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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

## **Northern Palm Beach County Improvement District Awarded \$50,000 Grant**

### *Palm Beach County Public Lands Grant Program Funds Control of Exotic Species*

**Palm Beach Gardens, FL – May 5, 2006** -The Northern Palm Beach County Improvement District has been awarded a \$50,000 grant for the control of exotic species in the Rolf Property, Unit No. 5 area. This area is located between Falkirk Street to Okeechobee Blvd. covering a stretch of 13, 378 feet and 7506 feet from Okeechobee Blvd. to Southern Blvd. along Florida's Turnpike. The Public Lands Grant Program is funding the grant through the Palm Beach County Department of Environmental Resource Management.

According to Sam Payson, Staff Biologist for Northern, "These plant species displace and alter native plant communities which native animal species need to survive. So anything we can do to benefit the ecosystem is an advantage for everyone."

Exotic species or nuisance plants, on the Rolf Property consist of air potato, Australian pine, Brazilian pepper, earleaf acacia and Melaleuca. Nearly eight out of ten plant species on the property is a prohibited species. The program provides matching funds for the duration of the grant in order to successfully eradicate the plants which effectively kill the natural growth of native plants.

The planning of the project began last October 2005, and a dramatic improvement in the restorative efforts can already be seen. The contribution of the grant is attributed to the success of the clearing of the prohibitive species. Anticipated completion of the project is June 1, 2006.

The Northern Palm Beach County Improvement District is an independent special district created by the Florida Legislature in 1959. Its role is to provide services related to water management and infrastructure for properties in northern Palm Beach County.

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