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# **General Government Policy Council**

**Wednesday, February 3, 2010  
Morris Hall  
1:00 PM – 3:15 PM**

**Larry Cretul  
Speaker**

**Baxter Troutman  
Chairman**

# **Council Meeting Notice**

## **HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES**

### **General Government Policy Council**

**Start Date and Time:** Wednesday, February 03, 2010 01:00 pm  
**End Date and Time:** Wednesday, February 03, 2010 03:15 pm  
**Location:** Morris Hall (17 HOB)  
**Duration:** 2.25 hrs

Updates from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

Deer Management/Youth Program Issues – Diane Eggeman, Director of the Division of Hunting and Game Management, FWC

Reptiles of Concern Update – Col. Jim Brown, Director of the Division of Law Enforcement, FWC

Snapper/Grouper Update – Mark Robson, Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries Management, FWC

Federal Saltwater Fishing Registration Exemption Update – Mark Robson, Director of the Division of Marine Fisheries Management, FWC

Florida Process for Listing Imperiled Animal Species Update – Tim Breault, Director of the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation, FWC

Invasive Plant Control Update - Tim Breault, Director of the Division of Habitat and Species Conservation, FWC

**NOTICE FINALIZED on 01/27/2010 16:23 by TUCK.SHIRLEY**



# Deer Management



Diane Eggeman

Director, Division of Hunting and Game Management

# Deer Management

## Changes to deer hunting seasons and zones (Phase I):

- Zone boundaries and season dates
- Purpose
  - align dates with peak deer activity
  - improve hunter satisfaction
- Extensive public and stakeholder input
- Proposed changes have good support from hunters
- Final rules considered at February Commission meeting; effective for the 2010-2011 hunting season

Phase II: Seasons on FWC-managed areas to be aligned during 2010-2011



# Deer Management

## Other deer management issues:

- Staff proposal to allow crossbows to be used during the archery season
  - Process for stakeholder input and rule development currently underway
  - Final decision by Commission expected in September 2010
- Harvest reporting system developed during 2010
- Designated funding for deer management is being provided by deer permit, resulting from legislation in 2009 – Thank you!



# Florida Youth Conservation Centers Network

HELP US CONSERVE FLORIDA'S  
MOST PRECIOUS RESOURCE.



Diane Eggeman

Director, Division of Hunting and Game  
Management

# Nature Deficit Disorder



- Today's kids are increasingly disconnected from nature
- Their health is increasingly at risk



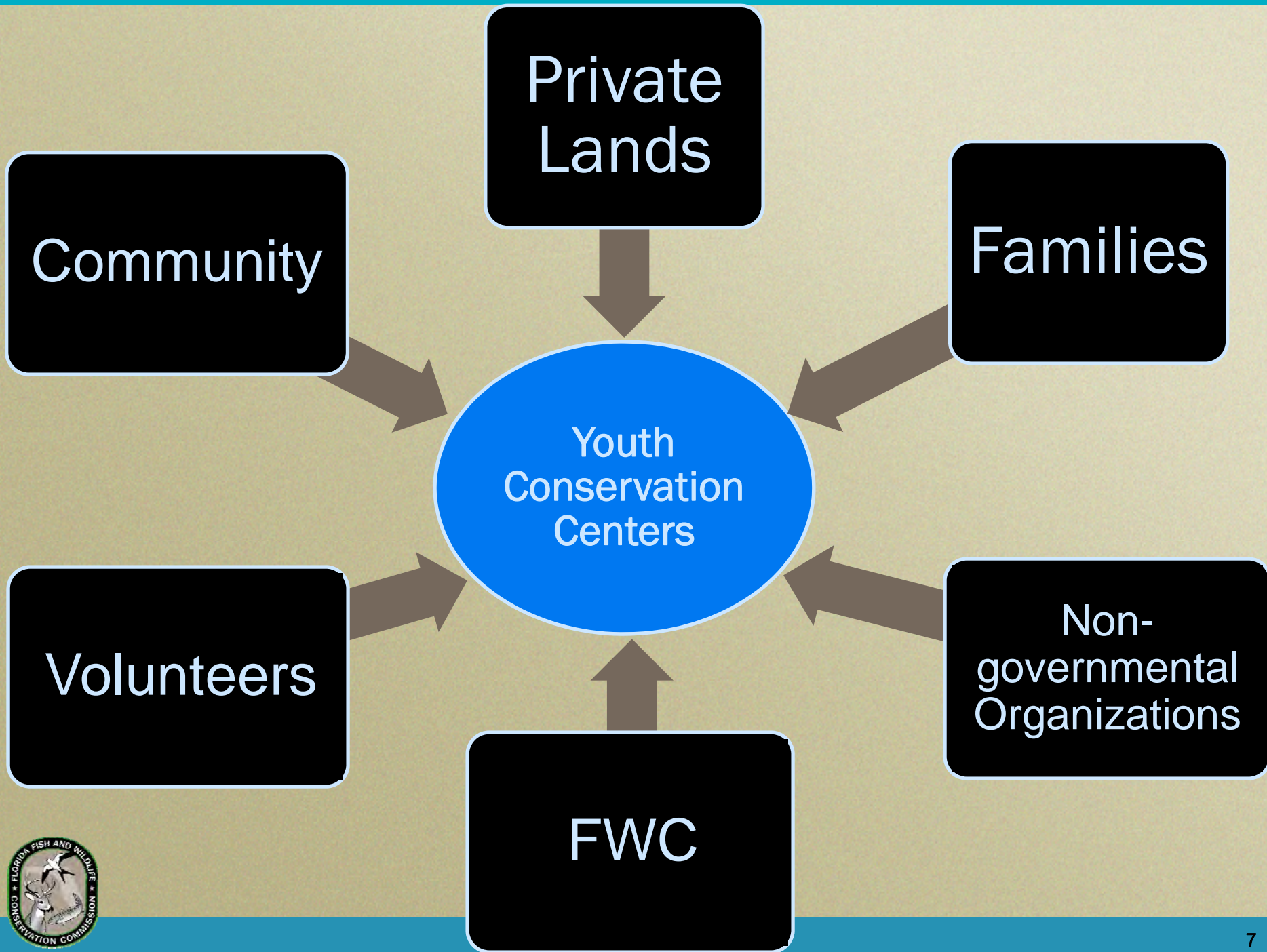


# Reconnect youth with nature and...



...build a better future for all of us





# The Next Generation that Cares!



Questions?



# Reptiles of Concern Update



Col. Jim Brown  
Director, Division of Law Enforcement



# Reptiles of Concern (ROC)

## Large Constrictors and a Large Lizard

- African rock python
- Burmese/Indian python
- Reticulated python
- Amethystine (scrub) python
- Green anaconda
- Nile monitor lizard



# Current Statutory Requirements

## Effective 2008:

- \$100 license to possess a ROC
- Penalties include non-criminal infractions, 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> degree misdemeanors, and 3<sup>rd</sup> degree felonies
- Enhanced penalties for repeat violations including minimum mandatory fines and mandatory license suspensions and/or revocations



# Current FWC Regulations

- Minimum age requirement for ownership
- Strict caging requirements and notification for escapes
- Micro-chipping identification
- Record keeping and reporting requirements
- Disaster and Critical Incident Plan
- Taking of ROCs permitted on FWC managed lands in South Florida during regular hunting season
- ROC Amnesty 24/7 (Executive Order)



# Additional Regulatory Proposals for February Commission Meeting

- Consider expanded control opportunities with hunters
- Reduce identification requirement from 2" to 1" diameter of reptile
- Require labeling on all shipments of live wildlife in inter or intrastate commerce
- ROC Amnesty 24/7





# Enforcement Efforts

- 398 Reptile of Concern licensees
- Initial focus on education and outreach
- FY 08-09: 210 inspections and 15 ROCs seized
- FY 09-10: 270 inspections and 58 ROCs seized
- 98 citations and 132 warnings issued for ROC related violations since January 2008



# Federal Issues

S 373 by Sen. Nelson and HR 2811 by Rep. Meek – adds species to the injurious wildlife list under the Lacey Act

- Prohibits those species from being imported into the United States and shipped across state borders
- S 373 - Adds nine constrictor species
- HR 2811 – Adds three constrictor species

HR 669 by Rep. Bordallo: Requires risk assessments of nonnative species

HR 3215 by Rep. Rooney: Allows hunting pythons in Everglades National Park

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service proposes rule to add nine constrictor species to the injurious wildlife list under the Lacey Act



# Questions?



# Snapper / Grouper Update



Mark Robson

Director, Division of Marine Fisheries Management

# The Issue—Federal Fisheries Management

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- Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
- Reauthorized in 2006
- Strong political support when passed
- Managers must address “overfishing”
- Affected numerous species in Gulf and Atlantic



Sen. Warren Magnuson

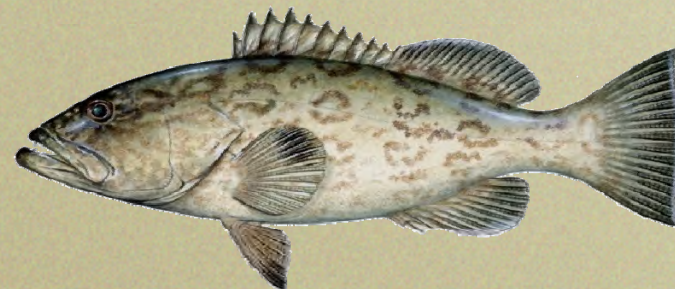
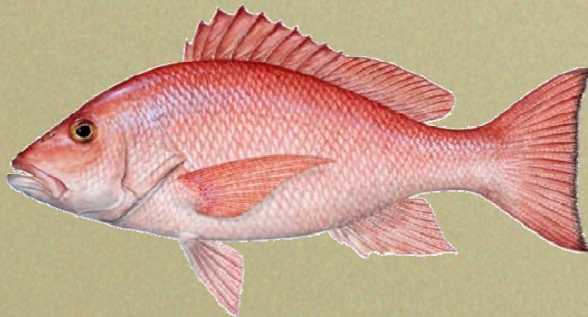


Sen. Ted Stevens



# The Issue—Federal Restrictions on Fishing

- To comply with Congressional requirements to address overfishing and restore depleted stocks, federal managers are implementing additional harvest restrictions for major reef fish species in the Gulf of Mexico and the South Atlantic
  - Red Snapper
  - Grouper



# Why is this Happening Now?

- Many Federal fisheries have been under intense fishing pressure for years
- The Magnuson-Stevens Act includes strict deadlines for action
- Ending overfishing and rebuilding overfished stocks are primary directives
- A number of species are undergoing overfishing (10 in the South Atlantic, 4 in the Gulf of Mexico)
- 2010 deadline to implement restrictive annual limits on harvest



# Managing Fisheries—A Fiscal Analogy

- The fishery or “stock” is your savings account or principal
- “Overfishing” means you are spending more than your annual interest income from the account. You are spending down your principal (the stock)
- “Overfished” means your account has become so small that it cannot provide a meaningful annual interest (fishing)





# New Federal Restrictions

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## Gulf of Mexico: Red Snapper

- Harvest levels reduced in Gulf from 9 million to 5 million pounds per year (2000 to 2008)
- Commercial quota reduced
- Recreational harvest reduced
- Signs of recovery evident



## Gulf of Mexico: Grouper

- 2009 - 25 to 40% reduction in gag grouper harvest required to end overfishing
  - Commercial quota reduced
  - Recreational harvest reduced
- Some improvement for red grouper
  - Increased harvest



# New Federal Restrictions

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## South Atlantic: Red Snapper

- Ending overfishing will take more than an 80% reduction in harvest
- Closing ALL harvest in federal waters
  - Still won't end overfishing
- Looking at closing large area to fishing for other reef fish
  - Designed to reduce incidental harvest of red snapper

## South Atlantic: Grouper

- 2009 - 35% reduction in gag grouper harvest required to end overfishing



# What is Ahead

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- Management driven by future assessments of the fisheries
  - Improvement for Gulf Red Snapper
  - Could get worse for Gulf Gag Grouper
  - South Atlantic Red Snapper closed indefinitely
- Short term pain, especially for Florida fishermen
- Long term goal is to rebuild fisheries
  - Larger “principal”
  - More “interest” available each year



# What is Ahead

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- Understanding in Congress that fishers are hurting due to cumulative impact of closures
- Discussion on ways to lessen the impact on fishers, while rebuilding fisheries
  - Modify Magnuson-Stevens Act?
  - Federal disaster relief?
  - More frequent stock assessments?
  - Other?



# Questions?



# Federal Saltwater Fishing Registration Exemption Update



Mark Robson

Director, Division of Marine Fisheries Management

# The Issue - New Federal Angler Registration / License

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- Required in Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act
- Angler concerns about accuracy of recreational harvest data
- Federal rules enacted
- State license databases used for national harvest surveys
- Gaps in licensing were identified
- Florida's identified gap: saltwater shoreline exemption



# The Issue - New Federal Angler Registration / License

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- Federal rule provides mechanism to use state license databases for harvest surveys, and then exempt anglers in that state from the federal license—if data gaps can be addressed
- 2009 Legislature adopted new saltwater shoreline license
  - Reduced-fee license for residents - \$7.50
  - Regular-fee license for residents - \$15.50
- Federal managers have declared Florida an “exempted state”





# The Outcome: “Exempted State” Status

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- Florida’s anglers (residents and tourists) will not have to obtain the new Federal license
- Would have applied to anglers who were:
  - Fishing in federal waters
  - Fishing for certain fish even in state waters
- Seniors would not have been exempted from the federal license requirement
- Estimated >600,000 anglers in Florida will be spared from having to get this federal license (\$15 to \$25)



# Conclusion

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- Anglers in Florida will not have to get a federal license
- Florida resident shoreline angling license is available for a reduced fee
- Florida shoreline license has exemptions for seniors, youths, subsistence fishing and economically disadvantaged citizens
- Florida will benefit from increased revenue dedicated to fishery management and protection
- Florida will benefit from improved recreational harvest information needed for management



# Questions?





# Florida Process for Listing Imperiled Animal Species Update



Tim Breault,  
Director, Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

# Purpose of the Review

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- Public confusion
  - 2 categories of federally-designated species and 3 categories of state-designated species
- Federal and state criteria used to determine eligibility for listing are different
- Federal and state listed species are co-mingled on one list
- Revise rules to eliminate duplicate state and federal permitting



# Internal Evaluation Process

- First step – Discussed whether or not to have a state process to identify and manage imperiled species
  - Concluded that the answer is yes
  - Purpose is to provide a mechanism for early management intervention by Florida to preclude the need for federal regulation under the Endangered Species Act of 1973



# Commission Evaluation

- In June 2008, the Commission directed staff to work with stakeholders in rule-development that includes:
  - Separation of the state list from the federal list
  - Creation of a single category state list
  - Assessment of science-based options for species to be added to or removed from the state list
  - Rules should be simple and understandable
  - Include stakeholders in discussions and look for areas of agreement



# Stakeholder Engagement

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- Phase 1 started with 4 focal area stakeholder groups
  - Governmental interests
  - Recreational interests
  - Regulated industries and landowner interests
  - Conservation interests
- Phase 2 included joint meetings of all stakeholders





# Anticipated Benefits of Rule Revision

- A transparent science-based state listing process
- The potential to preclude federal listing actions and regulation under the Endangered Species Act by developing management plans for state-listed species
- Elimination of duplicative state and federal permits
- The potential for delegating federal permitting to Florida



# Status of Rule Making

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- Substantial progress and agreement have been reached on major elements of the proposed rule
- Disagreement still exists on some key issues and continued dialogue is needed before moving to final public hearing
- Stakeholders have indicated that they are willing to continue to try to resolve issues where disagreement exists



# Questions?



# Invasive Plant Control Update



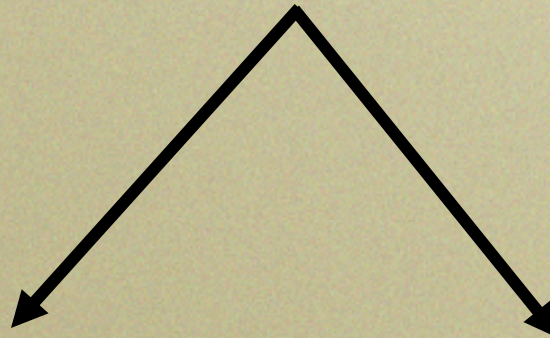
Tim Breault,  
Director, Division of Habitat and Species Conservation

# Invasive Plant Management

During 2008 Session, moved from...



DEP



FWC

DACS



# FWC Program Responsibilities

- Aquatic Plant Management
- Upland Invasive Plant Management
- Regulatory / Permitting



# Invasive Plant Control Trust Fund

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- Documentary Stamps
- Motor Fuel Tax
- Commercial Vessel Registration
- Recreational Vessel Registration



# Aquatic Plant Management

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- Sovereignty lands
- Public ramps
- 450 lakes and rivers
- 1.25 million acres





# Use of Florida Public Waters

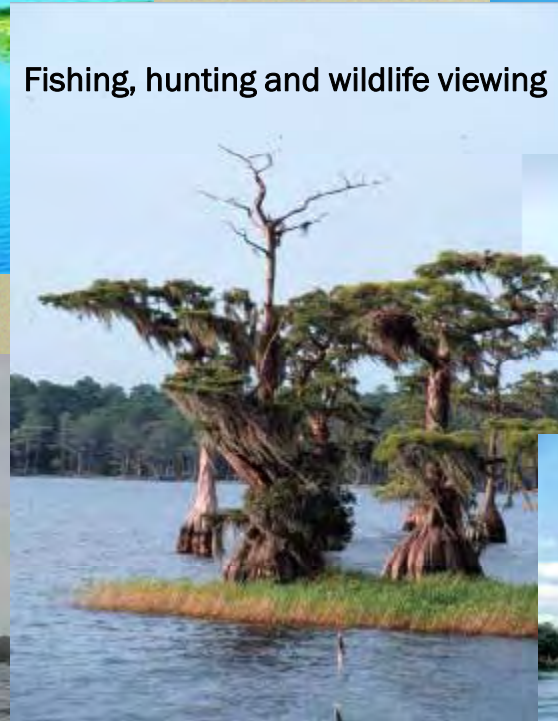
Boating & swimming



Flood control



Fishing, hunting and wildlife viewing



Drinking water



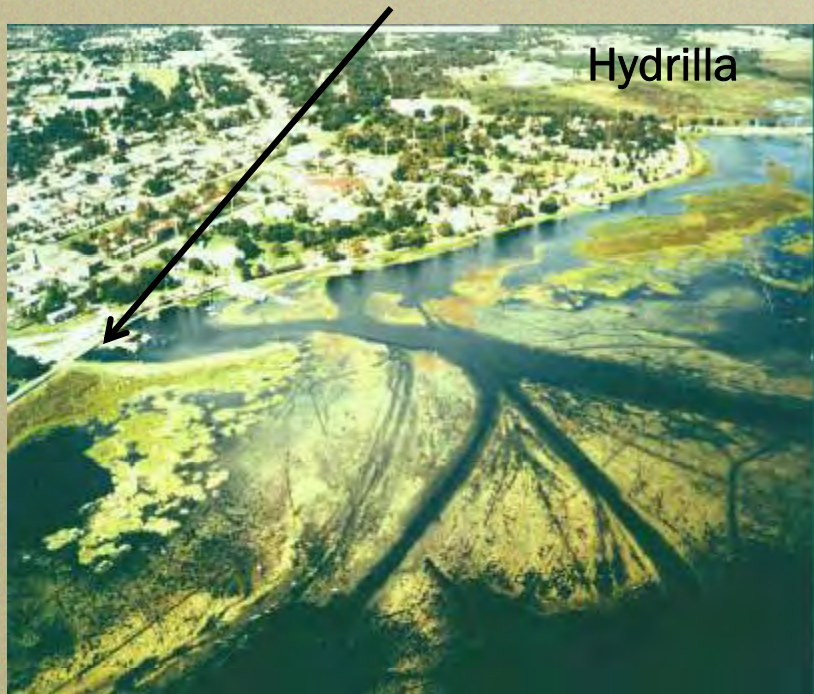
Commercial uses



# Aquatic Plant Problems

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Public boat ramp



# Aquatic Plant Control Contractors

- Water Management Districts
- Local Governments
- Private Contractors



# Coordination

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- State agencies
- Federal government
- Water Management Districts
- Local governments
- Universities
- Private businesses
- Non-governmental organizations



# UPLAND INVASIVE PLANT MANAGEMENT



# Program Responsibilities

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- Achieve eradication or maintenance control of invasive exotic plants on public lands
- Assist state and local governments develop and implement coordinated management plans



# Upland Invasive Plant Problems



Coral Ardisia



Kudzu



Melaleuca

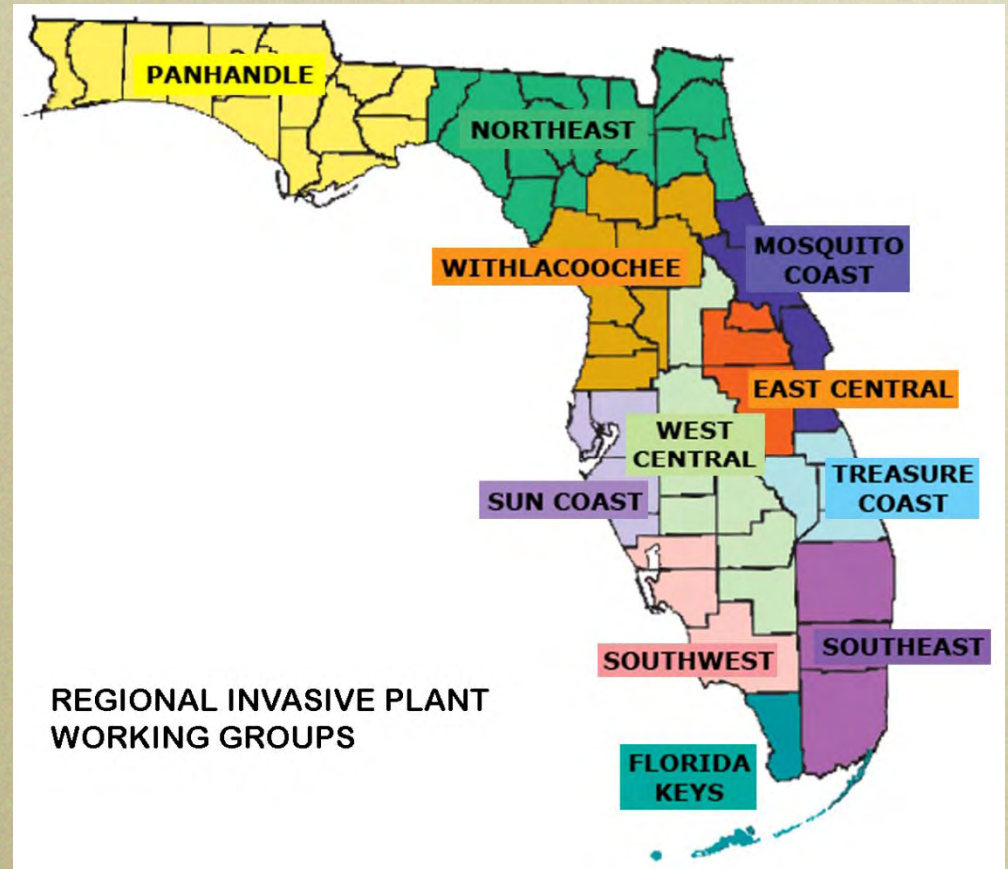


Old World climbing fern



# Upland Invasive Plant Regional Working Groups

- 11 regions
- 540 participants: federal, state, local, etc.
- Coordinate regional expertise to prioritize control projects for funding





# Upland Invasive Plant Contractors

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- Private vegetation control companies (~97%)
- Water Management Districts
- Local Governments



# Regulatory / Permitting Program

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Permitted site before control



## Permitted Project Complete

Cleared area for recreation while maintaining sufficient vegetation for fish and wildlife habitat & water quality protection



# Triploid Grass Carp Permitting



# Program Summary

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- Direct & fund the control of aquatic plants in public water bodies
- Coordinate & fund the eradication or maintenance control of invasive exotic plants on public lands
- Regulate, through permitting programs, the control of aquatic plants for projects not eligible for state funding



# Questions?

