



PALM BEACH COUNTY DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL RESOURCES MANAGEMENT
Natural Resources Stewardship Division Status Report
May 2010

Cypress Creek Natural Area

At the Cypress Creek Natural Area, staff is currently directing the removal of exotic vegetation, mulching of the vegetative debris, and trucking the mulch off site.



Cypress Creek N. A. restoration reveals shell pits.

When the exotic vegetation removal work is completed, we'll direct contractors to re-contour the shell-pits on the property, restore water flow through the on-site wetlands, and plant native vegetation as necessary.

Delaware Scrub Natural Area

The contract for building the public use facilities for the natural area has been awarded to Rio-Bak Corporation. Construction should begin in June 2010 and continue into December. Construction plans include parking facilities, nature trail, boardwalk, observation deck and other amenities. This project is being paid for by a matching grant from the Loxahatchee River Preservation Initiative.

Fire News

Two wildfires occurred on the Pondhawk Natural Area in Boca Raton. The first fire occurred on Easter Sunday and its origin was suspicious. It burned about 2 acres before



Prescribed fire at Pine Glades N.A.

Boca Raton's fire department put out the visible fire. However, 3 days later, we believe a smoldering portion of the original fire re-ignited and ended up burning an additional 15 acres of the southwest portion of the site. Because of smoke on Military Trail between Spanish River Boulevard and Yamato Road, this section of the road had to be closed during fire fighting activities. The Division of Forestry did respond and put in two small plough lines that can be easily restored.

On May 5th ERM was able to conduct the largest prescribed burn that our department has ever attempted, when we burned 650 acres of the Pine Glades Natural Area. The burn went very well, and all the objectives of the burn were accomplished.



Staff sets fire at Pine Glades N. A.

The Department of Forestry cleared vegetation within 50 feet of the northern fence line of Frenchman's Forest Natural Area, except for large trees, as part of their wildfire abatement work at the urban interface. This work was coordinated with ERM staff, and went very well.

Juno Dunes Natural Area

At the Juno Dunes Natural Area, work continues on completing the hiking trail in the portion of the site south of Donald Ross Road.



Eagle Scout bridge at Juno Dunes N. A.

Recently, an Eagle

Scout candidate, Chase Leonard Shaw, completed a 40-foot footbridge over one of the mosquito ditches that the hiking trail crossed. Staff plans to complete this southern hiking trail in the fall of this year.

Pondhawk Natural Area

At the Pondhawk Natural Area, the contractor continues to fill the remaining portions of the Blue Lake shore that need to be filled. This lake-fill area is where the promenade sidewalk



Restoration at Pondhawk N. A. – Note browned vegetation from wildfires at center right of photo

around the lake will eventually be placed. The entranceway to the Natural Area will connect to the promenade.

ERM heard from the granting entity to which we had submitted an application for funding the restoration and development of the public use facilities for the site. We were informed that they might be willing to fund a portion of the requested amount for our project. We are waiting for a final decision on that issue, but if we do receive a reduced amount, staff will use those funds for plantings within the wetland restoration area and hold off on the remaining public use facilities until other funds can be made available to complete their construction.

Winding Waters Natural Area

The contractor is currently more than 90% complete with the excavation of wetland creation areas at the Winding Waters Natural Area, and has completed widening of



Restoration progress at Winding Waters N. A. as viewed from southwest corner of property.

the Turnpike drainage ditch and filling of half of the targeted canals that cross the site. Construction of the water control structures that will control the water flow on site is the next major activity. Completion of the emergency outfall structure from our created wetlands to the EPB-10 Canal is awaiting the slide gate mechanism and a grate. Staff is still targeting completion of the wetland excavation and hydrological re-routing of the water by September of this year.

Yamato Scrub Natural Area

At the Yamato Scrub Natural Area, staff is working with the City of Boca Raton on the design of the multi-use trail proposed to be built by the city along the western boundary of the site. This coordination also involves developing a revised Interlocal Agreement with the City regarding responsibilities for maintenance of the trail. The area for the trail has been approved by the Division of State Lands which holds the deed for the site. This trail is designed as a bicycle and pedestrian multi-use trail and will be similar to the Riverwalk pathway that was placed on a portion of the northeastern boundary of the Jupiter Ridge Natural Area. The trail will be fenced off from the remainder of the Natural Area and an access gate will be provided for pedestrians to enter the trail systems within the Yamato Scrub Natural Area.