

Greetings Howell Creek Residents!

Please find the latest bioassessment report for your creek below. Some of the key highlights from this report include:

- Fertilizer ordinance
- Hydrilla update
- Submersed aquatic vegetation (SAV)
- Emergent vegetation
- Lake Waumpi vegetation status/update

On **March 6th, 2017**, Seminole County Lake Management Program biologists, Joey Cordell and Beth Beals, surveyed the aquatic plants in **Howell Creek** and **Lake Waumpi**.

Seminole County recently passed a fertilizer ordinance in an effort to reduce nutrient loading of waterbodies. The new ordinance places restrictions on the type of fertilizers used, time of fertilization, and placement of fertilizers. For more information about Seminole County's fertilizer ordinance please visit Seminolecountyfl.gov/fertilizer

At the time of inspection water levels were very low.

Hydrilla was observed in both Howell Creek and Lake Waumpi. All observed hydrilla was unhealthy and showed obvious symptoms of herbicide treatment (spongy and leafless). In the creek, small amounts of hydrilla were observed from the creek mouth to the wooden seawall just upstream of the first bend. There was a significant reduction in hydrilla biomass from the previous inspection.

Photo: Unhealthy hydrilla (invasive).



Native submersed aquatic vegetation (SAV) species found during the inspection included: roadgrass and eelgrass.

Photo: Young cattails at the mouth of the creek.



Invasive emergent vegetation observed during the inspection included: alligator weed, wild taro, primrose willow, torpedograss, and creeping oxeye. An increase in alligator weed and torpedograss was noted.

Photo: Torpedograss (invasive).



Native emergent vegetation found during the inspection included: buttonbush, pennywort, and aster.

Lake Waumpi was also surveyed during this inspection. Aquatic vegetation found on Lake Waumpi included: alligatorweed, buttonbush, wild taro, hydrilla, pennywort, primrose willow, duck potato, carolina willow, cattail, and aster.

Photo: Hydrilla found in Lake Waumpi



The secchi reading (water clarity) in Lake Waumpi was 3 ft. at 3.2 ft. No triploid (sterile) grass carp fish were observed. LakeWatch water quality data for Lake Waumpi can be found on the Seminole County Watershed Atlas at:

<http://www.seminole.wateratlas.usf.edu/lake/default.asp?wbodyid=151861&wbodyatlas=lake>.

Lake Recommendations:

1. Work together to establish a lake association with other lakefront owners. Have at least one annual lake association meeting, invite guest speakers (such as county or state biologists) and discuss lake specific issues, especially lake management recommendations. Seminole County Lake Management staff would be glad to present our findings from this and other surveys to the community. Contact Seminole County Lake Management Program at (407) 665-2439 with questions or to schedule a meeting.
2. Increase native aquatic plantings along the shoreline (such as pickerelweed, duck potato, and canna). Native shoreline plants help absorb nutrients from rainfall/run-off, thereby improving habitat and water quality, and reducing shoreline erosion of sediments/organic matter into the lake. Without management, this erosion and sedimentation will fill the lake over time, creating a wetland-type of environment. Planting native species now can assist

in slowing this process (formally known as eutrophication). In addition, native plantings can reduce your herbicide costs/needs, thereby providing a savings to you!

3. Utilize the valuable educational outreach programs that are available, such as Shoreline Restoration Workshops, Florida Yards and Neighborhoods (FYN) interactive presentations, and Lake Management Video mail-outs. Implement a media campaign within the community about reducing personal pollution by: decreasing overall fertilizer usage, **using only phosphorous-free and slow-release nitrogen fertilizers**, keeping a functional shoreline with beneficial native aquatic plants, and keeping grass clippings out of your lake and the stormdrains that lead to the lakes. All of these activities aid in protecting your lake! Contact Seminole County Lake Management Program (407) 665-2439 for more information regarding the free educational programs available.
4. Help spread the word! Obtain email addresses from neighbors not currently on the distribution list in order to share this information with others. Valuable information is contained within these reports.