

## **PROPERTY VALUE IMPACTS OF PROXIMITY TO THE CABOT-KOPPERS SUPERFUND SITE IN GAINESVILLE, FL**

***Megan Donovan***

University of Florida, Gainesville, FL, USA

The effects of environmental contamination on communities varies considerably depending on community context and the nature and extent of the contamination. Property values are a common economic means of assessing community impacts of proximity to environmental contamination, particularly in the case of Superfund sites. This study explores how property values changed over time in the face of a prolonged Superfund site cleanup process. The case examined is the Stephen Foster (SF) neighborhood located adjacent to the Cabot-Koppers Superfund site in Gainesville, FL. I used property value data from the Florida Department of Revenue to look at two specific time periods representing watershed periods in the cleanup process: (1) 2000-2005 and (2) 2006-2011. The first time period represents events surrounding discovery of contamination from the site in the Floridan aquifer. The second time period represents events characterized by a series of litigations related to the site. The SF neighborhood and a comparison group neighborhood are represented by corresponding census tracts. The hypothesis that the impacts would be more profound for the SF neighborhood due to proximity to the Cabot-Koppers site was not supported for both time periods. The reputation of the SF neighborhood was tainted due to proximity to the site and this may have resulted in consistent property values over time in contrast to the comparison neighborhood. In effect, the reputation of the SF neighborhood may have acted as a protective factor against the economic downturn in the second time period.

**PRESENTER BIO:** Megan Donovan is a current PhD student in the School of Natural Resources and Environment at the University of Florida. She has extensive experience in the nonprofit sector, particularly in youth development. She currently works on a research project investigating decision-making processes of farmers raising organic vegetables in high tunnels.