



News Advisory

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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TALLAHASSEE - Florida Department of Transportation Secretary Ananth Prasad recently signed the department's new Wildflower Management Program Procedure, which will allow more of the state's native wildflowers to flourish along roadsides through reduced mowing and other management practices.

FDOT state transportation landscape architect Jeff Caster said, "Roadsides are the state's most visited and visible landscape. The department is committed to increasing the visibility and enjoyment of native wildflowers."

"We salute the department in enacting this forward-thinking program," said Vince Lamb, Florida Wildflower Foundation board chairman. "In Florida, wildflower tourism is building as its own brand of ecotourism, as is exemplified in the eastern Panhandle. There's no doubt that FDOT's new statewide procedure will help preserve native wildflowers, the most beautiful roadside assets of all."



Not only are they beautiful, wildflowers provide habitat for the pollinators vital to Florida's agricultural success. Together, they are essential to the production of every third bite of food we eat.

On Jan. 28, the Florida Wildflower Foundation and the Magnolia Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society hosted a meeting of more than 100 Panhandle Wildflower Alliance members in Tallahassee to introduce the new program. Established in 2012, the Florida Panhandle Wildflower Alliance is an informal network of regional wildflower enthusiasts that advocates for conservation of wildflowers in the state's Eastern Panhandle.

To view the Wildflower Management Program Procedure, visit <http://flawildflowers.org/resources/pdfs/2014/FDOTWFProcedures650030001.pdf>.

Learn more about the Panhandle Wildflower Alliance at www.flawildflowers.org/fpwa.php. Learn more about Florida's wildflowers at www.flawildflowers.org.

Photo: Left to right - Jeff Caster, FDOT landscape architect; Jeff Norcini, FDOT wildflower horticulturalist; FDOT Sec. Ananth Prasad; Florida Wildflower Foundation liaison Eleanor Dietrich.

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