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FGCU’s 2015 “Moonlight on the Marsh” Series
Features Experts Lecturing on Water and Wetland Issues

FORT MYERS, Fla. – Some of world’s most distinguished experts on coastal landscape ecology, hydrology and ecological engineering will share their knowledge during The Bernard and Susan Master “Moonlight on the Marsh” 2015 lecture series presented by Florida Gulf Coast University (FGCU).

The third annual series sponsored by FGCU’s Everglades Wetland Research Park runs from January through March. Topics will include timely issues of local, regional and global interest such as watershed restoration, prevention of coastal dead zones and the potential for conflict over water management in the Middle East. The free lectures are open to the public and are held at FGCU’s Harvey Kapnick Education and Research Center at the Naples Botanical Garden, 4940 Bayshore Drive, Naples.

“This series brings to Naples the nation’s -- and the world’s -- best minds in environmental sciences,” said FGCU Professor Dr. William J. Mitsch, director of the research park and Juliet C. Sproul Chair for Southwest Florida Habitat Restoration and Management. “Because Naples and Southwest Florida have unique and vital relationships with our freshwater and coastal water environments, these lectures offer all of us some positive approaches and solutions to problems we see around us.”
Dr. Gail L. Chmura, associate professor of geography at McGill University in Montreal, will kick off the 2015 series on Thursday, Jan. 15 with “Losing Money with the Mud? How Sea Level Rise Will Affect Carbon Accumulation in Salt Marsh and Mangrove Wetlands.”

Other lectures in the series are:

--Thursday, Jan. 29: “Coastal Areas of the World and Global Change,” by Dr. Thomas S. Bianchi, Thompson Endowed Chair of Geological Sciences at the University of Florida.

--Thursday, Feb. 12: “Will the Next Middle East Tension Be About Water? Threats and Opportunities,” by Dr. Aazam Alwash, a civil and geotechnical engineer who was awarded the Goldman Environmental Prize in 2013 for his efforts to restore freshwater marshes in southern Iraq that are sometimes referred to as the Garden of Eden or Mesopotamian marshlands.

--Thursday, Feb. 26: “Restoring the World’s Rivers and Watersheds with Ecohydrology,” by Dr. Maciej Zalewski, professor of applied ecology and director of the UNESCO Regional Center for Ecohydrology at the University of Lodz in Poland.

--Thursday, March 12: “Preventing Coastal Dead Zones From a Distance,” by Dr. Jennifer Tank, Galla Professor of Biological Sciences at the University of Notre Dame in Indiana.

The series’ new title sponsors, Bernard and Susan Master of Naples, signed on to show their support for the science being done at the research park that will benefit the Everglades.

“Dr. Mitsch has assembled the world’s greatest wetlands experts to help in this endeavor,” Bernard Master said. “We are honored to sponsor the Moonlight on the Marsh Distinguished Lecture Series.”

Additional sponsors are: The Heffner Family, Columbus, Ohio; Gator Club of Naples and Southwest Florida Gator Club; CH2M HILL, Tampa; The Isles of Collier Preserve – Minto Communities, Naples; and the Notre Dame Club of Naples.

All lectures are at 7 p.m. in the Kapnick Center auditorium. Seats can be reserved by calling (239) 325-1365.

The Everglades Wetland Research Park is dedicated to research on the wise management of freshwater and coastal ecosystems of Southwest Florida and the Florida Everglades and to protection and enhancement of wetlands and water resources worldwide. More details are available on the park’s website, www.fgcu.edu/swamp.

For more information, contact Mitsch at (239) 325-1365.

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