

Program Name: South Florida Water Management District Invasive Species Management
Project Name: Invasive Species Research and Information Exchange
Project ID: 2503
Lead Agency: SFWMD

Strategic Plan Goal(s) Addressed: 2.B.1

Measurable Output(s): Development of new management approaches for invasive plants through applied research and information exchange between cooperators; development of management plans for priority invasive species; educational outreach to the general public on invasive species prevention.

Project Synopsis: The SFWMD continues to conduct and fund research programs in herbicide development, management techniques, and biological control of priority invasive plants and animals. Herbicide evaluations are improving the chemical control efficacy for downy rose myrtle, hydrilla, shoebutton Ardisia, South American water grass, and cattail. The SFWMD also collaborates with other agencies on education and outreach. Recent programs include the distribution of invasive animal identification booklets and information booths at several public outreach events.

There is still a large gap in acquiring sufficient funding to implement the multi-species control program with multi-agency integration. However, some success has been achieved through collaboration with Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMA), particularly the Everglades and Treasure Coast CISMAs. The Everglades CISMA has achieved many successes in improving implementation of regional control strategies, including early detection and rapid response activities. For example, collaborative efforts to reduce localized populations of the mile-a-minute weed, sacred ibis, and Asian black mangrove have been very successful. The Everglades CISMA initiated efforts to respond to newly discovered populations of Argentine black & white tegus, northern African pythons, and most recently, Oustalet's chameleon.

Current Status: Development and refinement of control tools for invasive species has recently focused on herbicides for cattail, Brazilian pepper, shoebuttan Ardisia, downy rosemyrtle, and limpograss. The District continues to fund biological control research institutions for melaleuca, Old World climbing fern and Brazilian pepper. The SFWMD expends \$425,000 annually toward development of biological control agents for these three invasive species. The U.S. Department of Agriculture Agricultural Research Service (USDA-ARS) is implementing a successful biocontrol program for melaleuca and is seeing recent success with a new agent for Old World climbing fern. Surveys for viable control agents for Brazilian pepper continue, but no established control agents are exerting control on Brazilian pepper.

In close collaboration with the National Park Service (NPS), the SFWMD continues its invasive species monitoring program for the Everglades Protection Area. Using aerial and ground-based techniques, the SFWMD and the NPS are collecting operationally useful spatial data for priority invasive plant species. There is now detailed information of major infestations throughout the entire 2.4 million-acre Everglades region.

The SFWMD also conducts and funds research programs in herbicide development, management techniques, and biological control of priority invasive plants and animals. Recent improvements with herbicide controls and successful biological controls are positively impacting management programs. The SFWMD and other agencies continue to lack effective control tools for many priority invasive animals, although some progress is being made on giant constrictor snake trapping and monitoring. A pilot project recently evaluated the feasibility of using detection dogs to locate pythons along canals and levees and in fallow fields. Field test scenarios using live and bagged pythons resulted in 91 percent detection by dogs. The use of detection dogs is recommended for canal and levee searches as well as rapid response efforts when a constrictor has been sighted.

Cost: Total
 Project Development: N/A
 Land Acquisition: N/A

Project Schedule:
 Start Date: 2007
 Finish Date: TBD

Detailed Project Budget Information (\$1000) / Expenditures to Date

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	2012	Total
SFWMD*	110	160	156	206	307	207	1,146

*SFWMD: Expenditures to date per fiscal year. The SFWMD also funds several biological control programs with USDA/ARS, which are identified on their project sheets.

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