

To: 4-H Agents, Program Assistants, Coaches, and Volunteers  
From: Martha Monroe, School of Forest Resources and Conservation  
Re: 2010 4-H Forest Ecology Contest

The 2010 4-H Forest Ecology Contest will be held at Austin Cary Memorial Forest north of Gainesville FL on April 17, 2010. This information will help you sponsor a team of youth to compete in the contest.

Please print and complete the team registration information at [http://florida4h.org/events/fe\\_contest.shtml](http://florida4h.org/events/fe_contest.shtml) and return it with a check to Brynn in the State 4-H office. **Registrations must be postmarked by March 26<sup>th</sup>, to be accepted.** Late registrations will be accepted until April 2<sup>nd</sup> with a late fee of \$30.00 per county. There is a charge of \$3.00 per competing youth for registration, insurance, and snacks. Adults must also register, but do not need to pay.

The purpose of the contest is to challenge youth to learn more about Florida's forests, to feel more comfortable outdoors, and to enjoy the varied and complex world of nature.

Check-in will be from 8:30 to 9:00 AM; the contest will begin promptly at 9:00 AM. Youth will be assigned to a group to complete each of six stations. Each competitor should bring a clipboard, a pencil, a lunch, and all their forest identification skills. **All participants must wear shoes, socks, and long pants.** The area is full of ticks. A hat, sunscreen, and water bottle are also recommended.

Observers will be encouraged to take a self-guided hike along one of our nature trails while the contest is underway. When it has concluded, a contest coordinator will be available to introduce each station to familiarize observers with the contest. Identification stations will be open for competitors to ask questions at this time. Counties are encouraged to bring non-competing youth to learn more about the Forest Ecology contest. Please register these youth by printing and completing the non-competing form.

Like previous years, the bulk of the Forest Ecology contest will be testing identification skills. Youth will be asked to identify trees and non-woody plants from sample leaves and fruits, insects and diseases from damage, wildlife, and evidence of forest health. A map and compass section will test map symbols with Juniors and compass skills with Intermediates and Seniors. Youth will also walk along a trail and identify specimens in the woods. A multiple-choice portion of the contest will cover two ecosystems: Bottomland Hardwoods and Sandhill Forests. Juniors will learn about the ecosystems from adventure stories while older youth will read the standard text. Youth will be given a list of species from which they will copy the appropriate number -- they will not have to spell common names or know Latin names. There will be from 10 to 25 questions on each of the six sections. Information on the details of each component of the contest can be found at [www.sfrc.ufl.edu/4h](http://www.sfrc.ufl.edu/4h).

Seniors will compete in the tree measurement station. We will be following the national protocols, available at: <http://www.aces.edu/n4hfi/page76.html>. Senior teams will also compete in a Quiz Bowl. The questions will be derived from the natural history information from trees and from the information in Units A and B: <http://www.aces.edu/n4hfi/page83.html>

Three age groups will follow the new Florida 4-H categories. Youth will compete in teams of up to 4 individuals at the Junior, Intermediate, and Senior levels. Juniors are youth between the ages of 8 and 10 years; Intermediates are youth between the ages of 11 and 13; and Seniors are between the ages of 14-18 of September 1 of the current 4-H program year. Each county can register up to 24 youth in 2 Junior, Intermediate, and Senior teams. Individual youth may compete if there are not enough to form a team. Teams of a minimum of 3 youth may be registered, as the three highest scores from a 4-person team are used in competition. In accordance to State regulations, senior participants must not have been a previous state winner in the first place Senior team. (Individual winners are welcome to compete with a team.)

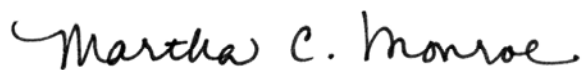
This year an award will be given to the highest scoring team from a county that has not participated in the Forest Ecology Contest in the last 2 years. Point values for each section may not be equal. Ties will be broken by using the Field Ecology Hike score first, the Tree Identification score second, Ecosystem Quiz third, then Plant Identification, Insect Identification, and Map and Compass scores.

A \$500 scholarship from the University of Florida's School of Forest Resources and Conservation will be offered to the high-scoring Senior Individual of the 4-H Forest Ecology Contest if he or she chooses to enroll at the University of Florida and declare a major in the School of Forest Resources and Conservation. The scholarship will be renewed for up to 3 additional years if a grade point average of 3.0 is maintained.

The Awards Ceremony will be held after lunch when all scoring is concluded. We anticipate this will be between 12:30 and 1:30 PM. Guided hikes and outdoor activities will be offered between the conclusion of the competition and the awards ceremony.

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact Martha Monroe at [mcmonroe@ufl.edu](mailto:mcmonroe@ufl.edu) or Annie Oxarart at [oxarart@ufl.edu](mailto:oxarart@ufl.edu) (352-846-0144).

Best wishes to you all!



Martha Monroe

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