

## **2018-19 UPDATES**

The FFS staff assigned to the management of TRSF includes a Forestry Supervisor II and a Forester. In addition, a full time OPS Park Ranger assists with invasive plant control. This position is funded by the FFS under its Non-native Invasive Species Plant control budget. Operational support is provided by FFS Forest Rangers and Senior Forest Rangers. Additionally, operational support is provided by the Department of Correction's (DOC) with an Inmate Supervisor and a four-person inmate crew. The TRSF office is located at the Live Oak Forestry Station in Suwannee County. The following report provides an overview of the major accomplishments for the District-owned portions of the TRSF for Fiscal Year (FY) 2018-19.

Continuation of the ongoing forest wide, land-based survey for invasive/exotic plants consisted of transect based sampling throughout the Sullivan, Westwood West, Westwood East, Chitty Bend West, Chitty Bend East, Withlacoochee, Nekoosa, Ellaville, and Black tracts. These tracts were treated for Japanese climbing fern, chinaberry, mimosa, tropical soda apple, Chinese wisteria, and cogon grass. Protocol was established for differentiating between native and non-native species of wisteria consisting of re-visiting known locations during active bloom seasons. This has allowed TRSF to drastically reduce anticipated treatments. Protocol was also established for differentiating between cogon grass and native Gramineae species, further reducing anticipated chemical treatments. TRSF applied for and received \$61,050 of funding through the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission's (FWC) Upland Plant Management Program to re-treat 1,200 acres of primarily Japanese climbing fern and cogon grass on the Ellaville Tract and \$28,084 for an initial treatment of chinaberry and Chinese wisteria on the Deese Tract. A funding request from the FWC Upland Plant Management Program for a second treatment on the Deese Tract in the amount of \$6,118 was approved. The associated funding will be used to treat this area during FY 2019-2020. TRSF will continue to maintain a GIS database for invasive plants and update it as necessary with incidental occurrences. Japanese climbing fern infestations continue to have the most noticeable adverse impact on the state forest. The battle against invasive exotics is challenging and diligence is necessary to limit their effects to the natural ecosystems on the state forest.

Every year a timber inventory is conducted on 10% of all the acreage on Florida State Forests. Using this method, all timber stands are inventoried at least once every 10 years. This year on TRSF, the Mill Creek South Tract was inventoried. For all pine stands, planted or natural, one plot is installed for every 5 acres with up to a 30 foot-plot maximum per stand. In hardwood stands, one plot is measured for every 100 acres. The inventory data collected is used to make management decisions on the state forest. For FY 2018-2019 the Westwood West and Westwood East tracts are scheduled for inventory.

Timber harvests are completed annually to meet management goals, desired future conditions and generate revenue to offset the costs of forest management. In the summer of 2018, after the discovery of a Southern Pine Beetle infestation, a 20-acre