

West Central Regional Working Group

Avon Park Invasive Exotic Plant Control

PCL: Avon Park Air Force Range

Project Manager: Department of Defense, U. S. Air Force
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County: Highlands, Polk

PCL Size: 106,110 acres

Project ID: WC-006

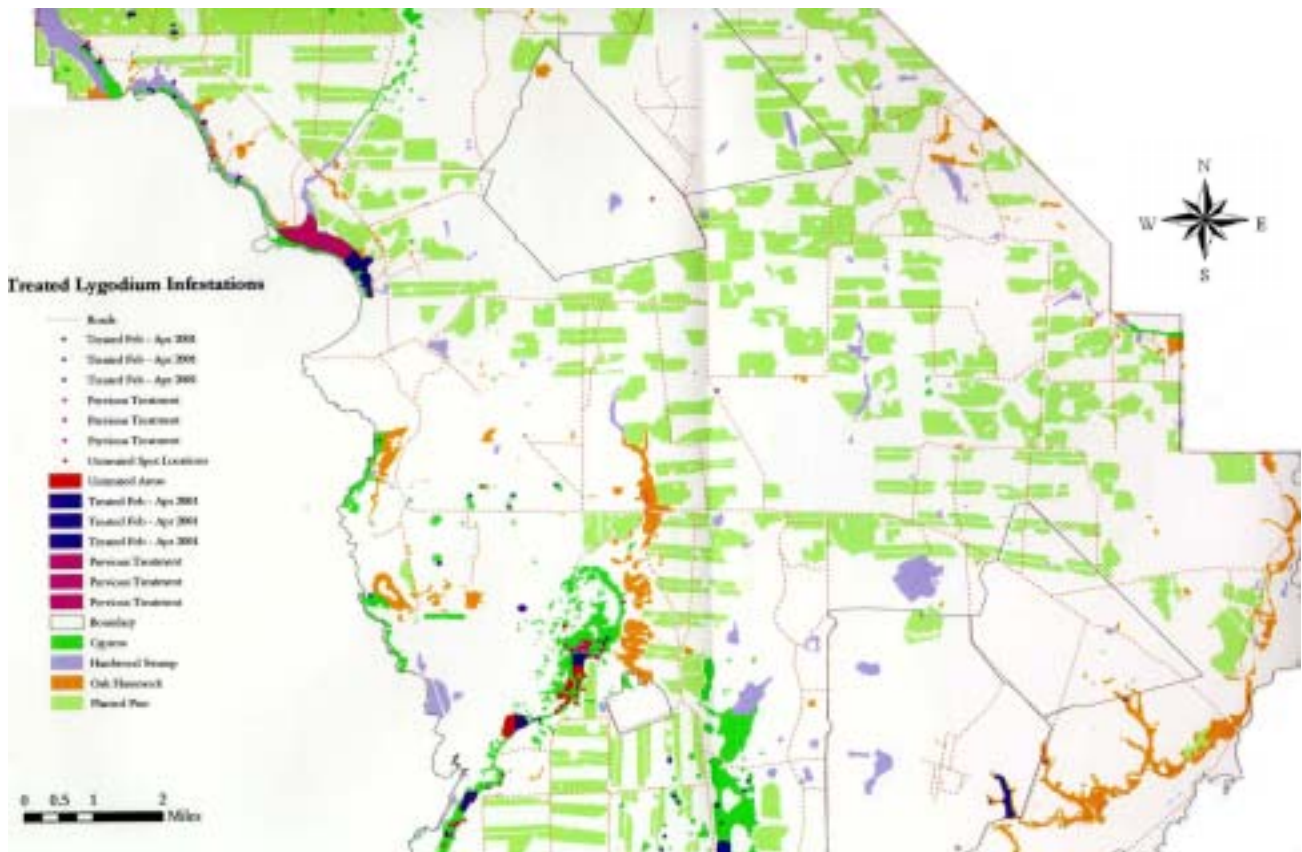
Project Size: 1,400 acres

Fiscal Year 01/02

Project Cost: \$46,911.64

Avon Park Air Force Range (APAFR) is perhaps the largest parcel of natural land in the Greater Arbuckle Ecosystem. Its numerous natural communities include the rare Scrub, Dry Prairie, and Cutthroat Grass Seeps. The APAFR supports an amazing array of rare plants and animals, including twelve animals and two plants that are listed as federally endangered or threatened species. Controlling invasive exotics provides a cornerstone in preventing the spread of exotics into adjacent or nearby conservation areas such as Kissimmee Prairie State Preserve, Kissimmee River WMD properties, Lake Wales Ridge State Forest, and Lake Arbuckle State Park, among others. This project controlled Japanese climbing fern and Old World climbing fern that infested approximately 30% of the cypress and hardwood swamps (~1,400 acres) at APAFR. The South Florida Water Management District administered this project under an existing agreement with DEP.

| Target Plants | Common Name | FLEPPC Rank | Treatment | Herbicide |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>Lygodium japonicum</i> | Japanese climbing fern | Category I | foliar | Rodeo |
| <i>Lygodium microphyllum</i> | Old World climbing fern | Category I | foliar | Rodeo |





The climbing ferns (*Lygodium* spp.) are a severe threat to natural communities throughout Florida. While many trees are adapted to low ground fires, the fern creates a “fire ladder” (left) that allows flames to reach the canopy.



The ferns quickly resprout (right) from millions of spores and have been found contaminating commercially available pine straw.

Retreatment is necessary maintenance after initial control efforts. Many exotic plant invaders can be eradicated in a few years with vigilant care. Climbing ferns, on the other hand, can be dispersed as spores for miles by wind, or coast-to-coast, as occurred with Hurricane Andrew.



Highlands Hammock Dianella Lily Invasive Exotic Plant Control

County: Highlands

PCL: Highlands Hammock State Park

PCL Size: 8,140 acres

Project Manager: Florida Park Service
 Peter Anderson, Park Manager
 5931 Hammock Road, Sebring, Florida 33872
 Phone: 863-386-6099, Fax: 863-386-6095
 E-mail: peter.anderson@dep.state.fl.us

Project ID: WC-013

Project Size: 14 acres

Fiscal Year 01/02

Project Cost: \$14,000

Highlands Hammock State Park is located four miles west of Sebring along the Lake Wales Ridge. Natural communities in the park include Sand Pine Scrub, Pine Flatwoods, Scrubby Flatwoods, Cypress Swamp, Bayhead, Freshwater Marsh, and old growth Hardwood Hammock. The Florida scrub-jay resides on the property. This project controlled infestations of Dianella lily and coral ardisia in the park. The infestations were located near the campground, in the picnic area, and along the loop drive, and were spreading through the park at the edge of the flatwoods, hammocks, and bayheads.

| Target Plants | Common Name | FLEPPC Rank | Treatment | Herbicide |
|--------------------------|---------------|-------------|------------|-----------|
| <i>Ardisia crenata</i> | coral ardisia | Category I | basal bark | Garlon 4 |
| <i>Dianella caerulea</i> | Dianella lily | n/a | foliar | Rodeo |

Kissimmee River Floodplain Invasive Exotic Plant Control

County: Osceola, Okeechobee

PCL: Lower Kissimmee River Valley

PCL Size: 80,000 acres

Project Manager: South Florida Water Management District
 Jeff McLemore, Land Manager
 P.O. Box 2033, Okeechobee, Florida 34973-2033
 Phone: 1-800-250-4200, x3022, Fax: 863-462-5269
 E-mail: jmclemo@sfwmd.gov

Project ID: WC-008

Project Size: 5,000 acres

Fiscal Year 01/02

Project Cost: \$100,000

The Kissimmee River Floodplain, managed by the South Florida Water Management District, lies between Lake Kissimmee and Lake Okeechobee on either side of the C-38 canal or the restored Kissimmee River, depending on the location in the river corridor. District-owned land encompasses approximately 80,000 acres. The Kissimmee River floodplain is divided into five *pools* that are defined by locks on the C-38 canal. One of these locks, the B locks, was removed but the pool names remain useful for area designation. The areas of the floodplain and adjacent uplands affected by Old World climbing fern (*Lygodium microphyllum*) include broadleaf marsh, woody shrub, wetland hardwood, wax myrtle, and cypress community types. These areas are not easily accessible from the ground or by airboat, so aerial spraying from a helicopter was used.

In Pool A, the most northern pool, a point of *Lygodium* exists approximately two miles south of State Highway 60 on an island within the canal. In Pool C, *Lygodium* infests approximately 740 acres of floodplain with coverage from 30% to 90%. Approximately 300 acres of the infested area is still privately owned. The District was seeking permission to treat this area and has been pursuing acquisition of the land. Pool D contains approximately 200 acres of *Lygodium* infestation with coverage ranging from 40% to 80%. Pool E contains approximately 850 acres of affected land with coverage approaching 90% in all but about five acres of land in this pool.

| Target Plants | Common Name | FLEPPC Rank | Treatment | Herbicide |
|------------------------------|-------------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>Lygodium microphyllum</i> | Old World climbing fern | Category I | aerial | Rodeo |

Tenoroc Invasive Exotic Plant Control

PCL: Tenoroc Fish Management Area

Project Manager: Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

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E-mail: eggemad@gfc.state.fl.us

Project ID: WC-011

Fiscal Year 01/02

County: Polk

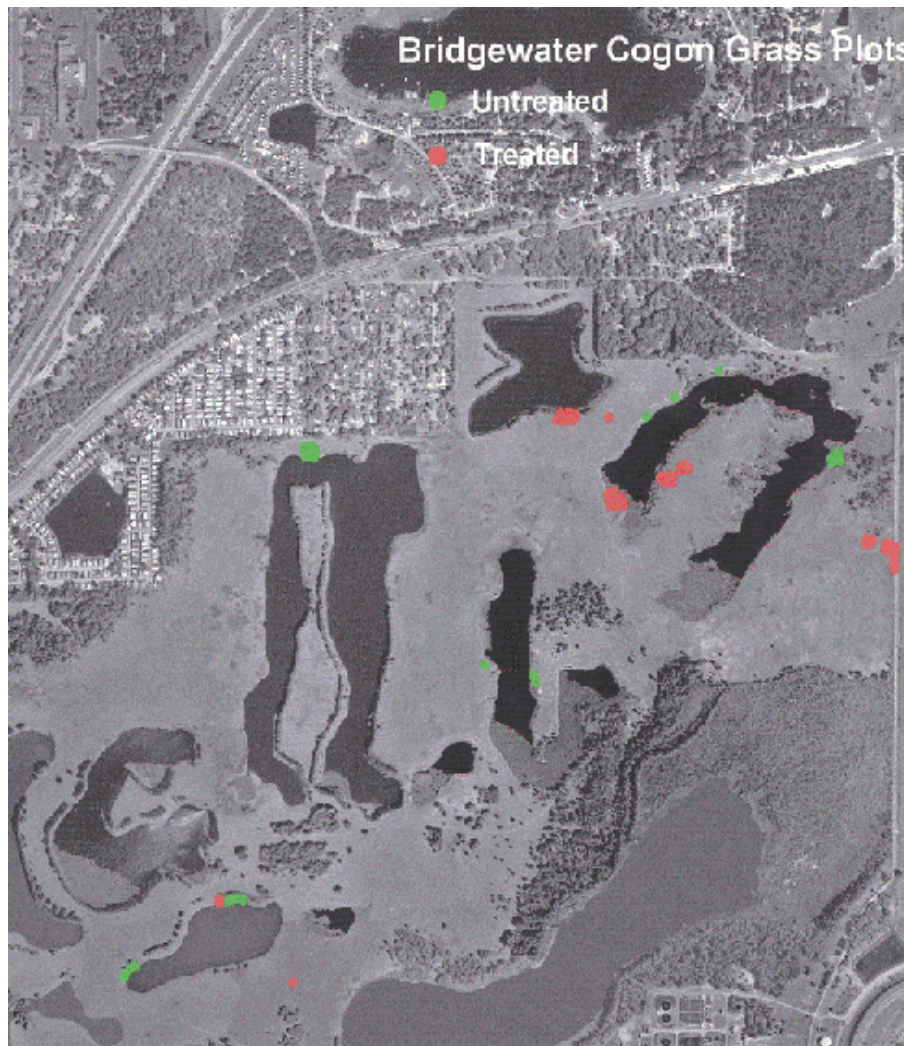
PCL Size: 7,348 acres

Project Size: 968 acres

Project Cost: \$34,964.70

The Tenoroc Fish Management Area (TFMA) is located two miles northeast of Lakeland. TFMA consists of reclaimed phosphate mining lands from the 1970s that are now used for fishing and other recreation. This project involved the recently purchased 968-acre Bridgewater tract. The primary target was cogon grass, which along with other exotics was scattered across the site. Estimated total coverage was less than 1%.

| Target Plants | Common Name | FLEPPC Rank | Treatment | Herbicide |
|---------------------------------|---------------------|-------------|-----------|-----------|
| <i>Imperata cylindrica</i> | cogon grass | Category I | foliar | Roundup |
| <i>Solanum viarum</i> | tropical soda apple | Category I | foliar | Roundup |
| <i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i> | Brazilian pepper | Category I | cut stump | Garlon 4 |
| <i>Sapium sebiferum</i> | Chinese tallow | Category I | cut stump | Garlon 4 |
| <i>Cinnamomum camphora</i> | camphor tree | Category I | cut stump | Garlon 4 |
| <i>Melia azedarach</i> | Chinaberry | Category I | cut stump | Garlon 4 |





A dense growth of cogon grass (left) is difficult to treat. The mass of older stems can prevent herbicide from reaching the newer shoots.

Removing the thick thatch by prescribed fire (right) or mowing increases the effectiveness of control efforts.



When the new growth appears in a few months (cogon grass is well adapted to fire), it will be much easier to treat.