

the monitoring of management activities.

A special effort needs to be made to encourage learning activities as part of the management program development for these sites. The integration of environmental education with research and management activities is beneficial. For example, the Long-Term Environmental Monitoring Ecological Research Program at John F. Kennedy Space Center has provided many opportunities for students to participate in ecological research. NASA has several programs that involve university faculty, graduate students, undergraduate students, high school and elementary teachers, and high school students in hands-on research activities. Students and faculty have participated in wildlife surveys, radio tracking of indigo snakes and gopher tortoises, vegetation studies, water quality studies, aquatic ecology studies, and many other environmental activities. These activities have varied from a very short-term "demonstration type" participation to an extended period of active data collection, analysis, and report development. Teachers and students benefit from the active participation in an operational research program which provides them with first-hand knowledge of ecological research, and the research program and researchers benefit from having extra help with field studies and the satisfaction of sharing their knowledge with others.

C. Ross Hinkle is the Group Manager of Biological Research Programs for the Bionetics Corporation at John F. Kennedy Space Center. He received his M.S. and Ph.D. in Ecology from the University of Tennessee, Knoxville. Dr. Hinkle directs research programs in ecology, bioregenerative life support systems, and space biology. He is an adjunct assistant professor at the University of Central Florida and has worked with graduate students at the Florida Institute of Technology, the University of Florida at Gainesville, and the University of Virginia, Charlottesville. He is serving on the Brevard County Committee for the Selection of Environmentally Endangered Lands.



LAND MANAGEMENT

Native Plants and the Indian River Lagoon: A View from a Different Perspective (or A Walk on the Wet Side) by Robert A. Day

The National Estuary Program (NEP) was created during the 1987 revisions of the Clean Water Act. The purpose of the NEP is to develop Comprehensive Conservation Management Plans for estuaries of national significance.

The Indian River Lagoon was nominated for inclusion in the National Estuary Program by Governor Bob Martinez in 1990 and, following review by the Envi-

ronmental Protection Agency, included. Staff was hired and a Management Conference Agreement developed and signed by the participating agencies and local governments. This agreement anticipates completion of a comprehensive Conservation Management Plan for the Indian River Lagoon in 1996.

Given the short life span (five years) of the initial phase of the NEP and the limited amount of funding available, it was determined that the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program (IRLNEP) needed to focus on one or two issues rather than attempting to address the myriad of issues concerning the lagoon. The IRLNEP Management Conference agreed that protection, enhancement, and restoration of the submerged aquatic vegetation community (SAV) in the Indian River Lagoon should be the focus for IRLNEP.

The SAV community, which in the Indian River Lagoon is largely seagrasses, was chosen because the habitat is vital to the survival of many important species in the lagoon, requires good water quality to survive and flourish, and, as a result, is a good indicator of the health of the lagoon. It was the opinion of the IRLNEP Management Conference that efforts to protect and enhance the SAV community would also address many of the identified problems of the lagoon. In addition, the general public could develop an understanding of the relationship between good water quality, improved SAV coverage,

and good fisheries.

The IRLNEP, working in cooperation with the Indian River Lagoon Surface Water Improvement and Management (IRL-SWIM) program, have developed a strategy to protect and enhance the SAV community. The overall goal of this strategy, known as the Submerged Aquatic Vegetation Initiative, is to increase the amount and quality of SAV and associated resources in the Indian River Lagoon.

Robert Day currently serves as Project Scientist for the Indian River Lagoon National Estuary Program. He received his B.S. in Biology from Florida Technological University (now the University of Central Florida) in 1976. Since then, he has worked for the Florida Department of Environmental Regulation and the Brevard County Division of Natural Resources Management as an environmental specialist involved in the monitoring and management of the natural resources of the Indian River Lagoon region.

The New Food Label

The new food label makes it easier to find out what's in the food you eat. Look for "Nutrition Facts" on the side or back of the package—that's how you know it's the new food label.

Check It Out!

A public service of this publication and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration.



We're Wild About Natives!...

...that future generations may appreciate Florida's heritage...

We are specialists in commercial wetland restoration [1-100 acres].

We also have the state's largest supply of seed-grown silver saw palmetto for upland restoration and xeric landscapes.

Many other species are also available.

If you need a quality native planting or plant supply please call.

Retail hours: Wed., 10-5; Sat., 9-2.

DAVID DRYLIE, ASLA
(407) 568-1333

- FLORIDA NATIVE LANDSCAPE PLANTS
- WHOLESALE TREES, SHRUBS & VINES
- WILDFLOWER PLANT & SEED SUPPLY
- WETLAND & AQUATIC PLANT SUPPLY
- LINERS, BAREROOT & CONTAINER STOCK
- CONTRACT GROWING & DESIGN/BUILD

1333 taylor creek rd. ■ p. o. box 1330 ■ christmas, florida 32709
20 mi. east of orlando, ½ mi. south of s.r. 50