

## **Completion of Initial Invasive Plant Species Control Program, Little Salt Spring, Sarasota County.**

Little Salt Spring is being managed by staff of the University of Miami - Steve Koski, in particular. Ecological Services Associates (ESA) (myself and Hugh D. Dinkler) subcontracted with Harold West (Wetland Management Services) to clear the north bank of the spring-fed run from the spring for approximately 1/4 mile. Harold and his crew used a small bobcat, fitted with a track to avoid compaction of the wetland soils, to cut and grind all the nuisance invasive species along this portion of the stream. All material was cut and chipped onsite - away from the Creek. Nearly all the vegetation along the Creek was overwhelmed by Brazilian pepper, plus a few other species. All native vegetation was avoided and was left unharmed. All work done inside the wetland boundary was hand cleared by ESA. Brazilian pepper was cut by hand. All material cut by hand or by Harold's crew was treated immediately with an appropriate herbicide to avoid re-sprouting.

Steve Koski has continued to manage the site with the assistance of volunteers.

The grant monies were largely used to pay Harold West for use of his equipment and crew. ESA's time and equipment were donated and Harold West's rate was reduced significantly below normal charges.

There still remains work to be done - as monies become available, more clearing will be done.

Craig Huegel



**Figure 1.** Photo showing the creek before clearing and removal of invasive vegetation.





**Figure 2.** Before removal of invasive vegetation.



**Figure 3.** Little Salt Spring.





**Figure 4.** A small bobcat, fitted with a track to avoid compaction of the wetland soils, cut and ground all the nuisance invasive species along the north bank of the stream.



**Figure 5.** After clearing was completed.