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TREE HABITAT - DOWN UNDER

Submitted by Ryan Slyter, Forest Supervisor - Florida Forest Service

When we think of the habitat created by trees, we can easily imagine a tree's canopy with nesting birds and squirrels, or maybe even a wide array of insects that crawl in-and-around the bark. Not so familiar to us is the unusual fungal habitat that lies beneath the surface. Many types of fungi exist above and below the soil and interact with plant organisms in harmonious and sometimes parasitic ways.

One of the most beneficial fungi that coexist in the tree world is called mychorrhizal fungi. If you have ever planted or dug a hole and noticed white string-like fibers and roots, you more than likely have seen this fungus. Mycorrhizal is a Greek term meaning "fungus root," while mycorrhizae

is the term given to the mutual relationship between the fungi and the roots of its host.

These types of fungi can be found subsurface, attached to the root systems of trees, and other plants. They colonize by attaching one of two ways: either by vascular (cell) attachment, or attaching to the outside of the roots. Once the fungi have connected to the roots it begins to disperse outward from the root system creating a surface area much greater than the roots themselves.

In fact, mycorrhizal fungus can increase the surface area of the trees roots as much as 100 to 1,000 times. This large surface area creates an extension for roots to gather additional resources such as water, nitrogen, and phosphorus that otherwise would not be attainable by the roots alone.

In their natural and organic state, nitrogen and phosphorus remain more or less useless to the trees because they are tightly bound within the soil. The ability of trees to break the chemical bonds and free the nutrients are limited. Luckily, the fungus releases strong enzymes that allow for nitrogen, phosphorus, as well as other nutrients, to be broken down and absorbed.

In return, the tree feeds the fungus by giving off sugars to be used as energy, which the fungi use to compensate for their inability to photosynthesize. This exchange creates what is known as a symbiotic (mutual) relationship, where both organisms rely on or benefit greatly from one another. This symbiotic process is essential.

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PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE



Hello FUFC members!

I once read, "A tree is a terrible thing to waste." With all the benefits trees give us, I would have to agree with that statement. Healthy trees in our communities improve our environment. Shaded neighborhoods and well-landscaped yards have a positive economic influence on real estate values. Trees are also good for business. Research shows that consumers respond

positively to shopping environments with healthy urban forests.

To maximize the benefits, trees need to stay healthy. For trees to stay healthy, you need to prevent tree damage and provide proper maintenance. Though trees seem resilient, repeated wounding of a tree can lead to premature mortality. Improper maintenance or neglect of an established tree causes a reduction in growth, thus reduction in benefits. Improper maintenance of trees may also result in damage to property or injury to people due to tree decay and structural weakness.

Think of tree care as an investment. Regular preventative maintenance, designed to promote tree health and structural integrity, ensures that a tree continues to increase its benefits over time and prevents the development of more costly problems in the future.

FUFC is busy planning upcoming workshops and the 2018 Urban Forestry
Institute. The workshops will be covering i-Ttree software, which helps
communities of all sizes manage their urban forest. The title of the 2018 Urban
Forestry Institute is Urban Forests and Natural Disasters: Preparedness and
Recovery to be held February 5-7, 2018 at the Gulf Coast Research and Education
Center located in Hillsborough County.

Stay tuned for more information on both programs. I hope you enjoy this issue of The Council Quarterly focusing on "Urban Forestry – From the Ground Up."

There are many species that would not survive long or reach a mature age without the mycorrhizal fungi interaction. The fungus can be found throughout the world in many different climates and biomes associating with about 90 percent of tree and plant species on earth. Application of chemicals such as herbicides, as well as construction, crop rotation, mining, and other ground disturbing activities, can greatly reduce or eliminate the mycorrhizal fungi in the area. Mycorrhizal fungi can be very slow to reestablish itself in an area of disturbance.

To expedite the colonization process in an area where the abundance of mycorrhizal fungi is limited or obsolete, spore inoculations are available through agricultural companies. Of course it is better to limit ground disturbing activities when possible, rather than reestablish what has been lost.

In short, the habitat created by trees, so familiar to us above ground, would not be what it is without the unforeseen habitat established below our feet. An understanding of the relationship between root systems and the soils in which they grow is vital to our ability to foster a lively habitat for healthy trees. A vast majority of tree decline situations can often be attributed to soil-related stress. Knowing more about the physical, chemical and biological properties of soil will enable the tree-care specialist to better manage for a resilient and sustainable urban forest canopy.



Yours Truly,

Linda Seufert Linda Seufert 2017 FUFC President

NEWSLETTER ADVERTISING ANNUAL RATES:

Business-card size advertisement: \$75

Quarter page advertisement: \$115 Half-page advertisement: \$225

Full page advertisement: \$450

To place an advertisement in *The Council Quarterly*, please contact Sandy Temple, *FUFC Executive Director* (407-872-1738).



BE PREPARED!



URBAN FORESTRY INSTITUTE

2018 Urban Forestry Institute:

ter Preparation and Response Confe presented by the

Florida Urban Forestry Council

February 5 -7, 2018

University of Florida Gulf Coast Research and Education Center

Wimauma, Florida 33598 register @ www.fufc.org

Natural disasters ranging from hurricane storm surges to drought-induced wildfires have ravaged urban forests across the United States this past year. While it is uncertain when the next storm or fire will cause disruption, urban forests are sustained systems which are altered and even defined by cycles of disturbance. As an urban tree manager...

How do you effectively prepare for the inevitable?

How do you respond to unmitigable risk?

In the face of devastating loss, can cities rebuild to make a more resilient urban forest?







The Florida Urban Forestry Council, with support from the Florida Forest Service, International Society of Arboriculture, and Arboriculture Research and Education Academy, is bringing researchers and industry experts with first-hand experience together to help define best practices for Natural Disaster Preparation and Response. From identifying what pre-storm data will help with cleanup to navigating the FEMA reporting process, this conference will provide attendees with valuable management insights from an international panel of experts.



Sponsored by









Speakers include:

- Cecil C Koniinendiik van den Bosch, Ph.D. - Professor of Urban Forestry at the University of British Columbia
- Tom Smiley, Ph.D. Researcher/ Educator for Bartlett Tree Experts and co-creator of the ISA Tree Risk Assessment BMP/
- David Evans Internationally recognized risk expert/trainer and creator of the United Kingdom's VALID risk assessment method.
- Dudley Hartel USDA Forest Service Science Delivery/Technology Coordiantor, co-creator of the Urban Tree Risk Index, and
- Scott Altenhoff City of Eugene, Oregon

And many more...

Conference Venue:
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PRUNING RECOMMENDATIONS FOR HOMEOWNERS ASSOCIATIONS

Submitted by Brian Hopper, Landscape/Forestry Operations Supervisor - Village of Wellington

Many homeowner associations (HOA) perform maintenance tree pruning on an annual basis. Tree canopies are often raised for street or sidewalk clearances. Sometimes canopies are thinned out to reduce wind load, increase light penetration, or for aesthetic purposes. Typically a sales person for a contracting company bidding the work will assess the job with a quick tree count and estimate of time required to complete the work. Then, if awarded the job, the trimmers for the contractor will prune the trees based on general information and sometimes limited supervision.

An important missing component that is very often omitted is a comprehensive structural pruning. Structural pruning is essential for young hardwood canopy trees to develop strong form. While thinning is sometimes needed, structural pruning should take priority over thinning. Structural pruning can often achieve many of the same objectives as simple thinning, but it does more for the actual strength of the tree by addressing specific flaws and defects.

In general terms, structural pruning improves the actual strength of a tree by selecting strong branch form and reducing weak branch structure. There are three aspects to structural pruning:

- 1) elimination of crossing branches;
- 2) reduction or removal of branches with weak attachment to the trunk; and
- 3) influencing overall canopy development.

It is important to eliminate any main

branches that cross over and contact one another. Rubbing over time can cause injury that will lead to a weak spot on the branch that is likely to break over time. One of the branches needs to be reduced to a lateral branch, directing future

growth away from the crossing point or possibly removed altogether to eliminate this problem.

In general, a strong branch union on canopy trees appears cup-shaped or u-shaped. Branches that have a narrow angle of attachment often result in bark embedded



between the branch and the trunk--a condition known as "included bark." This is similar to driving a wedge or a separator between the branch and the trunk. The branch is likely to succumb to the stress of its own weight or to give way during the winds of a storm. These branches are good candidates for removal.

The last aspect of structural pruning is performing pruning cuts that affect the eventual mature form of a tree. Typically, a tree with a central main leader is stronger than one with an adjacent, codominant stem (or a trunk that split into two leading stems).

"The last aspect of

structural pruning is

performing pruning cuts

that affect the eventual

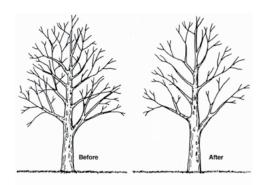
mature form of a tree. "

Often, the centermost leader is favored, but in some circumstances the leader with the best form is selected to continue its dominance. The opposing stem can be reduced to a lateral branch or removed completely.

If a mature tree has developed with multiple main leaders and they all have good cup-shaped attachments, then making drastic cuts (over 10") is not necessary. It is not advised to make large diameter cuts on trees because these cuts are harder to heal or close, which may create an entry for decay inside the tree.

It is recommended that the HOA solicit a tree service with a certified arborist on staff. At best, an HOA may be better served by incorporating into their community documents a statement that strongly recommends, or perhaps requires the endorsement or consent of a certified arborist with any major and/or significant tree work. An arborist certified through the International Society of Arboriculture (ISA) will know how to perform proper and strategic structural pruning.

Trees will require structural pruning over several years to achieve desired results. Ultimately, structural pruning techniques will leave a long lasting legacy for the community, the homeowners and the association.



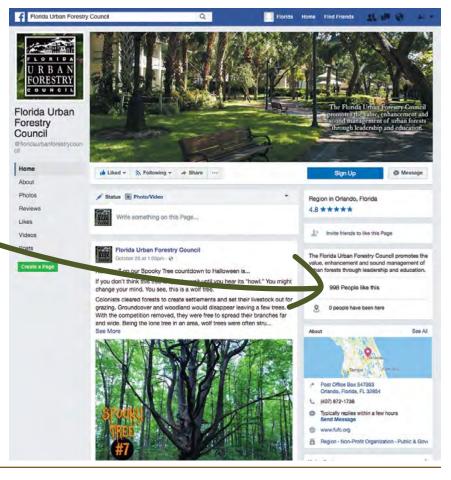






How high can we go?





STUMP THE FORESTER

QUESTION: Can you provide some basic steps when assessing or evaluating a tree's health?

ANSWER: There are some fundamental principles and basic steps that should be followed when examining a tree--be it a layperson or a professional. An accurate tree assessment requires knowledge, experience, and skillful observation that well extends beyond the tree itself. Eventually the expertise of a certified arborist, or a tree care specialist, will be a necessary step and an important option for a thorough and comprehensive assessment.

Step 1: Stop and look up. Become familiar and acquainted with your tree(s) before a holistic assessment is needed. Having an appreciation and familiarity with a healthy tree is key to detecting problems early in their development. Often, trees are overlooked or neglected until they are at a late stage of decline; or perhaps, already dead. It is not uncommon for signs and symptoms of tree-related ailments and disorders to have gone unnoticed for months, or even years.

Step 2: Accurately identify the tree. Many health-related issues are tree-specific. Certain tree species are susceptible to specific pests and environmental stress. Correctly identifying a tree can point the way to identifying conditions that are abnormal disorders; or conditions that may, in fact, be normal for the life cycle of a particular species.

Step 3: Compare the target tree with other trees in-and-around the area--especially those of the same species, age and size. Differences in shape, leaf color and patterns of irregularity may direct you to the severity and source of a problem.

Step 4: Survey the canopy. The foliage is invariably the most noticeable part of the tree. Note the color, fullness and any irregularities. Dieback in the crown may be an indicator to environmental stress to roots or the vascular system. Deformed leaves may indicate viral or bacterial attacks.

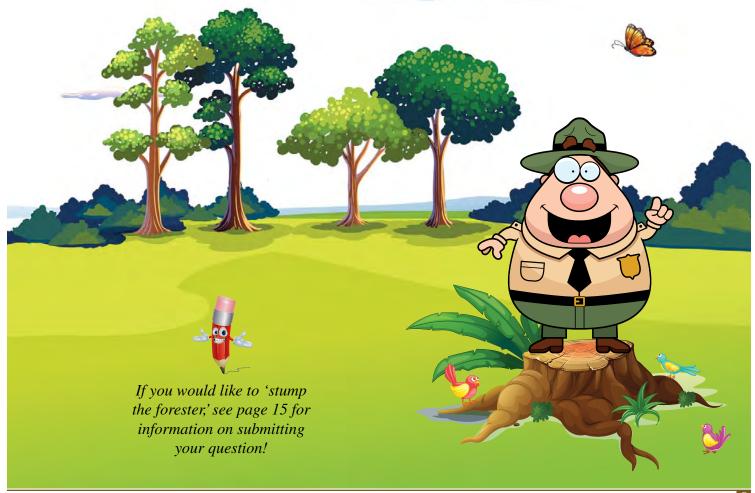
Step 5: Continue your inspection down the tree to include the branches and the trunk of the tree. Look for wounds, abrasions, storm damage, discoloration, insect holes, or fungus growths.

Step 6: Reach down as well as up. No roots, no branches. The root system is the most frequently overlooked portion of the tree. In many cases, the root of the problem can stem from underground. Examine the root collar and visible surface roots for damage, decay and/or uplifting. Note also the soil conditions within the root zone.

Gather as many clues and information as you can before drawing a conclusion. Rarely is a tree-related problem the result of one simple cause. Tree problems are often a result of a complex combination of factors. Your observation and diagnostic skills will improve each time you inspect a tree.

Step 7: Discuss your findings with a local arborist or tree-care specialist. Develop a working relationship with a local tree-advocacy group, professional arborist, municipal forester, Cooperative Extension Agent, or Florida Forest Service County Forester.

Answer provided by Joe Anderson – Certified Arborist and Utility Forester with JEA



Tree of Ouarter

GROUNDSEL TREE (Baccharis halimifolia)

Submitted by Joe Anderson – Certified Arborist and Utility Forester with JEA

Groundsel tree (Baccharis halimifolia) also known as salt bush, salt marsh elder, sea myrtle, eastern baccharis, consumption weed, and cotton-seed tree, is a fast growing, sun loving, perennial shrub or small tree. As many of the common names suggest, groundsel is a salt tolerant plant that graces the brackish edges and habitats of tidal marshes, maritime forests and barrier islands along our Atlantic and Gulf coasts. Groundsel tree is also an early successional, woody invader of disturbed areas.

The botanical name "Baccharis" is derived from the ancient Roman god of wine and vegetative power, fertility and drama. At its peak, in the fall of the year, eastern baccharis trees can wow the vegetative margins with a conspicuous display of silky, silver tassels that will bring drama and beauty to our natural Florida landscapes.

Groundsel is an edgy plant. Not only is it found along the fringe of natural areas and the brink of vegetative buffers, but it borders on the edge of definition between a tree and a shrub. As salt bush, groundsel is a woody, multi-stemmed shrub that grows under 12 feet tall. As a shrub it can spread as wide as it is tall. As a groundsel tree, it can grow just over 12 feet tall to resemble the common characteristics of a small tree. Growth characteristics are often influenced by location, climate, soil conditions, competing vegetation, or pruning practices.

Habitat: Eastern United States from Massachusetts south to Florida; west to Texas and eastern Mexico; the Bahamas, and Cuba. Common to brackish, seacoast beaches, tidal marshes, and estuaries; inland to wet habitats to include ditches, swamps, and disturbed roadsides and old fields.

Leaves: 1- 3 inches long, simple, alternate, thick, elliptical to rounded; coarse teeth at the upper margins, especially on leaves of lower stems. Leaves can vary considerably in size and shape. A dull, grayish green foliage turns purplish-red in the fall.

Burk: Dark brown; finely textured with long shallow ridges.



Branches: Weak wood and branch structure; green twigs.

Roots: Extensive, fragrant root systems.

Flowers: Honey scented; male and female flower clusters on separate individuals; female flowers display a conspicuous, silky, cotton-like, terminal inflorescence.

Fruit & Seed: Prolific seed producer. Fruit is tethered to slender, silvery-white, plume-like, silky tufts (pappus). Seeds drift in the wind as the wind-catching pappus act as a sail and can disperse the small cylindrical fruits over a wide area.

Usefulness:

- Wildlife food and cover. Male flowers produce abundant nectar for butterflies and bees. Beetles and moths feed on leaves and buds. Very little food value for game animals.
- Erosion control; Soil stabilization for retention and drainage sites.
- Suitable, vegetative cover for utility rights-of-ways requiring vegetative buffers of low growing plants and shrubs.
- Fast-growing; hardy plant tolerant of salt-spray, fire and mowing.
- Recommended for natural landscapes and habitat restoration.
- Traditional, herbal, folk remedies for inflamed kidneys and fever. Other medicinal uses included a topical treatment of various skin infections, irritation, and anti-inflammatory agent.
- An antiquated ornamental plant.

Little known facts:

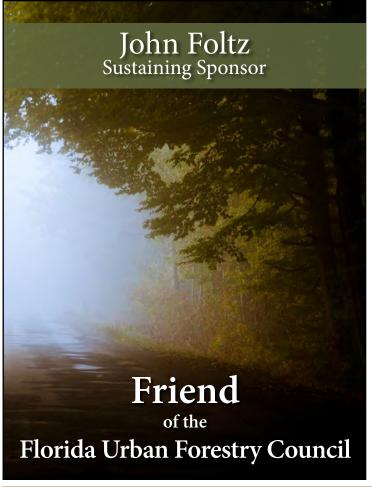
- The life span of saltbush can be as long as 50 years.
- Only native eastern species of the aster family reaching tree size.
- Seeds are toxic to humans; plant can be toxic to livestock.
- Member of the Sunflower family (Asteraceae)
- Considered a problem shrub in pastures, rangelands, broad open recreational areas; sometimes invasive in Europe and Australia.





PRUNING SAW SANITATION







MULCHING MADNESS AND MUTILATION

Submitted by Joe Anderson, Certified Arborist and Utility Forester - JEA

When applied properly, mulch can safeguard a tree's root system against drought, extreme temperatures, and a whole host of threats--especially for newly planted trees. However, improper mulching materials and practices may result in "mulching madness and mutilation." Too much mulch applied over the root ball or resting against the trunk can lead to little benefit or even negative impacts on stems of trees. This is not ground-breaking news. It's been known and preached for years. Yet still, I see it all the time. Planting a tree too deep is a common cause for decline or failure within the first and second year of growth. If the tree is buried above the root flare, the trunk can be exposed to decay causing bacteria or fungi. By building a soil surface above the root flare, mulch mounds can replicate the very same conditions as if a tree was planted too deep.

Too much mulch near the base of a tree can intercept and prevent water from reaching core roots within the root ball. The root ball is the crib that will sustain a newly-planted

tree for nearly a year. Robbing the crib of water can cause root balls to dry leading to stress and an early death.

"Aggressive, infant roots

can hug and girdle the

trunk restricting the

flow of water, nutrients

and sugars above their

embracing noose, or

snare."

To complicate matters, mulching close to the trunk can encourage the formation of girdling roots. Young absorbing roots will have an appetite for soft bedding, water, oxygen, and minerals found near the soil surface. An old mentor once told me that mulch can be

like "mother's milk" for infant roots. This is not a bad thing, unless, of course, the milk (or mulch) is spilled too close to the trunk. Aggressive, infant roots can hug and girdle the trunk restricting the flow of water, nutrients and sugars above their embracing noose or snare.

Generally, mulch depths of 2 to 4 inches (5 to 10 cm) is recommended. Course mulch

can be applied slightly deeper without harm. Do not mound mulch directly against the stem of the tree. Pull the mulch back away from the base of the tree several inches.

Leave the trunk exposed.
Allow air to flow around the base of the tree.
Encircle the outer edge of the buried root ball with a mulch ring, donut or berm. This will help collect and direct water to the core roots, and will also preserve the open, protective space needed at the base of the tree.

Want to learn more about proper mulching? Reach out to your local tree care specialist, certified arborist, county or municipal forester, or a local tree advocacy group. You can also visit the *Tree Owner Information* tab on http://www.treesaregood.com.



Improper Mulch Root flare buried & Mulch piled high up against the trunk



Proper Mulch
Root flare visible at the base of the tree &
Mulch extends to dripline of canopy



Deadline for Submission: November 30, 2017

- OUTSTANDING PROFESSIONAL
- OUTSTANDING TREE ADVOCATE OR TREE ADVOCACY GROUP
- OUTSTANDING PROJECT
- OUTSTANDING URBAN FORESTRY PROGRAM
- **LIFETIME ACHIEVEMENT AWARD**

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GUIDELINES

■ Nominate your own work, the work of your organization or the work of another.

■ Each application must be typed and presented in a standard three-ring binder (no larger than ½ inch capacity). The completed awards entry form must be the first page of the application. The second page of the application should be a 200-word overview of the nomination. (Note: For winning nominations, the overview of the nomination will be used for presentation purposes and to highlight the individual, project or program in The Council Quarterly newsletter.) Following the brief overview should be a summary of not more than three typewritten pages that describe the project's, program's or individual's

contribution to urban and community forestry as outlined in the Award Categories.

- Support documentation such as photographs, press clippings, printed pieces, and letters of commendation are encouraged, but shall be limited to 12 additional pages. All supporting documents must be attached or secured inside the application. Please, no loose documentation such as videotapes. Each application must include at least three digital photos in order to be considered. Examples include photos of the individual recipient, project logo, etc.
- Deadline for entry is **November 30, 2017.** Submit the original, one full copy and the three digital photos to:

SEND ALL NOMINATIONS TO:

Friends of Our Urban Forest Awards Program Florida Urban Forestry Council Post Office Box 547993 Orlando, FL 32854-7993

All submitted materials become property of the Florida Urban Forestry Council. Please note: The Awards Committee reserves the right to reassign the entry to another category if deemed appropriate. For questions or additional entry forms, please contact Sandy Temple, Florida Urban Forestry Council Executive Director at (407) 872-1738.

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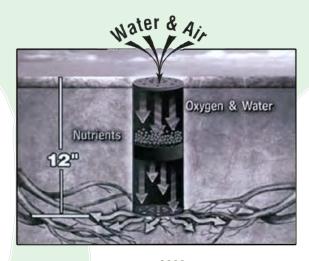
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REQUEST FOR ARTICLES

Please let us know what urban forestry projects you have going on in your neck of the woods. The Florida Urban Forestry Council would greatly appreciate the opportunity to share your information in our newsletter. These articles can include:

- New trends in the industry
- News about tree advocacy groups
- Volunteer projects
- City tree programs
- Letters to the Editor
- Questions for "Stump the Forester"

We look forward to hearing from you on this or any other interesting topic related to the urban forestry industry and profession. Please send any articles or ideas to Joe Anderson, FUFC newsletter editor, at andejs@jea.com.

Thanks for contributing!



FAX: (

E-mail:

Area of interest:

Amount Enclosed: _____ Date: ____

Would you be interested in further information regarding serving on a Council subcommittee? Yes No

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Justin Freedman
Immediate Past President
Elected Position
Private Arborist
E Sciences Inc.

COMMITTEE MEMBERS:

Alexis Alvey, Appointed Position ASLA/FL Chapter Keith and Schnars

Kathy Beck, Appointed Position Advisory Member City of Tampa

Greg Brown, *Appointed Position*FL Recreation and Park Association
City of Largo

Jody Buyas, Elected Position Member-at-Large Keep Orlando Beautiful

Jim Davis, Appointed Position Cooperative Extension Service Sumter County

Steve Edgar, Appointed Position Society of American Foresters Long Leaf Forest Service, Inc.

Elizabeth Harkey, *Elected Position*City Arborist
City of Sanford

Julie Iooss, Appointed Position FL Chapter ISA Retired – City of Orlando

Ian Jurgensen, Elected Position Member-at-Large City of Orlando

Andrew Koeser, Appointed Position Member-at-Large City of Vero Beach Gayle Lafferty, Elected Position Member-at-Large City of Vero Beach

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Daisy Morales, Appointed Position Advisory Member Orange County Soil and Water Conservation District

Guy Murtonen, Appointed Position Florida Department of Transportation Florida's Turnpike Enterprise

John Springer, Elected Position Tree Advocacy Enchanted Walkabouts

David Watford, *Elected Position*Utility Forester
SECO Energy

Mark Williams, Elected Position Member-at-Large City of Fort Lauderdale

Vacancy - Florida League of Cities

Vacancy - Advisory Member

Lou Shepherd, Liaison Florida Forest Service

Sandy Temple FUFC Executive Director