



Freshwater Restoration Course Description

Program Mission & Overview

The mission of the Florida Master Naturalist Program (**FMNP**) is to promote awareness, understanding, and respect of Florida's natural world among Florida's citizens and visitors.

FMNP participants will increase their knowledge of Florida's natural systems, of the plants and animals that depend upon those systems, and of the role of humankind in shaping our past, of determining our future, and as stewards of the land.

The objective of the Florida Master Naturalist Program is to develop skills and prepare persons to share their knowledge with others, to act in a positive manner, to help others feel a greater connection to the land/sea and to help others to develop their own personal environmental ethics. We hope to initiate what is for many a life-long process of learning, of observation, and of sharing with others.

Freshwater Restoration Course Overview

From microorganisms to birds and mammals, thousands of species rely on freshwater environments for food and shelter. Wetlands are among the most productive ecosystems in the world, which is why they've been coined the name "biological supermarkets." Recognizing the importance of freshwater ecosystems is the first step toward protecting and, when necessary, restoring them. By acknowledging the negative actions taken toward wetlands and other freshwater environments in the past, we can identify their consequences and take steps to restore and protect existing wetlands for the future.

The FMNP Freshwater Restoration course is appropriate for concerned citizens, educators, and professional resource managers and discusses the challenges and strategies associated with restoration of freshwater environments. The course capstones with examples of actions citizens can implement on small scales to enhance and restore ecological functions in freshwater environments. This course provide participants with examples of small-scale and large-scale restoration strategies in freshwater ecosystems.

The total training consists of **24 contact hours**, the scheduling of which will vary among different instructors. Classroom learning includes at least 3 presentations with associated

discussions and assignments related to: Introducing Freshwater Restoration, Large-Scale Restoration and Small-Scale Restoration. Outside of the classroom (virtual or in-person), participants will engage in field activities related to the course units. Detailed agendas for all FMNP courses are posted on the FMNP registration website.

By participating in this **Restoration Course**, you will be initiating or continuing your own personal journey to become a better naturalist, conservationist, educator, natural resource scientist, or citizen steward. And, in doing so, you are entrusted to share the information you gain with others and use the skills you acquire to contribute to conservation education and initiatives.

What will Florida Master Naturalist Program graduates receive?

At the end of the course, student will receive their Certification of Course Completion and be included in the online FMNP Graduate Database. Upon course completion, graduates will also receive the FMNP embroidered patch and course-specific lapel pin.

Graduates who complete 4 Restoration Courses will be considered Restoration Florida Master Naturalists. Graduates who complete all 3 Core Courses and at least 4 Restoration Courses will be considered Advanced Florida Master Naturalists.

Note: The FMNP course manual (covering course-specific ecological systems, habitats, plant and animal life, naturalist interpretation, outreach planning, and additional resources and sources of information) becomes the property of the graduate.