



NFWF

Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

RECIPIENT

Florida Department of Environmental Protection

Atlanta Botanical Gardens

AMOUNT

\$5,916,000

PARTNERS

USFWS

USDA

Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission

LOCATION

Walton County, Florida

AWARD DATE

November 2014

AMENDED DATE

November 2017

PROGRESS UPDATE

Costs for removing invasive vegetation is higher than anticipated due to the density of material. Project was amended to add \$2,870,600 to complete treatment of invasive vegetation (November 2017).

The Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund, administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), supports projects to remedy harm and eliminate or reduce the risk of harm to Gulf Coast natural resources affected by the 2010 Deepwater Horizon oil spill. To learn more about NFWF, go to www.nfwf.org.

FLORIDA

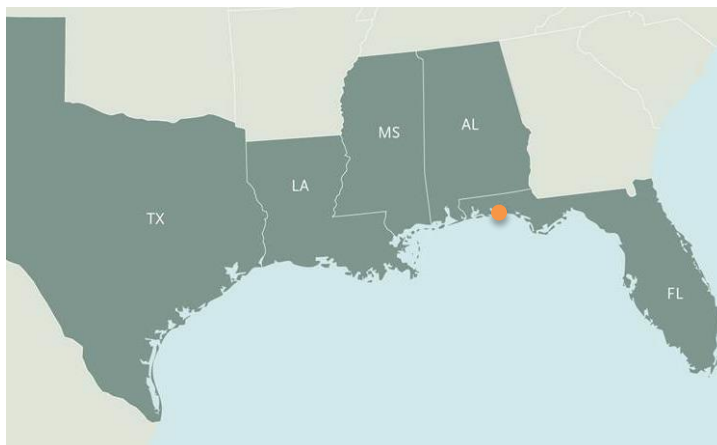
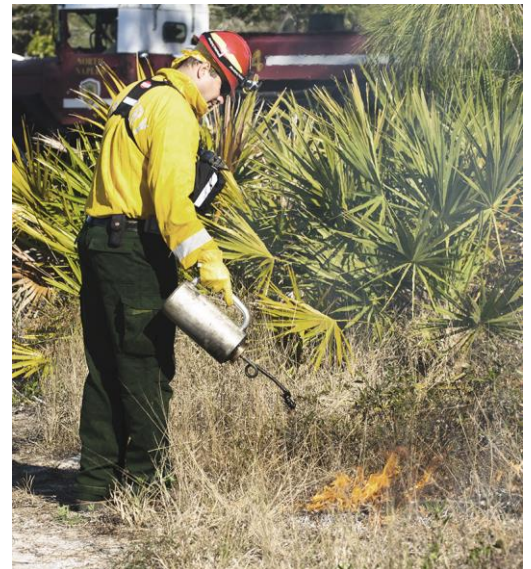
Restoration of Florida's Coastal Dune Lakes

This project will remove invasive species and use fire management to restore wetland habitat and increase freshwater flows into priority coastal dune lakes in the Florida Panhandle. Florida's coastal dune lakes systems provide unique habitat for a wide variety of fish and wildlife, in particular beach nesting shorebirds and estuarine fish species, and exist as a natural estuarine transition between the Gulf of Mexico and upland areas. Restoration of these lakes will improve wetland habitat, enhance freshwater flows and have significant benefit to adjacent benthic environments in Gulf waters.

The Florida Natural Areas Inventory has classified coastal dune lakes as imperiled globally and vulnerable to extinction. Florida's coastal dune lake habitats are incredibly unique, and their conservation and restoration is a high priority for the state. Addressing water quality improvements in watersheds that feed these lakes through improved fire management and invasive species control will provide significant improvements to the quality of the water within these systems and to the Gulf of Mexico.



Credit: Florida State Parks



Coastal Dune lakes are unique estuarine transitional habitats that occur in only a few places in the world and provide important habitat for a variety of fish and coastal birds.