

# Suncoast Regional Working Group

## Hillsborough River Invasive Exotic Plant Control

PCL: Hillsborough River State Park

Project Manager: Florida Park Service (DEP)

Robert Wilhelm, Park Manager

15402 US 301 North, Thonotosassa, Florida 33592

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Project ID: SC-016, SC-025

Fiscal Year 01/02

County: Hillsborough

PCL Size: 3,383 acres

Project Size: 186 acres

Project Cost: \$41,400

Hillsborough River State Park is a part of the Heritage Rivers GEOpark complex and is located in northern Hillsborough County about seven miles south of the town of Zephyrhills. The Park is one of Florida's earliest parks, created in the original Civil Conservation Corps (CCC) era, 1934. The park features both natural and cultural or historic resources. The Hillsborough River flows over a limestone outcrop to create rapids; a hammock of live oak, sabal palm, magnolia and hickory trees border the river. Cypress swamps, pine flatwoods, and marshes make up the most of the remaining acreage. As for historical resources, Fort Foster (now reconstructed on its original site) guarded a bridge crossing the Hillsborough River, which was part of the Fort King Military Road in 1836 during the Second Seminole Indian War. The Fort was a crucial supply depot. The park contains the area in which Major Francis Dade crossed the Hillsborough River en route to a defeat by the Seminoles.

This project involved treatment of 110 acres, followed by a treatment of 111 acres, of which 36 acres overlapped with the first area (i.e., a re-treatment).

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Solanum viarum</i>	tropical soda apple	Category I	foliar	Roundup
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	cogon grass	Category I	foliar	Roundup
<i>Paederia foetida</i>	skunk vine	Category I	foliar	Roundup



Skunk vine carpets the ground and forms a dense tangle among trees (left).



Once the skunk vine is removed (right), and maintenance control established, the native groundcover can recover, often quite quickly.

**Alafia River Invasive Exotic Plant Control**

PCL: Alafia River State Park

Project Manager: Florida Park Service (DEP)  
Robert Wilhelm, Park Manager  
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Phone: 813-987-6870, Fax: 813-987-6773  
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Project ID: SC-017, SC-026

Fiscal Year 01/02

County: Hillsborough

PCL Size: 6,345 acres

Project Size: 260 acres

Project Cost: \$49,500

Alafia River State Park is part of the Heritage Rivers GEOPark complex and is located in southeastern Hillsborough County about thirty miles southeast of the town of Tampa. Prior to its donation to the state, the property was a phosphate mine called Lonesome Mine, named after the nearby community of Fort Lonesome, which was itself named after a frontier outpost of the US Army that occupied the site during the Third Seminole War. The land includes part of the Alafia River Corridor Save Our Rivers Project designed to protect the 100-year floodplain of the river.

Cogon grass arrived in the early to mid-1970s during mining then later restoration efforts and has rapidly spread in several areas of the park. Cogon grass must be eliminated in order to revegetate reclaimed uplands with local native plants. If left unchecked, this exotic perennial weed threatens not only park habitat but adjacent public and private lands as well. This project involved a treatment on a 110-acre area and a 150-acre area.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	cogon grass	Category I	foliar	Roundup



A thick patch of cogon grass that has gone to seed (left).



The weeds looks dead (right), but a second treatment will be needed to control the profuse regrowth that will sprout within a few months.

**Frog Creek Invasive Exotic Plant Control**

County: Manatee

PCL: Terra Ceia State Buffer Preserve

PCL Size: 1424.08 acres

Project Manager: Office of Coastal and Aquatic Managed Areas (DEP)

Lee Hughes, Park Service Specialist

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Project ID: SC-013

Project Size: 17 acres

Fiscal Year 01/02

Project Cost: \$21,873.05

Frog Creek is a blackwater stream that runs through the Terra Ceia State Buffer Preserve (TCBP) and empties into Terra Ceia Bay. The project area is an approximately 1-mile stretch of the creek. The area to be treated was approximately 17 acres in size and consisted of a mix of native vegetation and Brazilian pepper. A fairly abrupt vegetative change occurs on the creek, which shifts from upland hammock to mangroves. The upland hammock consists primarily of live oak and cabbage palm, but also includes southern red cedar. The hammock area had a considerable amount of Brazilian pepper. The density of infestation on the south side of the creek was approximately 50%; the north side was 90%. The average diameter of pepper trees was estimated at 6", with the largest being 10".

In addition to clearing the littoral zone to allow growth of native species, eradicating the pepper also alleviated navigational and flushing problems experienced on the creek. In some areas, the pepper took up one-half of the width of the creek. Water hyacinths that were treated further upstream were breaking up and getting caught in the pepper, making parts of the creek impassable. The SWFWMD has begun a large-scale restoration project within the TCBP, which will continue for approximately five years. The restoration project will not directly affect the creek project area, but it will eventually help to increase the number of visitors the TCBP receives.

This project also encompassed a portion of a hiking trail project that will provide better public access to Frog Creek, and create more areas for bank fishing. The trail is located on the south side of the creek and will extend along the creek for approximately one mile. TCBP staff cleared "windows" within the treated area to provide access to the creek bank, which was restricted in some areas by the Brazilian pepper. Staff has been successful in eradicating large areas of exotic vegetation using Americorps and organized volunteer groups. SWFWMD will clear Australian pines from other portions of the hiking trail and the trail parking area. USFWS staff and Americorps have to date put in over 200 hours on clearing the hiking trail of exotics. The combined land management budget for FY 00-01, including salaries and equipment, was over \$100,000.

The state endangered prickly apple (*Cereus gracilis*), Tampa vervain (*Glandularia tampensis*), wild cotton (*Gossypium hirsutum*), and hand fern (*Ophioglossum palmatum*), and the federally endangered Florida golden aster (*Chrysopsis floridana*) are found on TCPB. The federally listed peregrine falcon (*Falco peregrinus*), bald eagle (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*), wood stork (*Mycteria americana*) and Eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*) have also been observed at the preserve.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	Category I	basal bark	Garlon 4



The scenic beauty of Frog Creek was marred by intruding Brazilian pepper trees.



Brazilian pepper lined both shores of the creek, capturing floating islands of water-hyacinth that blocked navigational access (above). In some areas, Brazilian pepper had become the dominant vegetation (right).



**Duette Park Invasive Exotic Plant Control**

County: Manatee

PCL: Duette Regional Park

PCL Size: 24,000 acres

Project Manager: Manatee County

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Project ID: SC-024

Project Size: 70 acres

Fiscal Year 01/02

Project Cost: \$15,750

Duette Park is located in northeastern Manatee County in the eastern portion of the Lake Manatee watershed. The property is managed by the Conservation Lands Management Division of Manatee County. Land uses such as citrus production and vegetable farming were abandoned upon purchase of the property. Current land uses include silviculture, passive recreation, wildlife and ecosystem management, and well field operations. Cogon grass primarily occurred in the areas previously utilized for vegetable production. The importance of this park is its many undisturbed prairies, scrub, and flatwoods. This project not only protected these natural communities from invasion, but will lead to the restoration of the invaded areas. There are fourteen natural communities found in the Park, including Dry Prairie, Pine Flatwoods, Xeric Oak Scrub, Sand Pine Scrub, Sandhill, Hardwood Swamp, Hardwood Hammock, and Cypress Swamp.

Manatee County had \$100,000 dedicated for the current and prior fiscal year to exotics removal on this park.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	cogon grass	Category I	foliar	Roundup

**A. L. Anderson Park Invasive Exotic Plant Control**

County: Pinellas

PCL: A. L. Anderson Park

PCL Size: 128 acres

Project Manager: Pinellas County Park Department

Mike Zubler, Park Supervisor  
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 Phone: 727-943-4085, Fax: 727-943-4087  
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Project ID: SC-021

Project Size: 33.5 acres

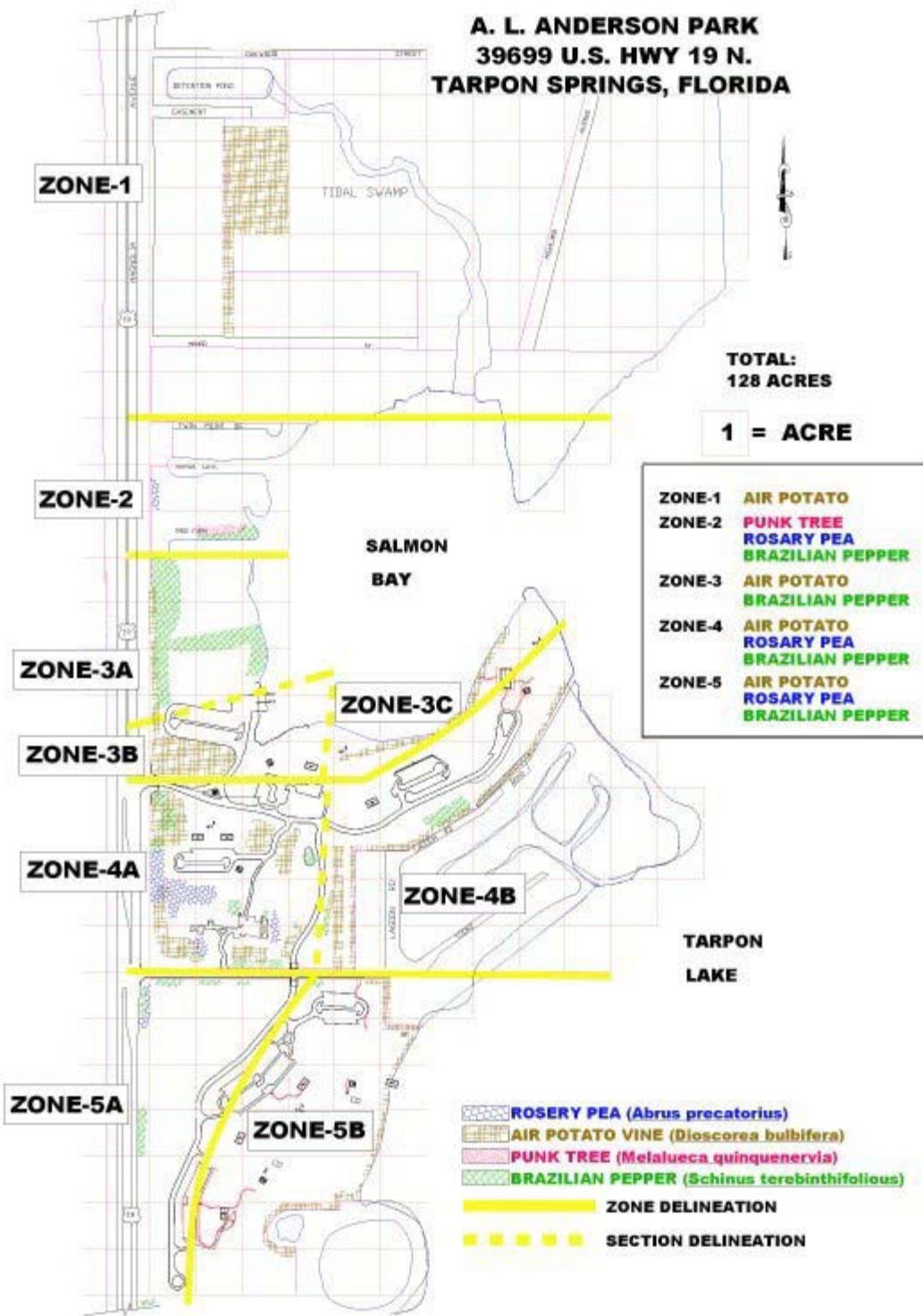
Fiscal Year 01/02

Project Cost: \$32,674.13

A. L. Anderson Park is a 128-acre tract of parkland used for passive recreation. Of the total acreage, approximately 33½ acres of upland and wetland transition areas are infested with air-potato, Brazilian pepper, punk tree, and rosary pea of varying densities ranging from moderate to severe infestation. Additionally, small pockets of natural vegetation throughout the more heavily used area of the park are succumbing to air-potato infestation.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	Category I	basal bark	Garlon 4
<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	camphor tree	Category I	basal bark	Garlon 4
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Chinaberry	Category I	basal bark	Garlon 4
<i>Schefflera actinophylla</i>	schefflera	Category I	basal bark	Garlon 4
<i>Psidium cattleianum</i>	strawberry guava	Category I	basal bark	Garlon 4
<i>Nandina domestica</i>	heavenly bamboo	Category I	cut stump	Garlon 4
<i>Melaleuca quinquenervia</i>	melaleuca	Category I	cut stump	Arsenal/Garlon 4
<i>Colocasia esculenta</i>	wild taro	Category I	foliar	Rodeo
<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	rosary pea	Category I	hack-and-squirt	Rodeo
<i>Lygodium microphyllum</i>	Old World climbing fern	Category I	hack-and-squirt	Rodeo
<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i>	air-potato	Category I	basal/cut stump	Rodeo
			foliar	Rodeo/Garlon 4

**A. L. ANDERSON PARK  
39699 U.S. HWY 19 N.  
TARPON SPRINGS, FLORIDA**



## Lemon Bay Park Invasive Exotic Plant Control

PCL: Lemon Bay Park

Project Manager: Sarasota County Parks and Recreation  
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Project ID: SC-023

Fiscal Year 01/02

County: Sarasota

PCL Size: 205 acres

Project Size: 205 acres

Project Cost: \$12,052.67

Lemon Bay Park and Environmental Center encompasses pine flatwoods, mangrove estuary, and freshwater swamp. The park is contiguous with the Lemon Bay State Aquatic Preserve and shares approximately one mile of shoreline.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	Category I	cut stump	Garlon 4
<i>Lantana camara</i>	lantana	Category I	cut stump	Garlon 4

