

FLORIDA KEYS INVASIVE EXOTICS TASK FORCE
Meeting Minutes

Meeting Date: June 9, 2011

Location: Marathon Fire House

Attendees: Alison Higgins (volunteer); Janice Duquesnel (State Parks); Randy Grau (FWC); Cody Miller (IRC); Josh Karow (IRC); Garry Eckerson (Monroe Co); Chad Anderson (USFWS); Carrie Backlund (Navy); Monica Woll (OHT); Beth Bergh (Monroe Co)

IPM Update:

Alison submitted this year's proposals to IPM at the end of May. Available funding should be about the same, maybe a little less than last year.

Janice informed the group that both North Key Largo State Park projects (A&B) have been completed this year. Therefore, the State Park is withdrawing Project B from next year's list of proposals and would like to submit a different proposal. The group agreed that since this new proposal was not brought to the ranking meeting, it should be placed at the bottom of the list. Due to the removal of the KL project, the ranking is revised as follows:

- 1 – USFWS contracted technician crew (37 points)
- 2 – FWC contracted technician crew (37 points)
- 3 – Monroe County technician crew (34 points)
- 4 – Monroe County contracted removal (33 points)
- 5 – Key West Botanical Garden (29 points)
- 6 – Naval Air Station (25 points)
- 7 – Overseas Heritage Trail (24 points)

Any new project proposals submitted will be ranked in the order they are received (starting with # 8).

Change of leadership for the Task Force:

The group discussed the chairperson position and agreed to proceed with co-chairs to lead the group. Janice and Beth volunteered to be the co-chairs for a period of one year. The co-chairs will be responsible for scheduling and leading meetings, providing leadership on the annual work plan, preparing an annual report, leading bi-annual plant ranking meetings and coordinating trainings. Beth agreed to continue to provide minutes for meetings.

Alison has been receiving notifications over the phone when someone contacts the "I've Got 1" hotline. The notifications will now be forwarded to Randy (FWC) and the Key Deer Refuge.

2011 Annual Plan:

The Annual Plan was reviewed and updated as needed. Due to lack of participation by local businesses, the group decided to put the "Green Thumb Certification" program on hold for now. The program may be picked up again in the future.

Plant News:

Cody reported on the EDRR workday held on May 12. Target species included burma reed and guinea grass. The work was conducted in the Cunningham Lane area of Big Pine and on Lower Sugarloaf Key.

In recognition of August being "Land Conservation Month", Alison will prepare a press release on the EDRR species for local publications.

Animal News:

Randy and Chad have agreed to provide leadership to the Task Force on animal issues. They will provide an update on the creation of an "Invasive Animals" fact sheet at the next meeting.

Jim Duquesnel (Bahia Honda State Park) is preparing an iguana fact sheet that should be available soon.

There has been a recent sighting of a monitor lizard in Key Largo (mm 98 ish). The animal has not been captured.

Patti updated the group on the status of the Gambian pouch rats on Grassy Key. The FWC has recently started trapping again and has caught two rats (one male and one female).

Recognition of service:

The Task Force recognized Tina Henize and Garry Eckerson for their many years of service to the environment of the Keys, including working the past 6 years as Invasive Exotic Technicians for Monroe County.

The Task Force recognized Alison Higgins for her hard work, dedication and leadership over the past 10 years. We're glad she's stickin' around!

NEXT MEETING DATES:

Thursday, July 14 (9 am to noon) – EDRR workday – Air potato – Cody to lead

Thursday, July 28 – Herbicide Workshop at Windley Key (led by Janice) – contact Janice Duquesnel if you're interested in attending

Thursday, August 11 (1 pm to 4 pm) – Task Force Meeting

Thursday, September 8 (9am to noon) – EDRR workday

Thursday, October 13 (1 pm to 4 pm) – Task Force Meeting