

RESTORATION: the initiation of a natural process.

by David M. Drylie, Jr., ASLA

David Drylie Landscape Architecture is pleased to announce the incorporation of Florida Landscapes and Associates, providing Landscape Architecture, Environmental Survey and Analysis through Site Planning services for North, Central and South Florida properties. We specialize in landscapes that are sensitive to the needs of Florida's delicately balanced environment as well as people.

It is our position: as Florida's population growth continues, many of the few remaining unspoiled natural areas are at risk of being lost. Short of eliminating growth, an alternative is to guide property development toward respect for environmentally sensitive lands. Much can be achieved through sound local and regional government growth management policies, but the entire solution is not found in government regulation.

Beyond important efforts to preserve valuable unspoiled habitats for future generations, we must look toward the potential resource of *all* Florida lands. Many development sites previously cleared for agricultural or other intensive land uses immediately present a great opportunity for us to initiate a natural process of native plant community succession. I have visited many beautiful places with abundant wildlife, diverse woodlands, and colorful wildflowers where worn-out cottonfields lay forty years ago. But we must provide the *opportunity* for nature to mend its scars. Acres of manicured sod and five-foot landscape strips are not the answer to living *with* our unique Florida environment.

Florida Landscapes and Associates, defines the objective of our work and art as "creative conservation"—blending the dynamics of natural systems ecology and their patterns with the human landscape, toward designs *with* nature. Natural systems are a dynamic product of interactions between climate, the land's edaphic conditions, and associated living organisms. Human landscapes are designed spaces providing facility of function, shelter, mobility, or enjoyment for humans, with or without respect for other living things. Through "creative conservation", we seek to design for the facility of all living things.

Understanding the interrelationships addressed by plant ecology is the first step toward design with nature. However, it is a first step often neglected or overlooked in the land design process.



A natural area from which we draw our ideas.



The initiation of a natural process...

Green Images is our wholesale native plant nursery, now producing quality native landscape stock for the restoration and beautification of disturbed Florida lands. We have spent thousands of dollars and devoted thousands of staff hours in the field: researching, studying, and surveying the plant associations of the Central Florida ridges, lakeshores, rivers, swamps, and coastal marshes through to our coastal dunes and beaches. From our field research, we take candidate seeds and cuttings back to Orlando for commercial trials. Year after year, successes have overcome failures and we are now approaching over 250 species in stock and on trial. To date, our initial plant selection efforts have been guided by my training in landscape architecture and horticulture, my colleagues, and many caring FNPS members. But, as there are over 3,500 native plant species in Florida, our task has just begun.

We, and the native plant industry, can now produce many previously unavailable native plant materials. **Florida Landscapes and Associates** has developed "Creative Conservation" landscape programs to accommodate many typical land design problems. Once invited to be an integral part of the site planning team during the initial land development phases, we can achieve the best human/land integration results possible. However, through the blinding haze of "bottom-line" decision making and antiquated planning practices, the design team flexibility required to commercially practice our art has all too often gone unchanged. We invite your serious inquiries.

To conclude: we, the FNPS members and all stewards of Florida's environment, must continue to emphasize this fact: people and their lives are interconnected to all other living things. Every minute of every hour our lives are affected by our dynamic relationship with nature. We are only a factor within our Earth's ecology, but we are the factor with choice! If armed with this understanding and knowledge, perhaps the growth-related development of our Florida ridges, wetlands, and coastal areas will also grow to accept natural systems, and their maintenance, as their guide towards Design *with* Nature. Thank you.

*Please call or write for more information: **Green Images and Florida Landscapes & Assoc.**, 8100 Curry Ford Rd., Orlando 32822. 305/282-1469.*