to see how necessary working with people from different backgrounds is to overcoming these limitations.

Finally, the NRES secondary major allowed me to be recognized for making an extra effort to focus on environmental studies and reach beyond the scope of my major. For these

reasons, I believe my participation in the NRES program will prove invaluable in my future studies and career.

Andrew McGowan
Senior in Agronomy

Director's Note: Andrew was awarded a Morris K. Udall Scholarship in April 2009, one of 80 such awards in the United States.

K-State Sustainability

Sustainability efforts at K-State have advanced substantially in the last year. The university-wide Sustainability Task Force completed its report of recommendations for the university in September 2009. The co-chairs as well as myself have been promoting those recommendations in meetings with a wide variety of administrative groups throughout the university ever since. The second annual K-State Sustainability Conference took place on January 31, 2010. Eighteen Kansas higher education institutions were represented, and part of the program established a statewide higher education sustainability network for greater contact and collaboration among the institutions across Kansas. In addition, students continued to play a vital role in campus activities, including organizing the Gameday Recycling program for football games, Earth Day activities, involvement in vital campus planning committees, and much more. K-State also recently was announced as the only school in Kansas listed in the Princeton Review's Green Ratings guide for universities. This was a great way to end the school year.

Looking ahead to next year, by the start of the school year we will have a new campus-wide energy manager in the Division of Facilities to work on energy conservation and renewable energy efforts for campus. The Kansas sustainability network will continue to build momentum. I will create an internship program for students to focus on special projects in many areas related to sustainability. Finally, the entire university community awaits the conclusions of President Schulz's 2025 strategic planning initiative, and I'm most anxious to begin identifying strategic overlaps between the Sustainability Task Force Report recommendations and the president's strategic initiatives. These are exciting times for K-State, as I'm sure you agree.

Ben Champion
Director of Sustainability

NRES Capstone Course Projects in 2009-10

Fall 2009

Communication Strategies for Friends of the Kaw

Joe Badger, Kate Glanville, Cassy Morris, Dane Johnson, and Chris Siebenmorgen

Present and Future Environmental Concerns in the Wildcat Creek Watershed

Katie Brennan, Sara Leavitt, Andrew McGowan, and Ethan Noll

Spring 2010

Recommendations for the Flint Hills Discovery Center

Kathryn Glanville, Kate Ireton, Luke Massoth, Elise Neuer, and Terrence O'Connor

The Cattle Industry in Kansas

Allie Archer, Jason Collett, Tyler Bowser, Guadalupe Montes, and Angela Tran

Campus Creek: Managing Runoff in an Urbanizing Watershed

Rebecca Burns, Kristopher Kleinschmidt, Elaine Lamm, and Michael Proffer

The Susceptibility of Native Grasslands to Woody Plant Encroachment: A Study of Juniperus Virginiana

Jared Brooks, Drew Dobbeleare, Taenecia Gaines-Bey, Kyle Loftus, and Katie Starzec

NRES Alumni News

Kelly Charbonneau

Occupation: Federal Officer
Title: Law Enforcement Ranger
Employer: National Park Service, Buffalo National River
Degree: Parks Resource Management & NRES Secondary

Vicki Charbonneau

Occupation: Veterinarian
Title: Public Health Officer
Employer: US Air Force
Degree: B.S. in Ag, DVM

Jack Geiger

Occupation: Farmer
Employer: Self
Degree: B.S. Agronomy, NRES Secondary,

Elizabeth Meyer

Occupation: Engineer
Title: Deputy Engineering Flight Chief
Employer: U.S. Air Force, 460th Civil Engineer Squadron
Degree: B.S. Bio & Ag Engineering, Environmental Option & NRES Secondary
Our son, Zachary William, was born January 15, 2010

Kajsa Stromberg

Occupation: Fisheries Biologist
Title: Watershed Coordinator
Employer: Idaho Dept. Environmental Quality
Degree: KSU, B.S. Biology, NRES Secondary, University of Idaho, M.S. Fishery Resources

Please take a few minutes to answer the questions below and return it at your earliest convenience. The survey will help us better manage NRES experiences for our majors. Your responses may be sent to NRES, 118 Seaton Hall, KSU, Manhattan, KS 66506, or via e-mail to the current director (cwmgeog@ksu.edu). If you would like to receive this survey form by e-mail, please contact one of us. Thank you for sharing your thoughts.

Survey of NRES Secondary Major Alumni from Kansas State University

1. How did you first learn about the NRES Secondary Major?
 - a. Professor in one of my courses
 - b. NRES student
 - c. NRES web site
 - d. KSU Undergraduate Catalog
 - e. Academic advisor
 - f. Other _____

2. Overall, my experience with the NRES Secondary Major was positive.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Somewhat Agree
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - d. Somewhat Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

3. Overall, the NRES Secondary Major helped to further my career or education following graduation from Kansas State University.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Somewhat Agree
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - d. Somewhat Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

4. The NRES Capstone Course helped to further my career or education following graduation from KSU.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Somewhat Agree
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - d. Somewhat Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

5. Having a secondary degree in natural resources and environmental sciences has been beneficial in my post-graduation job search, work, or education.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Somewhat Agree
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - d. Somewhat Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

6. The advising I received in the NRES program was of a high quality and helpful to my academic progress.
 - a. Strongly Agree
 - b. Somewhat Agree
 - c. Neither Agree nor Disagree
 - d. Somewhat Disagree
 - e. Strongly Disagree

7. Would you be willing to come back in the next five years to share your post graduation experiences?
 - a. Yes
 - b. No

(Continued →)

Please answer the following questions in as much detail as possible

8. Are you currently working, or have you worked, in a field related to natural resources or environmental sciences?

8a. If so, what is (was) the nature of the work?

9. Who is your current employer?

10. In looking back at your experiences in the NRES program, what could be done to improve the secondary major?

11. Are there any other experiences relating to the NRES Secondary Major that you would like to share with the Board of Directors?

*Spring 2010 Capstone Class
Student Fieldwork*



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