We are excited to inform you of our progress in creating a new Learning Center on the Austin Cary Forest (ACF) and to call on you to make a donation so that we can turn our collective vision into a reality. As many of you know, fire destroyed the Conference Building at the ACF last July. The immediate and overwhelming response encouraged its replacement with an enhanced Learning Center (see Progress to Date on the next page).

In addition to classes, workshops and conferences, our 25,000 visitors each year at the new Learning Center will include K-12 classes, county planning commissions, city councils, professional societies, and the general public. Also the location will be a favorite for weddings, anniversaries, and holiday parties. With so few people knowing about forests and wood products today, visitors will leave with enhanced awareness of the many roles that forests play in the economy, environment, and society, and be more knowledgeable voting citizens.

We have been very fortunate so far to receive major donations (see Leaving a Legacy on page 3) raising over $900,000. We still need over $500,000 and know that you are as enthusiastic as we are about the new Learning Center. We rarely ask for donations to the SFRC because so many of you provide support in so many ways. But, this is a special opportunity and a special place; so, we hope that you will be generous.

Jack Vogel, who chairs the Development Committee, said “The emotional attachment that the alumni and friends of SFRC have demonstrated through their many generous donations has validated my belief that the University of Florida’s School of Forest Resources and Conservation remains a constant in our professional and personal lives. With a final push before the end of the year, we will have the new Learning Center funded and under construction within a timeframe I didn’t think possible. All of us on the Development Committee are overwhelmed.”

The Gallery in the new Learning Center will have an Appreciation Wall and we look forward to entering your name on the wall as one who helped build the new Learning Center. With the success that we anticipate from this appeal, we plan to break ground on April 6, 2013 at the annual SFRC Spring Celebration. Watch for notices and please plan to attend and turn a spade-full for the Learning Center!

Thank you for your SUPPORT!

Only with the support of friends are we able to maintain our level of academic excellence.

FOLLOW OUR PROGRESS at http://sfrc.ufl.edu/Learning_Center/
Shortly after the fire, two committees were formed. The Planning Committee worked with local architect, Joe Walker, and engineers to develop plans for a new facility. Architectural plans were created with insight from a survey of previous Learning Center users and are now ready to build a state-of-the-art facility that will serve many future generations of students, faculty, alumni, professionals, and Floridians from all walks of life.

The planned Austin Cary Forest Learning Center will provide 7,823 square feet of space, including a large-capacity conference room; a classroom; a library; a gallery; a kitchen; restroom facilities; a covered entry, porch, and pavilion; and spacious outdoor decks. The new facility will reflect the rustic nature of its serene location on Lake Mize and be a showcase facility that will inspire and educate all users on the importance of forests.

A Development Committee was also formed, chaired by Jack Vogel and comprised of Mike Branch, John Clyatt, Michael Dooner, John Morris, Wayne Smith, and W. Leonard Wood. With their hard work, we have been fortunate to raise over $900,000 in less than a year!

We still have a long way to go. We’ve gotten to about 60% of our goal, but we still need to raise about 40% of the donations to achieve our $1.5 million goal. You can help through the website below, or by selecting one of the options on the next page.

Jack Payne, Senior Vice President of Agriculture and Natural Resources for IFAS, stated “The new Learning Center will shine as a gem for IFAS and UF providing 25,000 visitors a year with a beautiful place to have a meeting, conference, or social event, while at the same time educating them about the overwhelming importance of natural resources in our state.”

Harold and Juanita Mikell Library “As I looked back over my career, I wanted to leave something to show appreciation for the benefits I received from the School of Forest Resources and Conservation, and the University of Florida.”

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Harold Mikell

Plum Creek Classroom “Appreciation for natural resources and support of conservation require first-hand experiences. We are excited to help provide students and other visitors a hands-on opportunity to learn about North Florida forests.”

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Rose Fagler, Community Relations Manager for Plum Creek in Florida.

Vam and E.T. York Gallery “Our natural resources, including forestry, are a blessing to our state. We need to encourage all our students and citizens to appreciate the value of forestry to our environment. This learning center can play a most important part in this endeavor.”

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Vam. C. York

Rayonier Covered Porch and Covered Pavilion “Rayonier has a long connection to the University of Florida, particularly IFAS and the School of Forest Resources and Conservation. We consider them great partners in the success of our company, and we’re proud to provide assistance to this effort.”

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Paul Boynton, President and CEO of Rayonier.

Florida Farm Bureau Federation “We are proud to be a major contributor to the rebuilding of the Austin Cary learning center. Education is one facet of what Farm Bureau is all about, and this center will offer a quality learning environment as well as a place for university and community functions.”

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John Hoblick, Florida Farm Bureau President.

Yes, I want to help build the new Austin Cary Forest Learning Center!  

☐ $250  ☐ $500  ☐ Other  

Your gift matters and will help us build the new Learning Center. For gifts of $250 or more, your name will join others on the Appreciation Wall in the Gallery of the Learning Center.

1. Give online at:  
   http://sfrc.ufl.edu/Learning_Center/  

2. Donate by check made payable to:  
   UF Foundation (with note to Fund #017709)  
   Mail to:  
   Marie Meldrum  
   UF-SFRC PO Box 110410  
   Gainesville, FL 32611-0410