

To: Professor Diane Mooney
From: Laura De La Cruz
Date: 3 March 2013
Subject: *Proposal for Analyzing the Best Solutions to Combat Invasive Species in the Florida Everglades*

Introduction

Conservation of the Florida Everglades is a challenge. In addition to polluted runoff, urban encroachment, and water flow disruption, the Everglades have fallen victim to invasive plant and animal species. A drive through the Everglades might reveal an alarming number of dead tree trunks along the roads, each previously belonging to an invasive Australian melaleuca tree—sometimes with new saplings sprouting up between the thickly entwined dead trunks. Planted in the mid-1900s to aid the then positively-considered goal of drying out the swampland for human use, now the melaleuca threatens the biodiversity of the Everglades (Lemaire and Sisto).

Statement of Problem

The Everglades possesses an ecosystem which is wholly unique in this world. With many species classified as endangered or threatened, it must be preserved to ensure any habitat remains for them at all. The growing numbers of individual invasive plant and animal species pose a serious threat not only to the environmental composition of the area but also to the delicate balance in the ecosystem and food chain. If something is not done to decelerate the encroachment of these invasive species, the threat to the native wildlife will increase, likely endangering more and more of the native plants and animals as a result.

Proposed Solutions

An examination of each of the current implemented solutions to combat these invasive species will take into account the number of effective removals for each method. The analysis should also include any adverse effects that are a result of maneuvers to combat the invasive species. For example, the Australian melaleuca has been burned in great swathes and removed by hand. Research may reveal another yet-untested way to remove these invasive species, but the best recommendations will take into account feasibility, likely cost, and other important factors.

Scope

1. What methods are currently being used to combat these invasive species, and how are they performed successfully?
2. How much has each method done to remove these invasive species?
3. How cost-effective are these methods when lined up with budget and general resources?
4. Are there other methods that have not yet been implemented, and if so, why haven't they been used?
5. What are the negative and positive aspects of each method?
6. Is there anything that can be done to minimize the negative aspects of some methods?
7. Which methods appear to have the most positive impact with the least negative impact, while still being cost-affordable?

Methods

Sources will include online research with conservation groups, journals, and articles on the topic but will not be limited to such if I can obtain contact with knowledgeable members of the conservation groups fighting to protect the Everglades.

My Qualifications

As a new member of the Tropical Audubon Society, I hope that this information will be useful to me when I am enlisted to help in the conservation process. Though my majors—English and Communications—may seem unrelated, I feel that a more in-depth study of the methods being used to combat all of the threats to the Everglades will eventually help me to more effectively spread the message about the importance of Florida Everglades conservation. It would be difficult to encode an effective message to draw public concern without having done research on the topic about which I am writing myself.

Conclusion

It is critical to examine each of the methods used to combat these invasive species to determine the positive and negative aspects of each. By grouping the analyses into one study, it will be easier not only to see each positive and negative quickly, but also to begin planning for potential methods to reduce the negative aspects of some of the methods, where possible.

References

Lemaire, Janine, and Bénédicte Sisto. "The Everglades Ecosystem: Under Protection or Under Threat?" Miranda (2012): n. pag. Web. 12 Oct. 2015.

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Audience and Purpose

Primary audience:	Tropical Audubon Society, Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission
Secondary audience:	Professor Diane Mooney
Relationship with audience:	New TAS Member; Interested Student
Purpose of document:	Analysis and Recommendations
Audience and purpose statement:	I would like to analyze current efforts to conserve the Florida Everglades and combat invasive species. Included would be discussion of actions taken to eradicate invasive plants and animals such as the Australian melaleuca tree and the Burmese python. Recommendations as to where resources should be focused in the invasive species problem will be made after an analysis of factors such as destructive potential and immediacy of the effect.
Intended use of the document:	To recommend the best methods for eliminating the invasive plants or animals specifically mentioned.
Information needs:	Information on removal methods. Information on the species themselves. Possibly information on volunteer numbers and budgeting allocations and resources.
Technical background:	Intermediate to expert level knowledge of ways to eradicate invasive species; general to intermediate knowledge of particular invasive species.
Cultural considerations:	Few, if any, due to the nature of the primary audience and their familiarity and intimacy with the problem.
Probable questions:	Will focusing on the best methods cost more money or need more volunteers than we can muster? What criteria is being used to evaluate the “best” method to combat a given species?
Probable reaction:	Approval

Audience Preferences about the Document

Length and detail:	10 pages minimum.
Format and medium:	Proposal report; digital.

Tone: Professional.
Due date and timing: 22 April 2013.
Budget: Current financial information for invasive species removal.

