

The Natural Resources Leadership Institute

North Carolina is facing tremendous growth and development pressures. People often disagree about how our land, air, and water resources should be used and managed. Conflicts arise over such issues as endangered species protection, forest management, land use, water allocation, and industrial development. People with a stake in these issues tend to focus on their disagreements rather than build on their common interests to create new solutions. When decision-making moves from the meeting room to the court room, the potential for finding workable, effective, long term solutions to environmental problems fades.



We believe that people involved in these disputes can reach mutually acceptable solutions by communicating in a more meaningful and effective way, opening the dialogue to include all stakeholders, structuring problems to reflect complexity and uncertainty, and negotiating to settle disagreements. This will involve unprecedented cooperation from strongly committed leaders who possess the skills to collaborate for mutually beneficial scientific, technical and social solutions.

www.ncsu.edu/nrli

Who We Are...

The Natural Resources Leadership Institute is an instructional and community service program of the North Carolina Cooperative Extension Service at NC State University. The goal of the Natural Resources Leadership Institute is to improve management and policy decisions affecting North Carolina's communities and natural resources. We are working toward this goal by:

- Improving collaborative leadership in natural resource management and policy development;
- Convening stakeholders and decision makers in action-oriented forums to identify, negotiate, and resolve issues;
- Conducting research and providing training in decision-making, negotiation, and facilitation;
- Expanding the capacity for collaborative problem-solving in North Carolina.

What We Do...

The Institute's **Leadership Development Program** brings together people from government agencies, private industry, community and environmental organizations, and educational institutions in an atmosphere conducive to exploration and learning. Our ultimate goal is to foster the development of mutually satisfactory



environmental policies. The curriculum, which focuses on leadership, conflict resolution, and collaborative problem solving, consists of six workshops, two review sessions, and a practicum that involves the participant in collaborative solutions to natural resource issues with others who have a stake in the outcome. Graduates of the program are better decision-makers, work more effectively with other stakeholders, and can fashion effective solutions to complex environmental problems.



The program on **Environmental Decision-Making** convenes representatives of business, public interest groups, and government to jointly explore public policy issues, management priorities, future visions, and regulatory matters. The Institute supports these processes by designing and facilitating collaborative decision-making processes.

We complement our training and decision-making programs with course materials, training videos, educational booklets, and citizen guides.

Our accomplishments...

The success of the Natural Resources Leadership Institute has increased the capacity for collaborative problem solving in North Carolina. The Institute has organized problem-solving forums, brought disputants to the negotiating table, and educated others about collaborative approaches to solving public disputes.

Nearly 400 leaders from around the state have graduated from the program. Institute Fellows have completed practicum projects that affect environmental decision-making at the state, community, or organizational level. For example, NRLI Fellows have improved landowner compliance with the Endangered Species Act, established a leadership team among agricultural, environmental, and industry interests in the Lower Cape Fear watershed, and developed a multi-agency partnership to enhance wetland mitigation for state highway projects.

Through our program on Environmental Decision-Making, we have assisted numerous committees, commissions, and stakeholder groups develop collaborative solutions to contentious local and statewide environmental policy issues. Examples include assisting a legislatively appointed, multi-interest committee to develop rules to protect riparian buffers in the Neuse River watershed; and helping whitewater outfitters, wildlife interests, lakeshore homeowners, and power company executives reach agreement on water use and allocation in the Nantahala and Tuckasegee watersheds in western North Carolina.

How to contact us...

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