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## **Jerry Karnas joins Sustainable Communities Workshop as keynote speaker**

Sarasota County has added Jerry Karnas, noted environmentalist and former director of the Global Warming Campaign for the National Wildlife Federation, to its lineup for the 2007 Sustainable Communities Workshop, which will be held from Oct. 31–Nov. 1 at the Gulfcoast Florida Girl Scout Council Headquarters, 4780 Cattlemen Road, Sarasota. As Keynote Speaker for Day One, Karnas will lend his observations on Florida's ecological climate in a content-rich learning opportunity for planners, builders and developers, engineers, architects and landscape architects, as well as transportation sector representatives.

Jerry Karnas is currently Florida Climate Project Director for Environmental Defense, which partners with businesses, governments and communities to find practical environmental solutions. While with the National Wildlife Federation, Karnas led campaigns to protect Florida's waterways and wildlife from mercury contamination, safeguard the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge from oil drilling, and ensure that the Clean Water Act continues to provide protections for waterways.

Karnas has been educating Floridians on conservation since the start of his career at Newfound Harbor Marine Institute on Florida's Big Pine Key. There, he headed efforts to educate Florida's elementary, middle and high school students on coral reef ecology. In 1999, he joined the Save the Manatee Club, where he was instrumental in then Gov. Jeb Bush's Manatee Summit and helped local governments complete comprehensive manatee protection plans.

The 2007 Sustainable Communities Workshop will focus on developing sustainable communities. Participants will learn to plan developments that take advantage of natural systems and conserve area water resources; meet resource efficient housing and transportation demands and support economic development as they prepare to give their own organizations a competitive advantage.

Other speakers scheduled to present are: Brett Cunningham, Water Resources Discipline Director for Jones Edmunds and Associates, Inc., Clark Hull, ERP Program Director for Southwest Florida Water Management District, Marilyn Kershner of Florida Green Communities, Melanie Simmons, Ph.D. of Healthy Development, Inc.; and Jason Hight of the Florida Department of Health.

Eric Livingston, chief of the Bureau of Watershed Management for Florida Department of Environmental Protection, will be Keynote Speaker for Day Two. The bureau is responsible for the implementation of the state's watershed management and restoration program.

Registration for the workshop is \$100 for professionals and the general public. A special rate of \$25 is available to students.

The workshop is offering several sponsorship opportunities for businesses and educational institutions. To become a sponsor, or to learn more about the event, contact the Sarasota County Call Center at 941-861-5000 and ask for the Sustainable Communities Workshop, or visit [www.sustainablecommunities.scgov.net](http://www.sustainablecommunities.scgov.net).

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