Message from our new Chair . . .

Welcome to a new FLEPPC year and a huge “Thank You” to everyone who made the 2006 FLEPPC Symposium in Gainesville such a great success. The program and associated functions were very diverse, educational, interesting, and fun, and without the allure of nearby beaches, the session attendance was excellent!

As the new FLEPPC Chair, I am very lucky to be taking over from Jim Burney the reins of a vibrant organization that is in good general health and which is continuing to serve important functions to all the inhabitants (human and otherwise) of the State of Florida. We need to sustain the many successful programs that serve state-wide (and wider) communities. For example, Wildland Weeds, the Invasive Plant Lists, the FLEPPC/DEP database, the website, the horticulture industry liaisons, the Management Plans, the research, education, and outreach projects that we support, and, of course, all the training- and symposium-related activities. We also have many responsibilities within the organization that must be fulfilled to allow us to support the more visible programs. After all, somebody has to pay the bills, edit this Newsletter, revise the by-laws, and nominate the next Officers and Directors.

We have an excellent and dedicated band of Officers, Directors, and Chairs of Committees and Working Groups, but they can nearly always use some help. If you would like to become more involved in FLEPPC, please read through the descriptions on the Committee page on our website: http://www.fleppc.org/committees.htm, find a committee that appeals to you, contact the Chair, and volunteer to participate. Everybody seems to be busy these days, but having enthusiastic committee members can make all the difference between another “nothing to report” year and making valuable progress.

This year, one activity for the Board of Directors will be to develop some internal tools, such as symposium checklists, calendars, and revisions to the Standard Operating Proce-
Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council

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Merchandise
Tony Pernas
Nominations
Jim Burney

Thanks you, Jim!
Minutes of the Board of Directors Meeting
April 24, 2006
Paramount Plaza Hotel, Gainesville, Florida

The meeting was called to order at 2:30 pm by Jim Burney, Chair. The following Officers, Directors and members, constituting a quorum of the Board of Directors, were present: Mike Bodle, Jim Burney, Karen Brown, Roger Clark, Scott Ditmarsen, Jim Duquesnel, Alison Fox, Matt King, Jon Lane, Drew Leslie, Dianne Owen, Tony Pernas, Paul Pratt, Kris Serbesoff-King, Cressida Silvers, Aimee Cooper, Jim Cuda, Ellen Donlan, Chris Evans, Amy Ferriter, Dan Greene, Alison Higgins, Chris Lockhart, Todd Olson, Katy Roberts, LeRoy Rodgers, Donna Watkins, Steven Weinsier.

ADMINISTRATIVE AGENDA

 Approval of Minutes
Minutes of the previous Board of Directors Meeting of February 7, 2006, were distributed to the Board. Upon motion made by Roger Clark and seconded by Paul Pratt, the previous minutes were unanimously approved.

Correspondence – Jim Burney
Most correspondence is received through the FLEPPC web site and forwarded to the relevant Committee Chair. Other specific inquiries are addressed under New Business.

Treasurer’s Report – Kris Serbesoff-King
The Treasurer’s report showed cash inflows exceeding outflows by $9,095 for FY 05-06 to date. This reflects only a portion of the estimated income and expenses for the 2006 Symposium, which is expected to realize a net profit. Actual expenditures for all budget items were at or below the Board-approved budget amount for FY 05-06.
Upon motion made by Cressida Silvers and seconded by Tony Pernas, the Treasurer’s report was accepted unanimously. The written Treasurer’s report is attached to the minutes.

Editor’s Report – Karen Brown
The Spring issue of Wildland Weeds was a special 32-page issue which included a CD of the management plan for Lygodium, so it entailed some extra costs. There were also additional costs for a second mailing of the “complimentary” mailing list due to a problem with the list. The net profit for the issue was still approximately $1,200.
The FLEPPC membership brochure has been reprinted at a cost of $700 for 5,000 copies; by using an online printing service, about $500 was saved over the last printing.
Upon motion made by Kris Serbesoff-King and seconded by Alison Fox, the Editor’s report was accepted unanimously. The written Editor’s report is attached to the minutes.

Secretary’s Report – Dianne Owen
An initial draft was distributed of the Standard Operating Procedures that combines the SOPs posted on the FLEPPC web site and the SOPs that were reviewed by the Board in May 2005. Mike Bodle, Karen Brown and Jim Duquesnel, Alison Fox and Dianne Owen will work to develop a draft for review by the Board at the next meeting.
Upon motion made by Tony Pernas and seconded by Jim Duquesnel, the Secretary’s report was accepted unanimously. The written Secretary’s report is attached to the minutes.

COMMITTEE REPORTS

By-Laws – Dennis Giardina
Jim Burney pointed out that the by-laws should be revisited, in conjunction with the review of the Standard Operating Procedures, to ensure consistency. After approval by the Board, proposed revisions to the By-Laws would be submitted to the membership for approval at the 2007 Business Meeting. Katy Roberts emphasized that the By-Laws are a tool that aids the Board of Directors in performing its functions and should not include unnecessary details that constrain the efficient operation of the Board.

Education – Leesa Souto
Chris Lockhart reported for Leesa that three grant proposals were submitted to the Education Committee for funding this year. Kris Serbesoff-King confirmed that funding was approved for all three proposals. This is fewer submissions than in past years, and the Committee will not use its full budget allocation this year. Leesa will report on the status of the grant funds that she has applied for at the next meeting.

Legislative- Matt King
There have been no changes in the status of the pending legislation that was reported on at the last meeting. New state legislation has been proposed that would prohibit the Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services and the Department of Environmental Protection from issuing permits authorizing the importation of non-indigenous flora or fauna. Comments on this bill are still pending from committees, but it is not expected to pass since it does not take into account the potential economic repercussions for many state industries that were not the intended targets of the legislation, such as cattle and citrus. There is also a pending bill that would give the Florida Fish and Wildlife Commission the authority to regulate exotic reptiles and authorizes the FWC to establish a list of regulated reptiles; this bill is expected to pass and it is anticipated that pythons would be included on the list.
On the local level, the Lee County Board of County Commissioners approved the addition of iguana control on Gasparilla Island to the municipal services taxing unit in the Boca Grande community. The initial funding will be used to fund research, but the funds could be used for control activities in the future. Roger Clark reported that the population of Mexican spiny-tailed iguanas has exploded on the island and said that Prof. Jerry Jackson of Florida Gulf Coast University, who is with the Federal Invasive Species Advisory Committee, has found that during December/January the iguana survive mainly on Brazilian pepper.

In response to questions concerning the federal invasive species list, Matt said that it is unlikely that Lygodium could be added to the list, since the federal regulations do not allow the addition of a species that is considered to have already reached the limits of its potential distribution.

Local Arrangements - Mike Bodle

The most current total catering estimate for the Symposium is $9,600; copies of the catering order were distributed. The Monday social will offer an open bar with beer and wine for the first hour. The cost of the dinner is $30 per person (the dinner ticket price is $20) and includes a two-hour open bar. The cost of morning and afternoon coffee breaks ranges from $8 to $14 per person. The minimum of 210 room-nights needed for a 50% reduction in meeting room rates has also been met. The FLEPPC is providing four rooms for the band members and will receive one free room from the hotel.

Membership/Publicity - Katy Roberts

The current membership total is 260 but this number is likely to be closer to 300 once the membership renewals that were included with the Symposium are included. Members that had not paid dues for one year or more were dropped from the membership list at the end of 2005. Individual membership expiration dates are now set at one year from the date of payment.

Katy said that the FLEPPC membership display has been present at a number of spring events, including the State Fair, Kanapaha Spring Garden Festival in Gainesville, and the Tampa Bay Growers Show. She is working on new graphics for specific groups of plants so that the display can be tailored to specific audiences, such as aquatics, and grasses, or houseplants. She is also replacing the carry bag and display boards and is printing new graphics for the display that will include the FLEPPC mission statement and the current invasive plant lists. A budget increase to cover the cost of these upgrades was approved at the previous board meeting.

Chris Lockhart asked whether the list of recommended alternative plants could be reprinted with the Herbicide for Homeowners pamphlet. This list is currently available on the web site and could be reprinted, but it is specific to southern Florida and needs to be updated to include recommendations for the central and northern portions of the state.

Merchandise - Tony Pernas

The merchandise budget of $1000 was mainly used to purchase "Control Freak" t-shirts that will be on sale at the Symposium along with items left over from previous years. New FLEPPC decals were printed and will be given away.

Web Site - Tony Pernas

The FLEPPC web site is very popular, with 19,000 page views and 25,000 downloads during March; this represents visitors who click to links on the sites and is only a small fraction of the 91,000 hits received each day. The average visit time was 2.4 minutes and the top five pages viewed were the home page, the 2005 plant list, the plant list introduction, the site occurrence database and the FNGA press release.

Chris Evans gave a presentation and demonstration of the invasive plant site occurrence mapping program that he and Chuck Bargeron are developing free of cost to the SE-EPPC as part of a project at the University of Georgia. This geodatabase used the USDA invasive plants database as a starting point but will be able to import records from any source that has latitude-longitude data. The interface allows users to perform map queries of existing data and to enter new data. Site data will include information such as the characteristics of the infestation, property ownership, herbarium voucher data and photographs. The database will be updated in real time, so data can appear on the map as soon as it is entered. Board members had several questions concerning future funding, user training, and quality assurance for data that would be collected through the SE-EPPC mapping program. Chris said that as currently envisaged, each state EPPC would be responsible for developing a plant list, training users and the review/verification of data. The U. Georgia project is not funded and funding from SE-EPPC and/or the state chapters would be necessary to carry this project in the future. There was concern that FLEPPC would lose quality control over its site data if it was incorporated into the SE-EPPC database. Tony and Chris responded that the FLEPPC database could be controlled and maintained separately and accessed through the FLEPPC web site by means of an invisible, seamless link to the SE-EPPC system. How the use of the SE-EPPC system would affect the relationship between the FLEPPC database and the FNGA database is also an issue; Tony indicated that he has discussed this at length with Kathy Burks, and that these issues can be resolved. The SE-EPPC is planning to launch its demonstration site at the May meeting and Tony said it would be desirable for the FLEPPC to participate in this event by sharing its site occurrence data with SE-EPPC; details about management of the database and interface design will be worked out as an ongo-
Turning FLEPPC knowledge into chocolate . . .

In her presentation at the 2006 Symposium, Chair Alison Fox rewarded members who knew their FLEPPC facts with chocolate. Here are a few sample questions to test your own FLEPPC knowledge.

1) In which year was FLEPPC founded?
2) How many members does the FLEPPC have?
3) What is the literal translation of Melaleuca quinqueneriva?
4) What is the literal translation of Melaleuca leucodendron?
5) Amy Ferriter was the first editor of Wildland Weeds. Who was the second?
6) What was on the cover of the charter issue of Wildland Weeds?
7) What is the stinkiest genus on the FLEPPC Category I list?
8) How many species are on the current Category I and category II lists?
9) Which was the first species to have a FLEPPC “management plan”?
10) How many species has FGCLA asked its members to voluntarily not sell?

Nominations – Mike Bodle

The nominees for the current year are Donna Watkins, DEP, Tallahassee; Gary Nichols, St. Johns River Water Management District, Palm Bay; Cheryl McCormick, University of Florida, Gainesville; Alison Higgins, The Nature Conservancy, Summerland Key. This slate has been approved by the Board and will be proposed for approval by the general membership at the upcoming annual business meeting. Jim Burney will take over as chair of the Nominations committee for the upcoming year, and the Nominations committee will include at least 3 members.

Plant List - Kathy Burks

Chris Lockhart reported for Kathy Burks, who has been seriously ill, that the FNAI/DEP invasive plant database, which is co-sponsored by FLEPPC, continues to be populated at a steady pace. Currently there are 5,300 site records in the FLEPPC database, representing 64 of 67 counties, and there are records for all FLEPPC Category I and II species. This database is maintained by DEP in collaboration with FNAI. There was clarification regarding the differences between the FLEPPC and FNAI databases, which currently do not overlap. The committee would like to have more data. Field report forms are available on the web site. State funds can only be used for verification of site occurrences on public land, but information from all sources is welcome. Contact with Kathy Burks is temporarily preferred by snail mail.

Research - John Volin

Only one research proposal has been received to date; the deadline for submission of proposals will be extended to May 15. The extension will be announced at the meeting and John will also notify researchers by email. John would also like to find an additional member of the research committee who would do the follow-up on research presentations/publications that grant recipients are required to do.

Field Trips/Training - Jim Duquesnel

A total of 20.5 CEUs have been approved for the Symposium, with a maximum of 16.5 possible for individual attendees. Jim emphasized that CEUs are given for blocks of 25 minutes, so limiting presentations to 20 minutes can potentially limit the number of CEUs available. Participation in the field trips was poor this year and participants showed up for two trips that were cancelled because there were no pre-registrations. There was general agreement that planning of the field trips should be completed early enough to ensure that attendees can get information prior to early registration about what is being offered, particularly for field trips that take place before the Symposium.

Vendors - Todd Olson

A total of 17 vendors are represented at the Symposium. STIHL did not register as a vendor, but has do-
nated a chainsaw for the silent auction. There were $200 in
donations for door prizes, $700 for breaks, and $300 for Re-
search and Education. The vendors have received recog-
nition in the Symposium program and on posters in the vendor
room.

Upon motion made by Roger Clark and seconded
by Cressida Silvers, the Committee reports were approved
unanimously.

**TASK FORCES**

**Brazilian Pepper** – Jim Cuda

The revised Brazilian Pepper management plan was
completed and will be posted on the Florida Integrated Pest
Management (IPM) and FLEPPC web sites. The task force
currently has 24 members. As part of the task force’s mission
to prepare and disseminate information on best management
practices, a demonstration project was set up at an IFAS Ex-
tension Service workshop held at the SWFREC in Immoka-
lee and task force members participated in workshops with
the Coccoloba chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society
and Martin County. Final approval is expected soon for pilot
releases of the Brazilian pepper sawfly in Immokalee and the
Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge. Research has been
completed and a petition has been submitted for release of
the Brazilian pepper thrips. Research on the leaf roller has
also been completed and a release petition will be submitted
soon. A new video on integrated pest management is now
available and can be requested through the Florida IPM web
site.

**Australian Pine** – Rob Egan

Tony Pernas reported that the Australian pine man-
agement plan will be available on the FLEPPC web site.

**Chinese Tallow** – Cheryl McCormick

The Chinese tallow management plan is now avail-
able on the FLEPPC web site.

**Dioscorea** – Bill Overholt

The task force is currently working on the Dios-
corea management plan.

**Lygodium** – Jeff Hutchinson

The *Lygodium* management plan was included on a
CD in the Spring ’06 issue of *Wildland Weeds* and is on the
FLEPPC web site. Kris Serbesoff-King reported progress on
the regional control strategies that are part of the revised
plan. The Nature Conservancy has been moving forward
with a multiagency/multiorganization partnership for Ly-
godium control efforts on private lands in central Florida.
There are several overlapping projects: the systematic re-
connaissance flights in northern Florida were funded and coordi-
nated through a partnership of several agencies and organiza-
tions including the Florida Division of Forestry, SF, SWF
and St. John’s River Water Management Districts, the DEP,
Florida Park Service, USDA-ARS, and National Park Ser-
vice. In addition work has been completed by FNAl on a
project to conduct ground surveys on private lands adjacent
to conservation areas. In the Lake Wales Ridge area, money
received from partners for private land control work is
matching the DEP funding for public lands. Ground control
work on private lands adjacent to public conservation lands
has begun as of April 24, 2006. Kris emphasized the impor-
tant role of the FLEPPC in fostering work on private lands.

**Melaleuca** - Francois Laroche

Ellen Donlan reported for Francois that as an alter-
native to an update of the Melaleuca plan, the FLEPPC site
could be updated with links to other sites. Tony indicated
that this could be done if the information was provided to
him.

**OLD BUSINESS**

**National EPPC**

Tony Pernas reported on the meeting of the National
EPPC members that took place during National Invasive
Weeds Awareness Week in Washington, DC. There are
4,000 total members in the state EPPC/IPPChapters com-
bined. The proposed NAEPPC By-Laws and Memorandum
of Understanding must still be reviewed by the individual
state groups; meanwhile the National EPPC will continue to
move forward. A portal web site is being developed to link
the state and regional groups. A national meeting will be held
regularly, the first to be in Nashville in 2008, in conjunction
with the Natural Areas Association. The National EPPC will
formulate position papers on invasive plant issues of national
importance and concern and advocate for national legisla-
tion. Tony Pernas is the current National EPPC president.

**National Invasive Weeds Awareness Week**

The large number of authorized programs that are
unfunded can create adversarial positions over use of exist-
ing funds. In meetings with the Florida delegation, the Loxa-
hatchee invasive species manager supported better, more
consistent funding from the Department of Interior for con-
trol efforts there. Senator Martinez indicated that the Indian
River Lagoon Initiative may be added to the Water Resource
Development Act, which would provide long-term funding.
The FLEPPC will have a display at the meeting next year.

**Operations Committee**

Scott Ditmarsen and Jim Burney have developed
draft SOPs that will be reviewed/modified by the board be-
fore formal creation of a committee.

**Bylaws on the Web Site**

There was general agreement that the bylaws should
not be posted on the web site until they have been reviewed by the committee. Jim Burney will contact Dennis Giardina concerning this; Kris Serbesoff-King suggested that Katy Roberts should also be a member of the Bylaws Committee.

NEW BUSINESS

SE-EPPC Representation
Tony Pernas is now chair of the SE-EPPC so a new FLEPPC representative is needed. Jim Burney has appointed Karen Brown to fill this position.

SOPs for use of the FLEPPC logo
There was some discussion of the standards that should apply to allowing use of the FLEPPC logo by other organizations or businesses. Roger Clark made a motion that there should be no private or for-profit use of the FLEPPC logo without specific approval by the Board. The motion was seconded by Karen Brown and passed unanimously.

Dues Discrepancy with SE-EPPC
The discrepancy in membership dues between the FL- and SE-EPPC will be addressed at the next meeting of the SE-EPPC. Florida members who join through SE-EPPC are automatically members of FLEPPC.

Plant Conservation Alliance Participation
Karen Brown reported that the Plant Conservation Alliance, on the National Park Service web site, is seeking cooperators. This issue will be brought before the board at the next meeting, after Board members have had an opportunity to visit the site.

Position Papers
Currently the FLEPPC formulates its response to specific issues on an as-needed basis. Karen Brown suggested that a basic position paper that could be tailored to specific issues would allow for more rapid response. This issue was tabled for further discussion at a later date.

Federal Invasive Species Advisory Committee
Roger Clark reported that nominations are currently open for two positions on the federal Invasive Species Advisory Committee and urged the FLEPPC to consider putting forward nominees from Florida. Karen Brown suggested that Randall Stocker, who has served on this committee in the past, be asked to provide the Board with information about the duties of committee members.

DATE AND TIME OF NEXT MEETING

The next meeting will be held on Wednesday, June 28 at a place and time to be determined by email discussion. Upon motion made by Roger Clark and seconded by Kris Serbesoff-King, the meeting was adjourned by unanimous decision at 6:00 pm.

Attachments referenced in the minutes can be obtained by contacting the board member, committee chair or task force chair who presented that agenda item.

On April 30, 2006 the environmental community lost a dedicated steward whose passion for the environment will be sorely missed. Philip Myers, a Florida Park Service Biologist, was killed by a motorist while riding his bicycle, a hobby that he loved.

Phil’s professional efforts and accomplishments in the field of exotic plant removal in south Florida are well known. He was very skilled at forming partnerships, securing funding (over one million dollars in 2005 alone), and creating enthusiasm for the cause. The programs that he established have served as models for the Florida Park Service and other local agencies. He was responsible for the organization of many multi-agency exotic plant removal workdays throughout south Florida from Fort Pierce to the Florida Keys, and mentored numerous people in various land management activities. His mentorship, with the knowledge that he was always willing to share and his “get it done” work ethic, has given his employees and coworkers an opportunity to continue his legacy. From the years prior to his arrival, to the most recent year of record, he increased the number of acres treated for exotic plant species in his district by over 400%.

Phil will greatly be missed on a personal level as well. He had great stories to share about his travels during his Peace Corps days, his trips to Europe to watch the Tour de France, as well as his adventures at Jazz Fest in New Orleans. These stories, his sense of humor, and his one syllable “HA!” laughter will be greatly missed. He was a valuable colleague and a good friend to many who crossed his path.

Phil also will be remembered for his love of music, socializing with friends, repeating the jokes from the previous night’s episode of The Simpsons (verbatim) and especially, his personal dedication to the conservation of the environment. His passion was truly global in nature and his legacy will continue through the many programs that he helped establish and personally supported, and his professional dedication and friendship will be missed by all. - Greg Kaufman, Florida Park Service

In memory of Philip, donations may be made to:
Philip’s Rain Forest Project, C/O 8430 Shell House Road, Edisto Island, SC 29438
Meet our new Directors

Donna Watkins has an A.S. in Park Technology from Lake City Community College, and a B.S. in Communications from Florida State University. She is a Special Projects Coordinator for the Bureau of Natural and Cultural Resources, Division of Recreation and Parks, in Tallahassee.

Alison Higgins has been waging war against island invaders for 8 years. Originally a SCA environmental education intern for the Florida Keys National Wildlife Refuges, Alison found her niche when she asked those she educated to actually apply their new knowledge using bowsaws and herbicide. She started with the Nature Conservancy of the Florida Keys soon after as a "chick with a chainsaw" and has since become their Land Conservation Program Manager, and chair of the Florida Keys Invasive Exotics Task Force. In her off hours, Alison overcommits her time volunteering as Chair of the Refuge's non-profit Friends group, President on the Keys Green Living and Energy Education group and works on making her 30' liveaboard sailboat as sustainable as possible. She recently received her Masters in Environment and Community from Antioch University and is easing herself back into social life.

Gary Nichols is the Invasive Plant Program Manager with the St. Johns River Water Management District in Palm Bay, Florida. He has been managing exotic invasive plants for DEP and the District for more than 30 years, starting in 1973 as an Aquatic Plant technician. Currently, he is the Invasive Plant Program Manager. Gary says that in his short career in this line of work he has seen just about everything from new herbicides to innovative equipment. "If I had to name the one thing in this profession that has changed the most, it would be the people. Thirty years ago it was just a pay check to most. Today it is a shared challenge that we all take pride in!"

Cheryl McMormick is a Plant Ecologist at the Center for Aquatic and Invasive Plants, Department of Agronomy, University of Florida. She completed a B.A. in Biology and Chemistry at the State University of New York at Plattsburgh. She received her M.A. in Geography at the University of Georgia where she is now a doctoral candidate at the Institute of Ecology. Her research interests include the ecology, biogeography, and evolution of dormancy and germination of coastal invasive species. The species she loves to hate include Chinese tallow (Sapindus sebiferum) and latherleaf (Colubrina asiatica).