



SOUTH FLORIDA WATER MANAGEMENT DISTRICT

GET THE FACTS

June 15, 2016

A board member of the Audubon Society of the Everglades has falsely asserted that the South Florida Water Management District plans a hostile takeover at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Palm Beach County.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which leases the Refuge from SFWMD, has repeatedly admitted it will not control invasive plants ravaging the Refuge ecosystem. The federal agency has not even asked Congress for money to fix the urgent problem, so don't blame Congress. SFWMD hopes to shame the USFWS into action to ask Congress for necessary money to save this last remaining, intact northernmost portion of the original Everglades.

Here are the Facts:

- Science has shown continued expansion of Old World climbing fern and invasive melaleuca will lead to the irreversible collapse of hundreds of tree islands that are critical to the Everglades and will terminally degrade wading bird habitat.
- The Refuge suffered much of the 600-percent increase in the infestation of Old World climbing fern during the past 20 years.
- Of all the goals for Refuge management under the lease, USFWS has failed to meet the one that has the most impact on the health of the Refuge, and has no plans to ask Congress for the monies needed to meet this goal.
- While the Audubon Society of the Everglades board member marginalizes the significance of this one failed goal, the executive director of Audubon Florida has highlighted the critical ecological importance of Everglades tree islands - the same tree islands being destroyed by USFWS inaction.

- Because of this ongoing failure, SFWMD and the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) have repeatedly stepped in to invest millions of dollars towards invasive treatment in the Refuge, including \$4.3 million over the past 12 months.
- The FWC and SFWMD invite the public to visit the Water Conservation Areas it manages just south of the Refuge to see successful invasive species control in action.



Ground crew treating Old World climbing fern in LNWR

Old World climbing fern post-treatment

###

The South Florida Water Management District is a regional governmental agency that manages the water resources in the southern part of the state. It is the oldest and largest of the state's five water management districts. Our mission is to protect South Florida's water resources by balancing and improving flood control, water supply, water quality and natural systems.

STAY CONNECTED

Follow us on [twitter](#)

[Forward to a Friend](#)

[Subscribe to our Water Matters eNewsletter and Operations Updates](#)

South Florida Water Management District, 3301 Gun Club Road, West Palm
Beach, FL 33406

SafeUnsubscribe™ {recipient's email}

[Forward this email](#) | [Update Profile](#) | [About our service provider](#)

Sent by waternews@sfwmd.gov in collaboration with



Try it free today