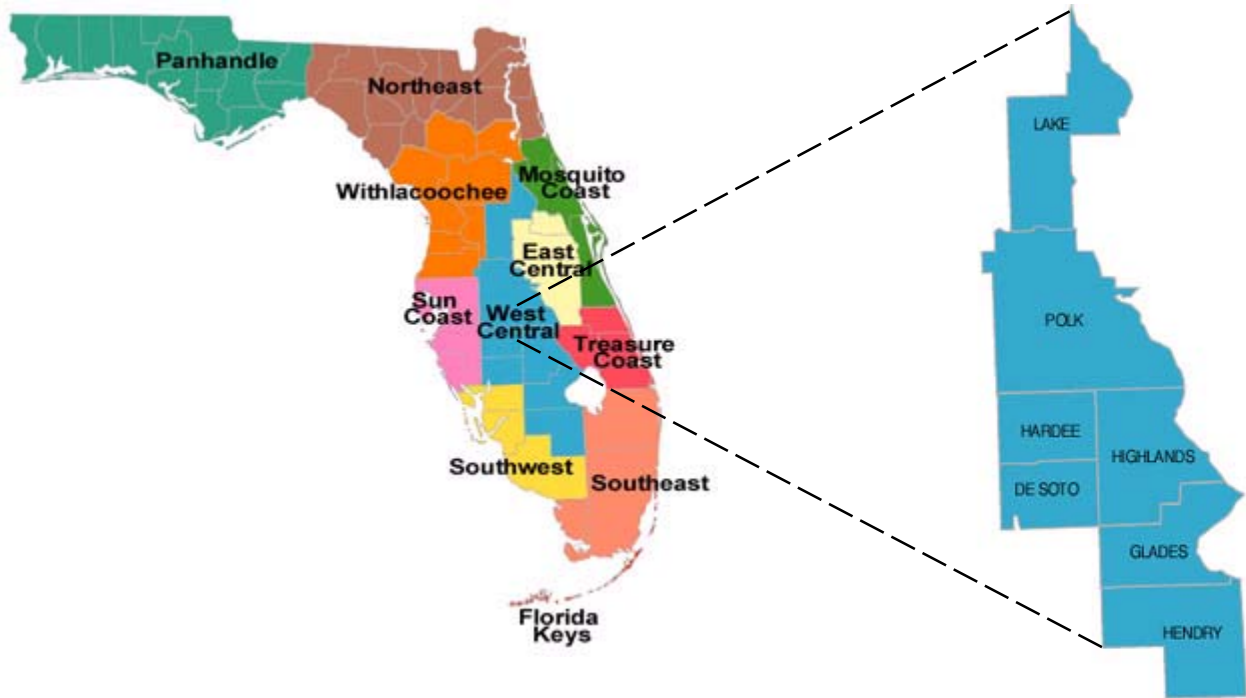


West Central Regional Working Group



The West Central Regional Working Group liaison is Mr. Matt Phillips, DEP Bureau of Invasive Plant Management, 2001 Homeland Garfield Road, Bartow, Florida 33830, phone: 941-534-7074, fax: 941-534-7143, e-mail: matt.phillips@dep.state.fl.us. Seven projects were completed in this region, three of which were in Lake County, three in Polk County, and one in Hendry County.

Okaloacoochee Slough Invasive Exotic Plant Control		County: Hendry, Collier
PCL: Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest		PCL Size: 32,039 acres
Project Manager: Florida Division of Forestry Kevin Podkowka, Senior Forester 10941 Palm Beach Boulevard, Ft. Myers, Florida 33905 Phone: 863-612-0776, Fax: 863-612-0780 E-mail: podkowk@doacs.state.fl.us		
Project ID: WC-019	Project Size: 2,142 acres	
Fiscal Year 02/03	Project Cost: \$207,768.07	

The Okaloacoochee Slough State Forest was purchased in 1998 as a single contiguous tract without inholdings. The forest is generally hydric in nature, with approximately 11,000 acres of mesic flatwoods and oak-cabbage palm hammocks persisting on the driest sites. The remaining two-thirds of the area is made up of a variety of plant communities such as dome swamps, swale, depression marshes, and swamps. The targeted exotic species affected all of the plant community types on the forest.

The project area was historically used for timber and cattle operations. Areas of exotic vegetation were found throughout the forest, except within the Okaloacoochee Slough itself. The total area needing control was approximately 19,000 acres. This area was broken down into blocks ranging from 30 to 500 acres to allow for a phased project approach. Within blocks, the infested acres are not contiguous and the concentrations of targeted species vary from only a few plants over the block, to potentially thousands. No areas were known to contain more than 1 acre of contiguous infestation; instead, most blocks had scattered infestations of the target species.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	Category I	basal/cut stump	Garlon 4
<i>Psidium guajava</i>	guava	Category I	cut stump	Garlon 4



One of the most common treatment methods is a basal bark application of herbicide using a handheld sprayer. A trained crew can treat thousands of trees each day—one stump at a time.



Crew composition is limited to eight applicators for each crew chief, to ensure proper supervision of work, safety procedures, and control methods.

Lake Louisa Invasive Exotic Plant Control

County: Lake
PCL Size: 4,450 acres

PCL: Lake Louisa State Park
Project Manager: Florida Park Service (DEP)
Rosi Mulholland, District Biologist
12549 State Park Drive, Clermont, Florida 34711
Phone: 352-394-3436, Fax: 352-394-1318
E-mail: rosi.mulholland@dep.state.fl.us

Project ID: WC-009
Fiscal Year 02/03

Project Size: 531 acres
Project Cost: \$12,100

Much of the uplands of the park are former sandhills that were converted to orange groves. The citrus froze out in the late 1980s, prior to state acquisition. Rosary pea and lantana occur throughout the park, primarily growing over sour citrus shrubs. The project area included sandhill lake margins along an area where partial restoration of the former sandhill community had begun. The estimated coverage of rosary pea and lantana was 25-35%, following the old orange grove rows.

At least two endangered plants can be found in the park: Curtiss' milkweed (*Asclepias curtissii*) and Florida bonamia (*Bonamia grandiflora*). Lake Louisa State Park adjoins Hilochee Wildlife Management Area and the Ecobank private mitigation site. The park lies within the Green Swamp Area of Critical State Concern.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Lantana camara</i>	lantana	Category I	foliar	Garlon 3A
<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	rosary pea	Category I	foliar	Garlon 3A
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	Category I	cut stump	Garlon 3A



LCWA Invasive Exotic Plant Control

County: Lake

PCL: *various* (see below)PCL Size: *various*

Project Manager: Lake County Water Authority
 R. D. VanderBleek, Land Management Specialist
 107 N. Lake Avenue, Tavares, Florida 32778
 Phone: 352-343-3777, Fax: 352-343-4259
 E-mail: deanv@lcwa.org

Project ID: WC-026

Project Size: 78.1 acres

Fiscal Year 02/03

Project Cost: \$1,847.58

The Oklawaha Basin Recreation and Water Conservation and Control Authority, commonly called the Lake County Water Authority (LCWA), was created by state law in 1953. The LCWA has acquired over 6,000 acres for protection through its Land Preservation Program. An active and expanded invasive plant control program is integral to LCWA's land management goals.

The Bourlay Historic Nature Park is an 83-acre property located on the southwest shore of Lake Griffin that includes a planted pine forest and 1930s era house. The former owner collected and grew a wide variety of exotic tropical plant species on the site. The property slopes gradually from the pine plantation to the shoreline, with transitional hardwood hammock species giving way to statuesque bald cypress. The 68-acre Sabal Bluff Preserve is located on the southeast shore of Lake Griffin and contained planted pine with a lantana understory, an isolated 10-acre marsh, and an abandoned orange grove.

The occurrences of nuisance species are relatively small areas scattered on the Preserves. There are no large acreages completely dominated by the invasive species, rather pervasive populations intermixed with native species. There were a total of 15 different species targeted, ranging from 0.25 acres to 40 acres. The bureau provided herbicide for initial and maintenance control through its Herbicide Bank.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Lantana camara</i>	lantana	Category I	basal	Garlon 4
			foliar	Roundup/Rodeo
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Chinaberry	Category I	basal	Garlon 4
			foliar	Roundup
<i>Dioscorea bulbifera</i>	air-potato	Category I	foliar	Garlon 4/Roundup
<i>Lygodium japonicum</i>	Japanese climbing fern	Category I	foliar	Garlon 4/Roundup
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	cogon grass	Category I	foliar	Garlon 4
<i>Abrus precatorius</i>	rosary pea	Category I	foliar	Roundup/Rodeo
<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	camphor tree	Category I	basal	Garlon 4
<i>Psidium guajava</i>	guava	Category I	basal	Garlon 4
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	Category I	basal	Garlon 4
<i>Urena lobata</i>	Caesar's weed	Category II	foliar	Garlon 4/Roundup
<i>Rhynchelytrum repens</i>	Natal grass	Category II	foliar	Roundup
<i>Koeleruteria elegans</i>	flamegold tree	Category II	foliar	Roundup
<i>Alternanthera philoxeroides</i>	alligator weed	Category II	foliar	Rodeo
<i>Ricinus communis</i>	castor bean	Category II	basal	Garlon 4
<i>Sorghum halepense</i>	Johnson grass	n/a	basal	Garlon 4
			foliar	Roundup

Haines Creek Invasive Exotic Plant Control

County: Lake

PCL: Haines Creek Park

PCL Size: 36 acres

Project Manager: Lake County Parks and Recreation
 John M. Bringard, Parks Services Supervisor
 P. O. Box 7800, Tavares, Florida 32778
 Phone: 352-742-0597, Fax: 352-742-4543
 E-mail: jblakecounty@aol.com

Project ID: WC-010

Project Size: 36 acres

Fiscal Year 02/03

Project Cost: \$18,950.04

Haines Creek Park consists of disturbed and natural wetlands adjacent to Haines Creek, which is part of the Ocklawaha River Basin. The treatment area is a wetland island that is accessed by a small bridge in the park. A man-made berm was created on the western and southern edges of the island by dredging for an adjacent canal many years ago. This disturbed land allowed a foothold for exotics to move in. The County recently discovered that it held a deed to this property.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Sapium sebiferum</i>	Chinese tallow	Category I	girdle/basal	Garlon 4
			hand pull	n/a
<i>Cinnamomum camphora</i>	camphor tree	Category I	girdle/basal	Garlon 4
			hand pull	n/a
<i>Melia azedarach</i>	Chinaberry	Category I	basal bark	Garlon 4

Avon Park/Kissimmee Lygodium Invasive Exotic Plant Control

County: Polk, Highlands

PCL: Avon Park Air Force Range

PCL Size: 106,110 acres

Project Manager: Department of Defense, U. S. Air Force
 Steve Orzell, OLA, DET 1, 347 OG/CEVN
 29 South Blvd, Avon Park Air Force Range, Florida 33825-5700
 Phone: 941-452-4119 Ext 317, Fax: 941-452-4161
 E-mail: steve.orzell@avonpark.macdill.af.mil

Project ID: WC-016

Project Size: 1,333.4 acres

Fiscal Year 02/03

Project Cost: \$198,601.10

Avon Park Air Force Range (APAFR) is 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 exotic plants at APAFR assists in preventing the spread of exotics into adjacent or nearby natural areas and endangered species habitats such as Kissimmee Prairie State Preserve, Kissimmee River WMD properties, Lake Wales Ridge State Forest, and Lake Arbuckle State Park, among others.

This project provided ground-based maintenance control for Japanese climbing fern and Old World climbing fern that infested approximately 3,100 acres of cypress and hardwood swamps at APAFR and on adjacent SFWMD lands in the Kissimmee River Valley. Avon Park Air Force Range received \$50,000 in Department of Defense funds that were contracted out for herbicide control of the climbing ferns. In addition, a student intern through the Student Conservation Association is employed at a cost of \$16,000 to continue an on-going survey for the ferns on APAFR. SFWMD budgeted \$100,000 for exotic plant control in the Kissimmee River Valley for fiscal year 2003 (October 1st 2002-September 30th 2003). These funds were used primarily for *Lygodium* control. One contractor was used for ground application and another for aerial spraying. In addition, SFWMD provided two part-time employees to serve as ground crew for additional *Lygodium* treatment.

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

Hilochee Osprey Unit Invasive Exotic Plant Control

County: Polk

PCL: Hilochee Wildlife Management Area

PCL Size: 6,100 acres

Project Manager: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Cyndi A. Gates, Area Biologist

12932 CR 474, Clermont, Florida 34711

Phone: 352-241-8501, Fax: 352-242-4478

E-mail: gatesc@fwc.state.fl.us

Project ID: WC-018

Project Size: 20 acres

Fiscal Year 02/03

Project Cost: \$7,521

The Osprey Unit of Hilochee WMA is located in northeastern Polk County. The property extends along both sides of Interstate 4 from County Road 557 east nearly to U.S. Highway 27. Important habitat features include cypress strands and bottomland hardwood forests. Cutthroat grass occurs on the site. The area rates very high as a “biodiversity hot spot” (seven or more focal species) with very high species richness. The property formerly supported relatively high densities of nesting Florida sandhill cranes. Other listed species known to occur on the property include the gopher tortoise, wood stork, bald eagle, little blue heron, and white ibis. This site is among the southernmost locations for the rare spotted turtle.

The project site consists of improved pasture, abandoned citrus groves, pine flatwoods, cypress swamp, and freshwater marsh. Sand mining, land clearing, and improved pasture have affected parts of the site. Most of the site was used for cattle grazing up until January 2002. Approximately 20 acres of citrus grove and roadways were infested with cogon grass. In addition to the contracted control work, the land manager also received approximately \$3,000 of herbicide from the bureau’s Herbicide Bank.

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

Cogon grass is a common roadside weed believed to be spread through contaminated roadfill material. Unfortunately, this nonnative grass has been leaving the roadsides and invading adjacent natural communities. It is a fire-adapted species, which makes it a particular problem for Florida. Some experts have named cogon grass “the world’s worst weed.”



Bridgewater Invasive Exotic Plant Maintenance Control

County: Polk

PCL: Tenoroc Fish Management Area

PCL Size: 7,348 acres

Project Manager: Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Eric Johnson

3829 Tenoroc Mine Road, Lakeland, Florida 33805

Phone: 863-499-2421, Fax: 863-499-2692

E-mail: eric.johnson@fwc.state.fl.us

Project ID: WC-022

Project Size: 75.3 acres

Fiscal Year 02/03

Project Cost: \$17,000

The Tenoroc Fish Management Area (TFMA) is located two miles northeast of Lakeland. TFMA consists of reclaimed phosphate mining lands from the mid-1970s that are now used for fishing and other recreation. The project site is a newly acquired land tract known as the Bridgewater Tract, which lies on western side of Tenoroc, adjacent to Lake Parker. The Bridgewater Tract is actually composed of two parcels totaling 969 acres. Bridgewater is a reclaimed phosphate mining land site consisting of lakes, wetlands, and uplands. Areas of invasive exotic vegetation were found scattered throughout the site and were somewhat concentrated around the lakes in particular. Exotic vegetation treatment was previously funded by BIPM in 2001 resulting in approximately 80% treatment coverage. The fact that exotics remained scattered throughout the site, often obscured by taller vegetation, made it difficult to canvass the entire site. Several treated exotics species showed signs of re-growth and seedlings from some previously treated plants were prevalent. Routine exotic plant maintenance activities involving multiple searches/treatments are required to obtain optimal control, especially with species such as cogon grass, which has a high re-infestation potential. Exotic plant coverage was estimated at less than 1%.

Target Plants	Common Name	FLEPPC Rank	Treatment	Herbicide
<i>Imperata cylindrica</i>	cogon grass	Category I	cut foliar	Glypro+Arsenal
<i>Solanum viarum</i>	tropical soda apple	Category I	foliar	Glypro+Arsenal
<i>Schinus terebinthifolius</i>	Brazilian pepper	Category I	cut stump	Glypro+Arsenal
<i>Sapium sebiferum</i>	Chinese tallow	Category I	basal	Glypro+Arsenal

