

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 Old World climbing fern, downy rosemyrtle, hydrilla, torpedograss, limpograss, South American watergrass, and Brazilian pepper.

The SFWMD also collaborates with other agencies on education and outreach. Recent programs include the distribution of notification cards for Burmese pythons and invasive plant identification cards.

There is still a large gap in acquiring sufficient funding to implement the multi-species control program with multi-agency integration. However, governmental agencies and other entities have formed a cooperative invasive species management area (CISMA) for the Everglades region. The Everglades CISMA has achieved early results in improving implementation of regional control strategies, including early detection and rapid response activities. For example, collaborative efforts to reduce localized populations of the sacred ibis and kripa, a newly discovered invasive plant in South Florida mangrove, have been very successful.

Current Status: Other research has focused on factors contributing to the invasiveness of priority species such as Old World climbing fern and ongoing funding to biological control research institutions for melaleuca, Old World climbing fern, 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.

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 continues to support research and development of control tools for Burmese pythons and other giant constrictors in the south Florida ecosystem. SFWMD is a participating partner on trap development efforts (\$46,500/yr) and this year began a cooperative effort with USDA Wildlife Services focused on trap deployment strategies and visual search methods (\$100,000 for 2010).

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. Ongoing invasive plant monitoring efforts are providing important information to land managers and scientists.

Cost: Total

Project Development: N/A

Land Acquisition: N/A

Implementation: \$5,000,000 per year for 15 years

Operations and Maintenance: \$2,000,000 per year thereafter for maintenance control

Project Schedule:

Start Date: 2007

Finish Date: TBD

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

	2007	2008	2009	2010	2011	Total
SFWMD*	110	160	156	206		632

*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.

Contact: LeRoy Rodgers, SFWMD, 561-682-2773