Lake Okeechobee Herbicide and Prescribed Fire Treatments

Background Information and Objective:

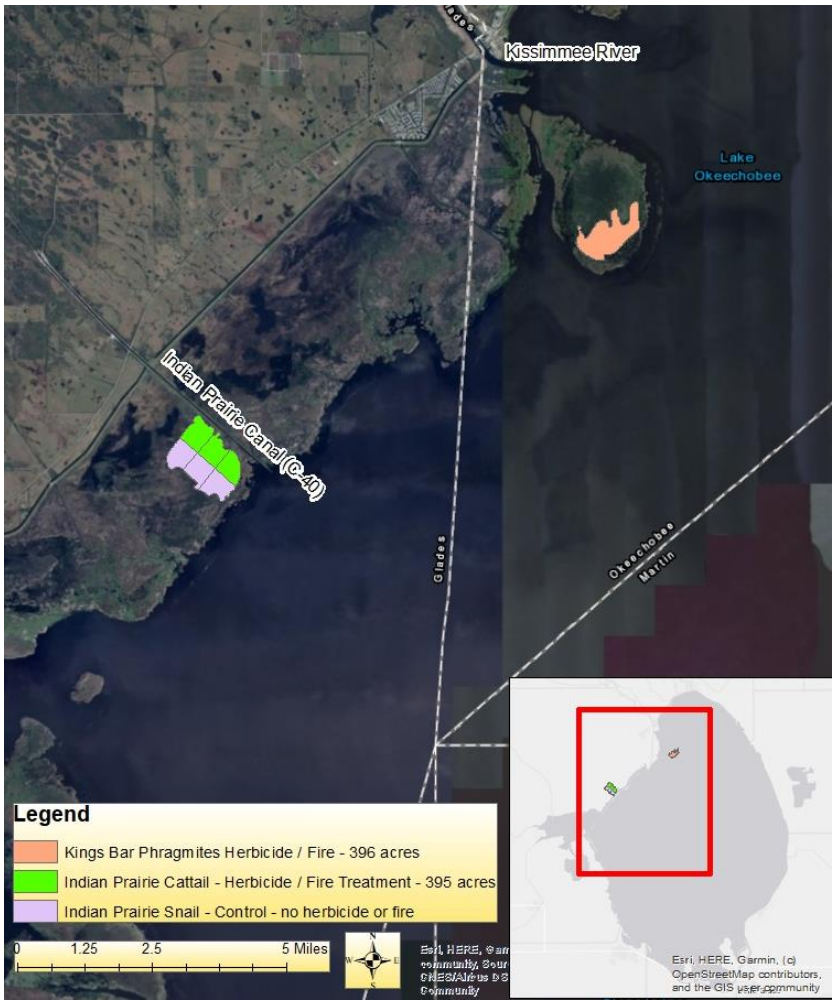
Kings Bar contains approximately 396 acres of phragmites that AHRE's would like to treat in October 2019. Phragmites can grow to be extremely dense and often crowd out other native species. Indian Prairie contains approximately 395 acres of cattail that AHRE's would like to treat in October 2019. Cattail can also grow to be extremely dense and often crown out other native species. Very few wildlife will use dense cattail stands. This treatment is also being monitored by University of Florida to determine snail activity and hopefully determine why these treatments sometimes lead to increased Everglade snail kite activity.

Plan of Action:

1. Phragmites in Kings Bar will be treated with max rate imazapyr via aerial helicopter application. Imazapyr is one of the few herbicides that can kill Phragmites.

2. Cattail near Indian Prairie will be treated with Clearcast at a rate of 32 oz/a via aerial helicopter of fixed wing application. Clearcast at these rates is fairly selective and should not kill any other species within the treatment area other than cattail.

3. At least 3 months after herbicide treatment of the cattail and phragmites, once vegetation has browned and fallen over, prescribed fire will be used to reduce the organic material falling to the bottom. Adjacent green vegetation may also burn, allowing the clearing of dead thatch.



Timing:

A mid-October herbicide treatment would be preferred to avoid interfering with the regular waterfowl season which begins in November. Prescribed fire may occur sometime during the winter months. Whether a fire occurs during hunting season or not, thick cattail is unlikely to be used by waterfowl hunters and provide little impact.

Monitoring:

University of Florida is monitoring snail populations within the Indian Prairie cattail treatment before herbicide (completed), after herbicide treatment and after prescribed fire to determine differences in snail populations in treatment areas. They are also monitoring a control site to ensure changes in snail populations are not due to other lake factors. Snails are being monitored to determine if Everglade snail kite activity increases in this treatment area after herbicide and prescribed fire. If it does, we may be able to link increased activity to either increased visibility of snails, or increased population of snails.