

COOPERATIVE INVASIVE SPECIES MANAGEMENT AREA (CISMA) OF LAKE COUNTY

SUCSESSES AND HIGHLIGHTS FROM 2009

- Formed February 23, 2009, as the result of a workshop about invasive species in Lake County that had a cross-sectional audience of about 70 people.
- Represents interests from over 30 different agencies, organizations, and individual land owners
- Trained City of Tavares staff in invasive exotic plant identification, removal, and proper herbicide application techniques during work day at Tavares Nature Park
- Gathered local volunteers to help remove dumpster-loads of Brazilian Pepper, Chinaberry, Camphor trees, and several other invasive plants in the short space of 3 hours.
- Use the CISMA as an early detection/rapid response network
 - Sickle pod (*Dichrostachys cinerea*) was found by railroad tracks in Eustis and another infestation was found in a vacant lot as result of efforts of CISMA partners. This thorny thicket forming plant from Africa has been documented in four other counties so far and has great potential to spread. Botanists from the UF Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants are currently working through the CISMA of Lake County as a partnership network to obtain research grants to eradicate this plant from Lake County and from Florida as a whole.
 - Data shared about sightings and treatments of Old Word climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*) provides significant information about the migration patterns of this fern and help to catch new outlier infestations.
- Conducted invasive aquatics workshop at the agricultural center
 - Participants were taught about the rules and regulations regarding treatment and removal of invasive aquatic plants as well as how to properly identify and control invasive aquatic plants. This workshop was attended by 37 persons representing the public and private sector as well as individual landowners. Attendees were from Lake, Orange, and Seminole counties.
- Established a website to help the community learn about CISMAs in general and the work that the CISMA of Lake County is doing (www.floridainvasives.org, then click on Lake County).
- Completed a draft of a Five Year Strategic Plan
- Started developing an AlterNatives publication, a guide for replacing invasive exotic plants with native species, specifically for the Lake County area
- Started developing waiver forms, working with the Florida Invasive Species Partnership, to make it possible for us to develop a “Weed Warriors” pool of volunteers to help organize work days to take out invasive plants as they are reported, and eventually also to help with controlling invasive animals.