



Lessons from Africa

Quest to restore a devastated national park in Mozambique is bittersweet but unforgettable

BY TOM SINCLAIR

The Beilfuss family's Christmas message to friends and relatives in 2006 was almost ecstatic.

"I wrote that it had been the most stimulating year of my entire life,"

Rich Beilfuss recalls. "And it was. So challenging and so fun. The first three years of our Gorongosa experience felt boundless."

But the final year, he confesses, was a reality check. The Nelson Institute alumnus (WRM'90; LR Ph.D.'02) says his perspective on a recently completed stint as science director for an ambitious wildlife conservation and community development effort in Mozambique's Gorongosa National Park is still evolving.

"It was a tremendous opportunity and we accomplished a lot," says Beilfuss. As time passed, though, the direction of the project troubled him and he departed with mixed feelings. Now, more than half a year later and back in the United States, he believes his experience holds important lessons for the protection of natural areas in Africa and around the world.

Opportunity of a lifetime

Gorongosa is a spectacular 1,500-square-mile national park with a sobering history. One of Africa's richest wildlife preserves in the 1970s, it was ravaged by a decade of civil war in the '80s and early '90s. Some of the fiercest fighting occurred in

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RICH BEILFUSS

Water lilies on Lake Urema, a centerpiece of Gorongosa National Park. Another landmark, Gorongosa Mountain, rises in the distance.

'A remarkable crossroads'

The Nelson Institute has put the finishing touches on a new strategic plan that emphasizes its role in building partnerships to address environmental challenges.

The institute "is a remarkable crossroads of interdisciplinary environmental teaching, research, and service that reach far into the surrounding community, region, and globe," says interim director **Gregg Mitman**.

The plan, designed to complement a new university-wide strategic plan introduced in March, sets in motion steps to strengthen the institute's social cohesion and intellectual community; improve coordination between academic, research, and external relations activities; enhance educational offerings; and facilitate environmental research and outreach. It is the product of six months of intensive work including scores of meetings, a detailed survey, and a daylong retreat.

Individuals and committees have begun tackling a long list of recommended initiatives, including a redesign of the institute's Web site and actions to build stronger relations with alumni. For details, see www.nelson.wisc.edu/about/mission.htm.



News and events

For more news from the Nelson Institute and details of upcoming events, visit our home page: nelson.wisc.edu

Did you know?

The Wisconsin Alumni Association offers a free online service to help locate UW–Madison graduates. Visit uwalumni.com and click on “Alumni Directory.”

Alumni networking online

Nelson Institute alumni can find opportunities for social networking on Facebook.com and for professional networking on LinkedIn.com. Visit nelson.wisc.edu/alumni and click on the appropriate links.

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and around the park. Once-teeming herds of African buffalo, elephant, zebra, and other large mammals were nearly wiped out. The famous lions of Gorongosa rarely appeared. Rhinoceroses vanished completely.

The region’s human inhabitants fared little better. Many were killed, maimed, or displaced from their homes. When hostilities ended, Mozambique ranked as the poorest country on earth. Today, four out of five Mozambicans live on less than a dollar a day. Nearly all in the vicinity of Gorongosa are subsistence farmers. Their soils are marginal and rainfall unpredictable. Educational opportunities and access to health care are severely limited.

Beilfuss had worked 16 years for the Wisconsin-based International Crane Foundation — 12 as director of its African programs — when he met Greg Carr, a wealthy American businessman-turned-philanthropist, in 2004.

Carr made his fortune bringing voice mail to market and compounded his earnings in the dot-com boom of the 1990s. By 2004, he was gearing up for a much different kind of entrepreneurial challenge. His private foundation had signed a memorandum of understanding — which later became a 20-year commitment of at least \$30 million — with the government of Mozambique to jointly protect and restore Gorongosa National Park’s ecosystem and to develop an ecotourism industry to benefit local communities. In exchange for Carr’s long-term financial commitment, the government gave him almost total control of the park; he became CEO, warden, and developer all in one.

“He showed up at my field office in Mozambique one day and asked me to give him a presentation on the region — the ecology, hydrology,



U.S. DEPARTMENT OF STATE

the people,” says Beilfuss, who had extensive experience with wetland conservation and poverty-alleviation efforts in the nearby Zambezi River and delta. “Afterward, he handed me his card and said, ‘I want you to come work for us.’”

Stunned at first by the offer, Beilfuss soon agreed to be a consultant to the Carr Foundation, then signed a four-year contract to serve as Gorongosa’s director of scientific services and create a research center at the park. For the first two years, he commuted between the U.S. and Africa, spending almost every other month in Gorongosa. Eventually, his family — Nelson Institute alumna **Katie Beilfuss** (LR M.S.’01) and their four-year-old son Ian — moved with him to a camp in the park.

Katie joined the park’s communications staff. She created and wrote a bilingual newsletter that circulated to thousands of “friends of Gorongosa,” helped produce public exhibits, and developed content for the park’s Web site. After the family settled in Mozambique, she also gave birth to their second son, Theo.

Getting down to business

“I joined the project to see what a successful for-profit businessman would do in a context like Gorongosa. That’s what excited me, really,” Rich recalls.



Rich Beilfuss, second from right, with the Gorongosa aerial wildlife survey team in 2007.

“Although our leader had limited experience in Africa and none with wildlife or rural communities, I thought, ‘This could be very different from the typical NGO or government program. What happens if you approach conservation and park development with a corporate mentality and focus on making the park profitable, sustainable, and efficient like a good business?’ It seemed this model could be important in Africa where funding is so limited for conservation and getting scarcer.”

Carr’s success with voice mail had come from putting the product to market quickly and refining it

based on user feedback, according to Beilfuss.

“He intended to apply this same business model in Gorongosa and was very much of the philosophy, ‘Let’s do, do, do, and see what happens.’ I quickly focused on establishing an adaptive management framework that could measure the success of these activities and provide feedback to improve what we were doing.”

Gorongosa’s government budget had been a mere \$150,000 annually. Carr committed to investing \$1.5 million a year but actually spent more than \$15 million in the first three years alone.

“We had funding behind us that

I had never experienced before,” Beilfuss says. “For example, Carr brought a private helicopter every time he came to the park and gave us almost unlimited use of it, although it cost about \$1,500 an hour. I spent more time in the air in the first two years of the project than I had cumulatively in Africa in the previous 15 years. It was invaluable to cover almost every square inch of the park so thoroughly.”

The Carr Foundation’s investment created job opportunities for local people, brought in buffalo and wildebeest that had been nearly absent from the park, and rebuilt

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park infrastructure for the staff and tourists. Gorongosa regained its former spot on the international tourism circuit with media attention from television programs such as *60 Minutes*, *Carte Blanche*, and *National Geographic*. But just beneath the surface, says Beilfuss, frustrations mounted over the project's leadership and staff turnover was high.

Philosophical impasse

Beilfuss gradually realized that although populations of “charismatic” mammals were low, most were recovering well on their own. What's more, Gorongosa still had magnificent scenery and a wealth of other intriguing plant and animal species — many of which were thriving — to attract tourists.

“I changed during the course of the project from seeing the restoration program as largely a reintroduction effort to understanding it as a monitoring and conservation effort,” says Beilfuss. “Many of the animals we thought we needed to bring in were on fine trajectories of recovery if we could protect them.”

Carr, determined to draw worldwide attention to Gorongosa, had other plans.

“He sought elephants for reintroduction,” says Beilfuss, who opposed the move because local farmers already were upset about crop damage from growing numbers of the animals. “He brought in six bull elephants, and most of them moved out of the park immediately after release. One of the elephants killed someone. Another died in transport back to the park after it was recaptured. This was a serious, serious situation.”

Over time, Beilfuss and Carr differed over the strategic focus of the project as a whole.



RICH BEILFUSS

Katie and Ian Beilfuss, right, get a close look at a tranquilized African buffalo as park staffers check the animal's health.

“I believed all development around the park should be in concert with the core conservation mission,” Beilfuss explains. “He wanted to build a lot of schools and clinics, which was wonderful. So I said, ‘Let's be strategic and first put them where there is the least poaching or the fewest fires, for example, and we'll reward people for supporting the park. But he believed that development should not in any way be subjugated to conservation, especially in the government's eyes. He wanted to demonstrate separate, distinct strategies for conservation and community development and tourism and argued that any economic development around the park would ultimately benefit conservation.”

While Beilfuss conceded the latter point, he worried about the project's expense and long-term cohesion.

“I knew even the vast resources we had available were limited. We would eventually have to make hard choices about where to focus, and I was

invested in the idea that we would closely link all our activities under one strategic framework,” he says.

“There were at least 15 recognized tribal communities around the park. Could we see measurable differences in how each community treated park resources in response to differences in the kinds of investment, employment opportunities, and conservation education that they were getting? I saw this as a pathway for building a ‘social fence’ around the park for conservation.”

Ultimately, the project's early levels of investment were unsustainable and the Carr Foundation reined in the park's budget. Although it was still many times greater than before, Beilfuss says the cuts were painful. To save costs, he offered to spin off the research center as an independently funded body linked to the national university to advise Gorongosa. When Carr rejected the idea, preferring to control research within

the park, Beilfuss decided it was time to move on.

His family returned to their home in Madison late last summer after 18 months in Gorongosa. Katie rejoined the staff of the Wisconsin Wetlands Association, where she had worked before their departure. Rich completed his contract with the Carr Foundation in December. He is now a consultant to the World Wide Fund for Nature and this fall will rejoin the International Crane Foundation as vice president and head of programs.

Rich and Katie remain deeply committed to the people and wildlife of Gorongosa and are thrilled that the park has received so much support and attention.

“Africa’s parks desperately need international investment, and the Carr Foundation is making a very generous contribution,” says Rich. “Public-private partnerships for protected areas are still a very new concept in Africa, and it will take time to learn how best to structure them to attract funding and innovative ideas without concentrating too much power with individual donors.

“It’s a delicate balance with no easy answers. One step might be to establish oversight bodies of recognized professionals with experience in protected area development and management in an African socio-economic context. I hope the Gorongosa project learns from its failures as well as its successes. It holds valuable lessons to help other parks find the best way forward in the future.”

For more information about Gorongosa National Park and its restoration, visit www.gorongosa.net

‘We were ready for something exciting’

When Rich and Katie Beilfuss agreed to work for Gorongosa National Park, they knew it would involve moving their family there indefinitely, perhaps for many years.

“We were both ready for something exciting like that, and we really wanted to expose our son to other cultures, languages, and ways of life,” Katie says. As a couple, they had spent five months in Africa in 2001. But what would it be like with young children?

“There are big worries there that you don’t have in Wisconsin. And there are a lot of day-to-day worries here that you don’t have there,” Katie explains.

“We got through the African winter without any colds or flu, without the kinds of things that hamper people in Wisconsin because it is not as cold there, things are open air, you’re outside all the time. Malaria is a concern, of course, but we were extremely vigilant in taking precautions and had no problem. Generally speaking, we stayed remarkably healthy.”

The flip side?

“Our camp in Mozambique had a slew of poisonous snakes — puff adders, spitting cobras — as well as dangerous scorpions and other kinds of tropical critters,” says Rich. “So there were things you worry about with a curious four- and five-year-old that you don’t have to think about in Wisconsin.”

But the prospect of dwelling in an African national park trumped those concerns.

“For (our son) Ian this was an extraordinary opportunity,” says Rich. “I think he’ll probably be in college some day looking at old photo albums of our time in the park and suddenly the experience he had will finally hit him.”

Once, for example, the park staff conducted a tuberculosis survey on wild buffalos, “one of the most impressive and dangerous animals in Africa,” says Rich. “We darted 50 buffalos from a helicopter in small groups to tranquilize them so we could check their health and take measurements. By the third day the operation was going so well that we were able to bring our families along. Ian walked among several enormous, tranquilized buffalos in the field and touched their skin and horns.”

Rich says living inside the park nurtured his own sense of wonder.

“It was just so fun to really learn the subtle behaviors of big African mammals — to watch them every day, their ruts, and the birth of their young. We collected seeds, studied grasses, and learned all the frog calls. We made deep friendships with the local park staff. I’d worked in Africa for many years, but you learn so much more living there. It would be very appealing to move back again for another chunk of time. Africa gets in your blood, for sure.”



Katie and Rich Beilfuss with sons Theo, left, and Ian in Mozambique.

RICH BEILFUSS

Life at the epicenter of a changing world

Q&A with Nelson Institute Alumnus Bruce Kahn



Bruce Kahn (LR Ph.D.'02) is a senior investment analyst for climate change strategies with Deutsche Asset Management, a division of the Deutsche Bank Group, in New York. He joined the company in 2008 with 20 years of experience in environmental research, most recently related to investments. Kahn and David Zaks, a doctoral student in the Nelson Institute's Environment and Resources Program and Center for Sustainability and the Global Environment, are co-authors of a report on agriculture and climate change published in April by Deutsche Asset Management.

In Common:

How did you get into your line of work?

Kahn: I did my Ph.D. in land resources, thinking about doing interdisciplinary work. I learned in that program that you have to look at environmental problems from a variety of perspectives. I came to the conclusion that for me, the capital markets are what drive activities. If you can harness the capital markets and drive them toward advancing environmental goals, that's a huge lever in promoting the things that the Nelson Institute stands for. That's why I came to the financial markets. Even though we've had this broad economic meltdown, I'm still convinced that it's the financial markets that have the ability to change the things that need to be changed.

Tell us, in a word, what you do for Deutsche Asset Management.

We do thematic research on how climate change is impacting investors in terms of both risks and opportunities. I advise portfolio managers and product developers on the thematic trends of climate change in what we call both traditional and alternative investments — stocks and bonds but also private companies, project finance, hedge funds, etc.

The economy has been so volatile. How do you keep on top of everything?

Because we're an asset manager we are really at the crossroads of a lot of information. We are in touch with a lot of governmental regulators. We're in touch with all the Wall Street banks. They do research, so they provide us with an enormous amount of information on industries and companies. We subscribe to other sources of news and analysis. We also manage large amounts of assets, so we're actu-

ally shareholders. We can call companies and say, 'How does this new regulation affect your business?'

Who are your clients?

We have both institutional and individual investors. If you buy a mutual fund from the Deutsche Group, we are the underlying asset manager. Or if we get a mandate from a large endowment or a large institutional investor, we invest their money, as well.

The world has fallen into a deep recession. Corporate giants have collapsed. National governments are desperately trying to jump-start their economies. What kinds of investments do you recommend now?

That's a delicate question because I am not in the business of giving investment advice, although I once was. Now I'm more a researcher. But I can tell you that as asset managers in the climate change sphere, we are saying that you want to be invested in *adapting* to climate change as well as *mitigating* climate change. Adaptation relates to areas like water resources, agriculture, etc. Mitigation involves new sources of power, new types of transportation, new building materials, energy efficiency, and other types of manufacturing that reduce CO₂ emissions. Those are investment opportunities. The other side of the coin is risk management. We operate from the premise that climate change regulation will impede companies' abilities to make more money if they have to reduce their carbon footprints. We want to know who's best at doing that. So we evaluate the carbon risk they face. We also act as advocates. When you're a shareholder of a company, you have rights to vote on management decisions. We vote our proxy. That's a very important part of the equation.

Around the Nelson Institute

So you do research and share the results with your clients. How quickly does the investment picture change?

Pretty quickly. We track changes in regulations globally, changes in markets, changes in technologies. I'm looking at new research on a daily basis.

Has interest grown in this area, climate change, over the last couple of years, or have investors backed off because of the financial crisis?

Governments have not backed off at all. They have stepped up, in fact. Investors in general have backed off a bit, not because of anything to do with climate change. But smart investors are putting money to work today because they recognize that this is the best time to be investing.

What is it like to be at the center of the financial services industry right now?

It's interesting. Leaving the credit crisis aside for a moment, I feel it's a great privilege to be involved in the environmental side of the transformation into a low-carbon economy. I have the best job in the world. I'm at the epicenter of where we can make changes to better the world and protect natural resources by financing the solutions. In the face of this past year's economic crisis, it's intense, for sure, but it's also one of the greatest opportunities that we will see in our lifetimes.

For more information about Deutsche Asset Management's climate change investment research, visit [dbadvisors.com/climate change](http://dbadvisors.com/climate_change).

Headway on the lakes

Efforts to clean up Dane County's Yahara Lakes have made headway against a major obstacle in recent months, thanks partly to the Nelson Institute.

The Dane County Farm Bureau Federation invited county executive Kathleen Falk and local environmental experts in January to discuss a proposal to build a manure digester north of Lake Mendota to reduce agricultural pollution. Studies have linked 75 percent of the phosphorus that triggers algae blooms and related problems in the Yahara Lakes to manure in storm water runoff from surrounding farms.

The Nelson Institute helped organize the gathering, which included presentations by university scientists.

County Farm Bureau president Pat O'Brien offered to host the meeting

following the Nelson Institute's Yahara Lakes conference last fall in Madison.

O'Brien, who attended the conference, said at a closing panel discussion that he had been unaware, until that day, of the extent to which farm runoff was tied to the lakes' algae blooms and other problems. He also said the conference assured him that farmers and their interests were respected by those who seek to improve the lakes.

Falk has praised the Nelson Institute for its work as a neutral convener to bring all stakeholders to the table. Governor Jim Doyle included funds for two Dane County manure digesters in his state budget, and the institute's Community Environmental Forum helped maintain the momentum during the spring semester with six free public presentations on Yahara Lakes issues.

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Following 15 inches of rainfall during the first two weeks of June 2008, algae collects on the surface of Lake Mendota along the UW-Madison shoreline. Storm water runoff from farm fields is the primary source of phosphorus that triggers algae blooms and other water quality problems in the Yahara Lakes.

Write on!

Professor **Nancy Langston** (forest and wildlife ecology/environmental studies) is on a roll. The American Society for Environmental History and the Forest History Society honored her recently for writing the best article in the journal *Environmental History* in 2008. The topic: endocrine disruptors.

One member of the journal's editorial board wrote, "One of the many things I liked about this essay is that it is (to borrow a phrase from the current economic crisis) 'shovel ready.' Its focus is on the historical dimension, but it is really the perfect primer for policymakers. I hope some of her ideas find their way into the Obama administration's health policies."

They just might. Langston's forthcoming book, *Toxic Bodies: Endocrine Disruptors and the Lessons of History*, will be published by Yale University Press in early 2010. And CNN recently interviewed Langston for an hour-long television special with Dr. Sanjay Gupta on toxic chemicals in our everyday lives

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Nelson professor named

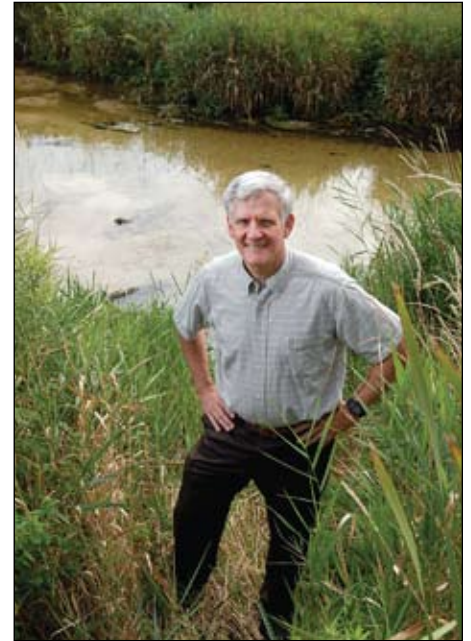
Longtime faculty member **Kenneth Potter**, widely known for his work in watershed protection, this spring became the Nelson Institute's new Gaylord Nelson Distinguished Professor.

A professor of civil and environmental engineering and environmental studies, Potter will hold the honorary title for the next four years. It includes an annual stipend for flexible research support.

Potter's teaching, research, and public service in storm water management and aquatic systems restoration in Dane County "has been a beacon for ecologically responsible development far beyond the county's borders," said Nelson Institute interim director **Gregg Mitman**.

Mitman cited Potter's guidance of 17 of the institute's annual water resources management workshops as proof of his dedication to the Wisconsin Idea, the university's commitment to share its expertise with the people of the state. These intensive summer workshops typically unite teams of graduate students with government and nonprofit client organizations to protect and improve water quality, recreational opportunities, and other public benefits in Wisconsin communities.

An enthusiastic supporter of local watershed and resource protection groups, Potter also has donated many evenings of his time to provide the best science and engineering information on storm water management, groundwater levels, and flooding potential. At the national level, he is a fellow of both the American Association for the Advancement of Science and the American Geophysical Union and has served on 10 committees of the National



Kenneth Potter

Academy of Sciences/National Research Council.

The Nelson professorship is awarded by the Nelson Institute to members of its faculty for innovative thinking, research excellence, and significant contributions to the institute.

"This professorship is named for one of the great champions of environmental stewardship in our state's and nation's history," said Mitman. "It is an outstanding honor that demonstrates the high esteem in which the awardee is held by his or her colleagues."

Kudos for Kucharik



Chris Kucharik earned a position on UW-Madison's faculty in January after working as a staff scientist with the Nelson Institute's Center

for Sustainability and the Global Environment (SAGE) for nearly a decade.

Kucharik, who became an assistant professor of agronomy and environ-

mental studies, retains his affiliation with SAGE and continues to serve on the science council of the Wisconsin Initiative on Climate Change Impacts, of which the Nelson Institute is a founding partner.

A native of southeastern Wisconsin, Kucharik earned his B.S. and Ph.D. in atmospheric sciences, with a Ph.D. minor in soil science, at UW–Madison in the 1990s. His research interests range from biosphere-atmosphere interactions, global climate change, and prairie-grassland ecology and restoration to sustainable agriculture, yield-climate relationships, and carbon sequestration through improved land management.

Gearing up for Tales II

Surpassing a highly praised debut with an inspired sequel is always a challenge, but the odds look good for those hoping to recapture the magic of the Nelson Institute's 2007 environmental film festival, *Tales from Planet Earth*, a few months from now.

Roughly 35 films — about 10 more than before — will be featured in the second edition of the free environmental festival, slated for November 6–8 in downtown Madison. And unlike its predecessor, this fall's event will highlight a full year of community engagement. It also will spawn a mini-festival that will travel to several other Wisconsin communities in 2010.

Hosted by the Nelson Institute's Center for Culture, History, and Environment, the festival again will boast four issue-based "strands" of films, two graduate-level film courses, a variety of panel and audience discussions, and community interactions with filmmakers. The theme of the first *Tales from Planet Earth* was hope. This year's theme is justice.

But this time, the organizers seek to make the festival a national model,



FILM FESTIVAL

MADISON, WISCONSIN

using film to catalyze community action on broad-ranging issues in environment and sustainability, like food, health, energy, climate, and biodiversity. The lead-up to the next *Tales* actually began last fall with the screening of two independent films in partnership with Madison-area nonprofit groups and continued this spring with comparable screenings of three more.

Its new emphasis on community engagement helped *Tales from Planet Earth* secure funding this year from the Ira and Ineva Reilly Baldwin Wisconsin Idea Endowment, which supports university projects built on collaborations with Wisconsin communities and outside organizations.

For the latest details on the festival, visit TalesFromPlanetEarth.com.

Blogging through

What's it like to be a graduate student these days? Ask **Andrew Stuhl**. Better yet, check out his blog: sum.ology.

The Nelson Institute alumnus (LR M.S.'07) started the blog last fall, when he returned to UW–Madison to begin a Ph.D. in the history of science after spending a year in Canada's Northwest Territories.

"The blog concerns the life of graduate students, in general, and the skills, experiences, and knowledge created therein that are applicable outside of academia," says Stuhl. It also features products of his research on Arctic environmental history. See phdetails.wordpress.com.

Health research rewarded

Nelson Institute professor **Jonathan Patz** received a Romnes Faculty Fellowship from the university this winter in recognition of his contributions to date and his "great potential" as a researcher. Romnes award winners have earned tenure within the past four years, and each receives \$50,000 in research support.



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Patz, also a professor of population health sciences, co-chaired the health expert panel of the U.S. National Assessment of Climate Change and for the past 15 years has been a lead author for the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, the organization that shared the 2007 Nobel Peace Prize with Al Gore. In addition, he presides over the International Association for Ecology and Health and dedicates his research and teaching to sustainable public health solutions with a focus on the health effects of climate change, energy, and deforestation in the tropics.

Alumni Notes

What's new in your career and life? Write us at incommon@mailplus.wisc.edu or at *In Common*, c/o Tom Sinclair, Nelson Institute for Environmental Studies, 122E Science Hall, 550 N. Park St., Madison, WI 53706-1491.

Janet Battista (WRM'89) has retired from the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources but is, she says, "volunteering as best I can to carry on with environmental activism."

Todd Bryan (WRM'78) received the 2008 Best Dissertation Award from the Academy of Management's Organizations and the Natural Environment (ONE) Division for his dissertation at the School of Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Michigan. Bryan also received one of eight Distinguished Dissertation Awards from the Rackham Graduate School at Michigan. His topic, *Aligning Identity: Social Identity and Changing Context in Community-based Environmental Conflict*, draws from social identity theory to explain the transformation of an intractable environmental conflict. Bryan is currently a senior associate and mediator with The Keystone Center in Colorado.

Perry Cabot (LR Ph.D.'06) received a Fulbright Scholarship to lecture and conduct research on soil management and irrigation of biofuel crops from April through August of this year at the University of Zambia. He recently married Leah Benzschawel, who will join him in Zambia. Cabot is an extension water resources specialist and faculty affiliate in the Department of Civil and Environmental Engineering at Colorado State University. He studies water leasing arrangements, limited irrigation for energy crops, and water requirements for revegetating previously irrigated lands.

Andrea Dearlove (LR M.S.'96) is an outreach specialist with the Academic Partnerships Program of UW-Madison's Institute for Clinical and Translational Research (ICTR), which ties research to practical improvements in human health.

Amanda Fuller (LR M.S.'02) and **Justin Mog** (LR M.S.'99/Ph.D.'03) returned to the United States in December following a stint as volunteers with the Peace Corps in Paraguay, where they set up a seed bank to give farmers alternatives to growing cotton. "After 3 years in Paraguay, working for positive changes where change is painfully slow, a person can become jaded," they wrote. "But having gone into it with open eyes and open hearts, we don't think that's happened. We are leaving with optimism and hope and a feeling of satisfaction that we've contributed in good ways."



Ainka Granderson (CBSD/EAP'07) coordinates development and university membership for the

National Council for Science and the Environment (NCSE) in Washington, D.C., where she says she is putting both her CBSD degree and EAP certificate to good use. Granderson engages academics, federal agencies, business and civil society organizations in advancing environmental and energy education, research and funding in high schools, colleges, and universities across the country. She also does development and fundraising work for NCSE's initiatives on biodiversity conservation, communicating science to the



Justin Mog and Amanda Fuller in their garden in Paraguay shortly before completing a three-year assignment in the Peace Corps in December: "We wrote a letter to President-elect Obama suggesting that he establish a model organic 'Hope Garden' on the White House lawn ... and of course hire us to manage it!"

public through the online Earth Portal, and the new Green Economy.

Steve Hoffman (LR M.S.'88/Ph.D.'96) is now "double majoring" as an independent environmental consultant and executive director of a nonprofit focusing on sustainable energy issues in northwestern Washington state. He is putting together pilot projects on both industrial and residential energy efficiency.

Patricia Howard (LR M.S.'93) recently accepted a position as a policy advisor to Portland City Commissioner Amanda Fritz in Portland, Oregon. Her work focuses on water quality issues in the Willamette and lower Columbia rivers.

Kirk Kapfhammer (ES'92) is a principal and founding member of Endpoint Solutions, an environmental consulting company. Based in Hales Corners, Wisconsin, he has worked on environmental assessment and remediation projects across the

United States and abroad. He co-founded Endpoint last July after working more than 15 years as a hydrogeologist and project manager for both large and small consulting companies.

Gini Knight (CBSD'08) created the illustrations for a new field guide, *The Common Trees of Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Reserve*, published by INBio, the Costa Rican Biodiversity Institute. Many people consider

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Illustration by Gini Knight of Ochroma Pyramidale from The Common Trees of Cabo Blanco Absolute Nature Preserve.

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ALUMNI, from page 10

the Cabo Blanco Reserve to be the cradle of conservation in Costa Rica; it was the first in what is now a magnificent, world-class system of protected areas. The new guide features detailed descriptions in Spanish and English and illustrations for 106 species of trees. Selected illustrations from the guide are on display through May in the lobby of UW–Madison’s Bradley Memorial Building, 1225 Linden Drive, home of the Nelson Institute’s Center for Culture, History, and Environment.

Bob Merideth (WRM’77) is publications editor in chief at the University of Arizona’s Udall Center for Studies in Public Policy. In his spare time he serves on the board of directors of the Tucson Audubon Society.

Lynn Persson (WRM’79) retired from the Wisconsin Department of Natural

Resources in 2006. She now sells hand-woven ethnic doll clothes and other items from Central and South America at **terraexperience.com**. Her business, she says, strives to support sustainable development, fair trade, local artisans, their communities, and environment.

Robert Taylor (LR M.S.’90) took his degree back to California and worked as a restoration ecologist for an environmental consulting firm in San Diego for five years. He returned to graduate school at the University of California, Santa Barbara, and earned a Ph.D. in geography in 2004. He currently works as a biogeographer and fire GIS specialist for the National Park Service in and around the Santa Monica Mountains National Recreation Area. He lives in Ventura, California, with his wife and daughter.

ES = Environmental Studies Undergraduate Certificate Program; CBSD = Conservation Biology and Sustainable Development Graduate Program; EAP = Energy Analysis and Policy Graduate Certificate; ER = Environment and Resources Graduate Program (after 2007); LR=Land Resources Graduate

Program (through 2007); WRM = Water Resources Management Graduate Program

For more alumni notes or to leave a note of your own, visit the Nelson Institute alumni Facebook site. Look for the Facebook link at **nelson.wisc.edu/alumni**.

Staff Notes

Sara Lorence, well known to recent alumni as a staffer in the Nelson Institute’s Academic Programs Office since 2002, started a new job in February as a student services coordinator for academic departments of the College of Agricultural and Life Sciences in Russell Laboratories.

Former Nelson Institute director **Arthur Sacks** now directs the Guy T. McBride, Jr. Honors Program in Public Affairs for Engineers at the Colorado School of Mines (CSM). He also was that school’s Distinguished Lecturer for 2008–09. His address to the faculty, “The Purpose of the University: The Future, Sustainability, and Educational Transformation,” highlighted the creation of the Nelson Institute and the Interdisciplinary Committee on the Future of Man that gave birth to it. Sacks joined the CSM faculty in 1993 and directed its Division of Liberal Arts and International Studies for 11 years before serving as associate vice president for academic and faculty affairs from 2003 to 2008.