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Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Management

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Inside this issue:

Exploring NM and CO: culture and resources intersect 2

Students Brave Boundary Waters with Dr. J. Gruver 2

Interview with Zack Deckard, student reef restorer 2

Sustainable Ag. 304: Grow your food and eat it too! 3

Contact NREM Give to NREM 4

White River Clean Up: Alumni Society in Action!

Twelve NREM alumni and guests demonstrated their commitment to community and environment as they cleaned their adopted portion of the White River near Strawtown. With a beautiful workday on August 27, they removed 14 passenger car tires, one tire and wheel, one large truck tire and eight bags of trash totaling approximately 870 pounds from the river. The annual project is chaired by John Maher, '85, and the

disposal is coordinated by Bruce Oldham '98, members of the NREM Alumni Society board of directors.

The NREM Alumni Society also called on the help of community partners. The White River Canoe Company provided canoes, paddles and PFDs while the Hamilton County Parks Department disposed of trash and recycled the tires and scrap metal.

Video of this event is available

at the College of Sciences and Humanities' Facebook page.



NREM Alumni Society and guests remove debris from the banks of the White River.

Points of Interest:

- The annual NREM picnic was held on September 30, at 5 pm in the Christy Woods Pavilion.
- The first meeting of this year's NR club was scheduled for October 6th, at 6 pm. It was held in the Christy Woods Pavilion and featured remarks by Sarah McKillip, a guest speaker from the Audubon Society. Refreshments were provided.

Theft Prevention Tips for Cyclists

You can take steps to make it harder for someone to steal your bicycle by following the listed theft prevention tips. Theft prevention tips include:

- Lock your bicycle to a campus bike rack and avoid locking it to items that can be easily cut, broken or removed.
- Use a steel U-lock through the bike's frame, at least one wheel, and a campus bike rack.
- Avoid using cable locks (coated or uncoated) as a primary locking device, especially 3/8" to 5/8" cable locks. Lightweight cable or chain locks no longer provide

adequate security.

- Make sure bike seats, lights, and panniers are securely bolted to the bike. If not, it is recommended that you take these items with you.
- Remove the front wheel and lock both wheels and frame together with a steel U-lock if it is a quick release wheel.

Did you know...

Students, faculty and staff can register their bicycles at the University Police Department at 200 North McKinley Avenue between 8:30 am –

8:00 pm. The owner must either bring their bike or present a bill of sale/receipt which contains the serial number, brand, model, and color. Cost is \$1 per registration. Bikes that are registered are less likely to be stolen, and if stolen and recovered, more likely to be returned to their rightful owners. Also, students and employees are encouraged to report suspicious/criminal activity to the University Police at 765-285-1111 or 911.

- Stacy Wheeler, Sustainability Specialist



Students explore ancient ruins of Anasazi civilization at Chaco Canyon.

Exploring CO and NM: culture and resources intersect

Dr. Eric Kelly, professor of Urban Planning and Dr. Amy Gregg, associate professor of NREM, accompanied eight Ball State students in a summer field study to northern New Mexico and Southern Colorado. In the two weeks they spent traveling, students studied the intersection between culture and natural resources in shaping American life.

“My hope is that they remember some things about

the history of the Southwest, the conflicts over the use of public lands, the overlays of culture that created the Southwest, and the role of water in shaping politics and land-use in the Southwest,” says Dr. Kelly.

To that end, students studied cultural heritage ranging from the ancient civilizations of the Anasazi, to the railroad wars of the 1800s, to the Colorado ranching communities that still exist today.

“This field study opened my eyes to a completely different landscape,” says Elaine Deichmeister, graduate student. “Cultures of the Southwest have adapted to maximize the resources available, especially water.”

In a final exploration of water resources, the group paddled several miles of Arkansas River whitewater. Deichmeister says, “It was an exciting experience, and I loved every bit of it.”



After a long day of paddling, Brian Kostelnik and George Meblon return with the catch of the day.

Students Brave Boundary Waters with Dr. Josh Gruver

In a unique summer field study at the boundary waters between Canada and the United States, students had the opportunity to explore the relationship between America’s wilderness, and the communities that depend on it. A group of six intrepid NREM students, led by Dr. Josh Gruver and graduate assistant Brian Kostelnik, embarked on a two-part research project.

The first portion of the field study focused on conducting research interviews with citizens of Ely, Minnesota, a target of exploratory mining interests.

“I wanted to go to Ely to better understand the attitudes and perceptions of the people living and working there concerning the sulfur mining,” says Dr. Gruver. “Is it a good thing? How will it affect their businesses? How will it affect the town? Will it provide the jobs that the mining companies

are promising?”

Ely Minnesota also happens to be a popular “jumping off point” for wilderness camping and canoeing. Though historically a mining site for iron ore, the economy has transitioned to tourism catered toward wilderness enthusiasts. Now, some mining companies hope to reopen mineral excavation.

The second part of the field study focused on observation of the wilderness area itself.

“After learning about the mining and its effects on the community and the landscape - we went to experience the wilderness in our own way. We were in the wilderness for 6 days. We canoed over 35 miles in those 6 days. Canoeing was broken up by dozens of portages - we hauled our gear (including the canoes themselves) through mosquito infested northern boreal forests. Some of the portages

were short (20 yards) some were close to a mile long! Toward dusk we would set up camp, start a fire, fish, and eat. The nights were amazing.”

This two-part exploration of communities and natural resources helped the researchers better understand the connections between the two. Gruver states, “the wilderness experience helped us reflect on the research - particularly, how the mining could potentially change the land we were experiencing.”

Now back at home in Muncie, Gruver is already planning to return to Ely for further investigation. “I think the ‘currentness’ of the issue had a positive impact on how the students related to the project. This stuff didn’t happen a long time ago - it’s happening now, under our feet. And they were hearing about it first-hand.”

“The wilderness experience helped us reflect on the research - particularly, how the mining could potentially change the land we were experiencing.”



The rugged team pauses for a picture in front of their canoes.

Interview: NREM major Zach Deckard restores reefs in Madagascar

How long did you spend in Madagascar?

I spent 2 months there; half of June, all of July, half of August.

I understand you worked on reef restoration. Can you describe what you did?

Andavadoaka, Madagascar sits on the southwestern coast of the island. There is a large reef system that starts a bit north of Andavadoaka and extends all the way around the southern tip of the island. The fishing tribe that lives up and down the west coast, known as the “Vezo” tribe, are completely dependent on the reef for food and income.

Blue Ventures works directly with local communities to establish conservation programs and to do away with destructive fishing practices like poison fishing and dynamite fishing. Blue Ventures brings in people who are interested in marine conservation, trains them in the necessary science and species identification, and puts

them to work conducting science dives or running social programs. I conducted transects to measure coral diversity and abundance, fish species diversity, and biomass. There were around 10 dive sites that we (Blue Ventures) were actively surveying every week. Some sites were as shallow as 20 feet, and some were around 100 feet deep. The coral and fish abundance was incredible!

Was this part of a Ball State University program?

I did not go through a university program. Blue Ventures is a marine charity based in London. They also work in Malaysia and Belize.

Why did you choose Madagascar?

Madagascar isn't on the way to anything. For that reason it is one of the least explored places on earth. I chose Madagascar because I wanted to see a place that was completely different than my home. With 87.9% of

all life on the island being endemic, there's a good chance that whatever you are looking at - you've never seen it before! Also, the diving experience there is such an attraction. I was among the first people to ever dive on the reefs where we dove.

What was one of your most memorable experiences from the trip?

Rolling backwards off the dive boat at 4 am by starlight to do a night dive! It's such a strange experience to be sinking into pitch black water with a few other people, and only dive lights to show what's around you.

What advice would you give to someone traveling to Madagascar?

Learn as much of the local language as possible before you go. Not only to make your life easier—but to show some respect to the locals.



Deckard surveys wildlife populations in the Andavadoaka reef.

“Madagascar isn't on the way to anything. For that reason it is one of the least explored places on earth.”



Deckard kicks back with local children from the Vezo tribe on a white sand beach.

Sustainable Ag 304: Grow your food and eat it too!

In the spring semester of 2011, NREM students had the opportunity to put training to the test—by growing a spring salad. Led by Dr. Brian Lepore, this class challenged students to apply concepts of sustainable agriculture to the hands-on goal of growing a meal for the table.

To this end, students read literature in the field of

sustainability, built inexpensive season extenders, experimented with composting, and finally, grew their own vegetable gardens.

One unique feature of this class was its emphasis on practical application. “Students were dependent on each other to make things work,” says Dr. Lepore. “They were also dependent on the weather,

which was an important simulation of real life.”

When asked if he plans to offer the course again, Lepore responds, “Definitely. I'm working on finding a closer spot for the hands-on experience, which I plan to keep, and spending more time helping students explore the sustainability of their decisions.”



Students transplant vegetable seedlings to season extenders at Hults Farm.

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Thank you!

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- Ms. Stacy Wheeler
- Mr. John Maher
- Dr. James Eflin
- Dr. Eric Kelly
- Dr. Joshua Gruver
- Dr. Brian Lepore
- Mr. Zach Deckard
- Ms. Stephanie Schuck
- Ms. Sue Taylor
- Ms. Laura Waldron

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Contact NREM and submit news for consideration in the newsletter!

- For more information about news and upcoming events, contact Ms. Connie Tyner, administrative coordinator. 765-285-5780. nrem@bsu.edu
- Please send news about promotions or new positions, recognitions, and changes in your contact information to Mrs. Sue Taylor at alumni1@bsu.edu or call 765-285-1080. “Like” [NREM Alumni Society](#) on FaceBook, and visit their [Web site](#). Click here to nominate an alumnus for an [award](#).

Make a Difference: Donate to NREM

Your donation is invaluable to the support of this department. The contribution you make may benefit one or several of the accounts listed below. Thank you for your support of Ball State University’s Natural Resources and Environmental Management program.

- Funding for the general welfare of the NREM department #6201
- Operation of the Hults Environmental Learning Center #6203
- Activities and awards of the NREM Alumni Society #6204
- Funding for research projects within the department #6216
- Funding for soil research projects within the department #6217
- Funding for soil and water conservation education activities #6218
- Funding for renewable energy and industrial ecology research #6219
- NREM Scholarships #6250
- Clyde Hibbs Scholarship #6253
- Alex and Anna Nicoloff Scholarship #6254
- Charles Mortensen Fellowship #6255

Questions?

- To make a donation, please visit the NREM website and click on the link labeled “Make a Gift.” Or click this link. www.bsu.edu/giving
- For more information about giving to NREM, contact Darleen Lugenbuhl at dmlugenbuhl@bsu.edu.
- To support the creation of a new scholarship, contact Dr. James Eflin, NREM Department Chair at 765-285-7055 or jeflin1@bsu.edu.