



To Minimize the Spread of Invasive Plants the  
FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF TRANSPORTATION Adopts These

# VOLUNTARY CODES OF CONDUCT

**The Florida Department of Transportation** is believed to be the first state agency in the nation to adopt a voluntary code of conduct to minimize the spread of invasive plants. The code defines conduct designed to curb the use and distribution of invasive plant species through self-governance and self-regulation. In 2006, the FDOT refined the Voluntary Codes of Conduct developed at the Workshop on Linking Ecology and Horticulture to Prevent Plant Invasions. This event was convened in 2001 by the Missouri Botanical Garden and the Royal Botanic Gardens, Kew, and brought together some of the most respected leaders in their fields for the first time. The aim of the workshop was to explore and develop workable voluntary approaches for reducing the introduction and spread of non-native invasive plants by commercial, professional and government groups. The FDOT is incorporating the code into their statewide policy for roadside landscaping and other related business practices, and the document is now page one of the Department's Guide to Chemical Weed and Grass Control. The action by the Department's Chief Engineer in 2006 increased statewide awareness and understanding of invasive plants at all levels within the agency. In November 2008, new Chief Engineer Brian Blanchard renewed the department's commitment by re-endorsing the Voluntary Codes of Conduct.

## **The Department routinely takes the following actions:**

- Complies with Federal, state, and local invasive plant legislation.
- Consults with regional experts and stakeholders to determine which species are known to be invasive.
- Cooperates with owners and managers, and encourage the management of invasive plants on adjacent public and private lands.
- Supports the development of environmentally sound methods to manage invasive plants.
- Encourages the use of non-invasive plants.
- Develops specifications to lessen the impact of invasive plants.
- Provides training on invasive plant identification and management.
- Encourages employees, consultants, and contractors to participate in training on invasive plants.
- Disposes of unwanted invasive plants and plant parts using appropriate safeguards.
- Participates in Florida's Invasive Species Partnership and Cooperative Weed Management Areas (CWMAs).

## **The Department will evaluate the following practices and, where appropriate, will take steps to implement:**

- Phase out the use of Florida Exotic Pest Plant Council (FLEPPC) Category I and II plants, and other species known by the Department to be invasive.
- Advise plant nurseries of the Department's intent to phase out the use of invasive plants.
- Encourage plant nurseries to increase availability of non-invasive plants.
- Take precautionary actions to reduce the probability that invasive plants are moved on construction and maintenance equipment and materials.
- Develop a system-wide invasive plant management plan with budget projections.
- Develop innovative, effective, and enforceable specifications for management and removal of invasive plants from the right-of-way.
- Schedule opportunities to evaluate the effectiveness of these voluntary codes of conduct.

<http://www.dot.state.fl.us/emo/>