



## FLEPPC 25<sup>th</sup> Annual Symposium Held in Crystal River

In spite of tough travel restrictions and shrunken budgets, more than 120 diehard land managers turned out for the 25th Annual FLEPPC Symposium. Held in beautiful Crystal River, Florida, the meeting was packed with papers, posters, workshops, field trips and fun. FLEPPC members are notorious for having a good time while working hard in tough conditions and this was proven when the crowd braved an air raid of no-see-ums at the poolside banquet that had the band, The Big Wiggler, wiggling more than usual. The grand prize for the chance drawing that benefits the Kathy Craddock Burks Memorial Scholarship Fund was floating in the hotel pool – a bright yellow Emotion Comet kayak that hopeful winners were taking for a spin. The winning ticket was drawn by Able Otter who made a poolside appearance half-way through the festivities. Able Otter is the official mascot for the Nurture Nature program in East County Water Control District, which received a FLEPPC Education and Outreach grant last year. The program was described by Carla Ulakovic during the Collaboration: The Key to Success session of the symposium. Other sessions were Invaded Landscapes, Invasive Plant Management Strategies, and Invasive Grasses. Keynote speaker Dr. Jeffrey Dukes, assistant professor in the Department of Forestry and Natural Resources at Purdue University and director of the Boston-Area Climate Experiment, opened the Climatic Influence on Invasive Species session by exploring how the impacts of invasive species are expected to change in a warmer, more CO<sub>2</sub>-rich world and what measures can be taken to prepare for these scenarios. Symposium workshops followed including a training session on the Early Detection and Distribution Mapping System (EDDMapS) led by University of Georgia's Karan Rawlins, an Invasive Plant Field Identification session led by University of Florida (UF) Drs. Colette Jacono and Kenneth Langeland, and a preparation class for those planning to take the Natural Areas Weed Management Certified Pesticide Applicator examination led by UF Extension Agent Ken Gioeli. A panel discussion that included 12 of Florida's 15 Cooperative Invasive Species Management Area (CISMA) leaders reviewed the strengths and strategies of the different groups and was informative to all. During the FLEPPC business meeting, the general membership approved the slate of incoming board nominees: Mike Renda (The Nature Conservancy), Dan Bergeson (SePro Corporation), Erin Myers (USFWS), and Michael Yustin (Martin County Parks and Recreation). Jim Burch of Big Cypress National Preserve took the helm as our incoming Chair, welcomed by now Immediate Past Chair (finally) Jim Burney, who served one full-term and then completed the remaining terms of other chairs who left Florida for weedy pastures elsewhere (it's a long story). The business meeting also included the award of \$5,000 in FLEPPC Education/Outreach grants for 2009/2010 (see next page). Please join us next year when we partner with the Florida Native Plant Society for our annual meeting in Maitland, Florida. —Karen Brown

## Florida Invasive Species Partnership Formalized



The Florida Invasive Species Partnership's (FISP) statewide efforts, and local efforts by fifteen Cooperative Invasive Species Management Areas (CISMAs), continue to demonstrate the effectiveness and efficiency of the partnership approach in reducing and controlling invasive, non-native species in Florida. FISP has no formal authority and does not exert control over the work

of any individual or institution; it exists to improve the efficiency and effectiveness of invasive species management through communication, coordination and shared resources in order to protect wildlife habitat, working agricultural and forest lands, natural communities and biodiversity in Florida.

A FISP Resolution was drafted in 2009 to solidify support from all agency and organization partners. While not as formal as a Memorandum of Understanding, it is intended to accomplish the following:

- give formality to FISP, and show that it has broad support from the respective agencies and organizations;
- keep FISP moving forward - with agency/organization support, the effort can continue;

- provide a mechanism for other agencies or organizations to sign on and show support of FISP and CISMAs;
- demonstrate the strength of the partnership when seeking funding, future participation, and/or endorsement of recommendations that the group may formulate for adoption in the future; and
- provide a widespread partnership agreement that covers CISMAs throughout the state.

To date, the FISP Resolution has been signed by the following entities:

- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- National Park Service
- USDA-Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Florida Division of Forestry
- Florida Dept. of Environmental Protection
- Florida Dept. of Transportation
- Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission
- Southwest Florida Water Management District
- University of Florida – Institute of Food and Agricultural Sciences (IFAS)
- University of Georgia – Center for Invasive Species & Ecosystem Health
- National Audubon Society
- Florida Native Plant Society
- The Nature Conservancy
- Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC)

To visit the FISP website and view the Resolution, go to [www.floridainvasives.org](http://www.floridainvasives.org). To contact members of FISP, email [chair@floridainvasives.org](mailto:chair@floridainvasives.org)