RELEASE
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FGCU wetland scientist gives presentation before a record crowd at FGCU’s Kapnick Center in Naples

Prof. Bill Mitsch, Director of Florida Gulf Coast University’s new Everglades Wetland Research Park (EWRP) located at the Naples Botanical Garden, Naples, Florida, presented his inaugural address to SW Florida on Thursday evening 24 January 2013. It was his first major presentation since he arrived in SW Florida in October 2012 to head up the EWRP and serve as the Juliet C. Sproul Chair for Southwest Florida Habitat Restoration and Management at Florida Gulf Coast University.

His talk, entitled “Ecological Engineering of the Best Kind: Restoring Rivers, Wetlands, and the Florida Everglades”, was heard by a standing-room-only crowd of 170 at the Kapnick Center Auditorium on the Naples Botanical Garden campus. His presentation, the 4th in a series of 8 Moonlight on the Marsh lectures sponsored by the Everglades Wetland Research Park, covered research on the “ecosystem services” that wetlands provide in preventing water pollution in Midwestern USA, the Gulf of Mexico, and the Florida Everglades. He also discussed the newfound recognition of wetlands for sequestering carbon from the atmosphere on a global scale, partially neutralizing the climate changing effects of carbon dioxide emissions from the burning of fossil fuels by automobiles and the electric power industry. He suggested that wetlands in the world might be responsible for serving as a sink for over 10% of the fossil fuel emissions in the world.

Finally he presented his vision of the new Everglades Wetland Research Park and many of its planned research and teaching directions that will be based at the Kapnick Center in Naples.

Audience participants included several individuals living in or visiting Naples from Ohio, where Professor Mitsch taught for 27 years before coming to SW Florida.
Some of the estimated crowd of 170 who came to the Kapnick Center in Naples Florida to hear FGCU Professor Bill Mitsch discuss his current and planned research in wetland creation, restoration, and conservation.