



PROJECT: RADIO ROAD EAST MSTU MAINTENANCE

FIELD REPORT No. 9

CONTRACT: LANDSCAPE & IRRIGATION MAINTENANCE, AFFORDABLE LANDSCAPING SERVICE & DESIGN LLC

MAINTENANCE FIELD VISIT PERFORMED ON 7/11/14 and 8/4/14

PRESENT AT SITE 7/11/14 Dayna Fendrick, UGS Tom Hecker, EcoBotanic Designs

Darryl Richard, CC ATM Albert Bennaroch, ALS Doug Caldwell, IFAS

GENERAL NOTES & OBSERVATIONS

- 1. During the months of June and July, we've had the typical summer rainy season, with a little above-average rainfall and temperatures in the low 90's.
- 2. The main issues we are dealing with are 1. WEEDS 2. Horticultural Consultation 3. Overgrowth & Trimming 4. Bromeliad plantings

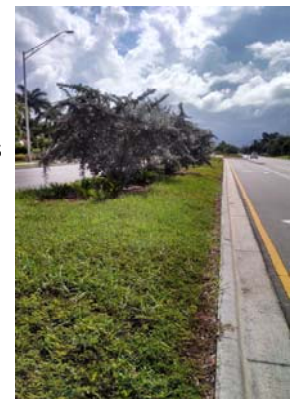
WEED ISSUE

Weed growth throughout the ground cover beds continues to be a major concern. Per the Committee's direction, the maintenance site visit schedule has been increased to every week instead of every other week, and ALS has been hand-pulling the weeds as well as trying out chemical control applications. However, it appears that the weeds are staying ahead of us, and are widespread. Some areas of the Mimosa ground cover appear to be too overtaken with weeds to recover, and may have to be replanted with an alternate species.

Even in newly planted beds of Asian Jasmine and Dwarf Bougainvillea, weeds have quickly emerged.

Another type of viney weed is overgrowing the Bougainvillea & Thrinax Palm plantings.

Since ALS has been focused on trying to get the weeds under control, other items have been neglected and are adding to a very poor appearance overall. Many plants are overgrown and overdue for trimming.



Weeds in Mimosa



Weeds in new Dwarf Bougainvillea planting



Viney weed in Thrinax Palm/Bougainvillea plantings

HORTICULTURAL CONSULTATION 7/11/14

Due to our concerns with some of the plant conditions & performance, Darryl asked Mr. Doug Caldwell, Horticulturist with the IFAS Extension office, to walk the site and provide his opinion.

On the weed problem, Doug suggested a couple of herbicides to try on the Mimosa: "Image" and "Fusilade" should work on broad-leaf weeds and the grassy weeds. ALS followed up on the suggestions and found that neither one was labeled for Mimosa, and John Deere and another supplier have not been able to find an herbicide that is labeled for Mimosa.



Doug reviewing Mimosa area

The "Fusilade" also could be used on the Asian Jasmine, and ALS has been trying that out in small areas already.

ALS' crew was observed pulling weeds by hand, however some of the weeds were too large and deeply rooted to pull out by hand. Tools like shovels or hoes were needed to get the large clumps out, but the crews didn't have those tools on site at the time of our observation. Some of the root clumps were left in the ground, which would likely re-grow.

We reviewed the spotty areas of Spider Lily die-off. There seems to be no obvious reason, but the best guess is that it's due to soil conditions, poor drainage, and in some areas the plants may have been planted too deep

Pigeon Plums off-color: Doug noted that the Pigeon Plums at the Botanical Garden took 2-3 years to get established and start looking good. So it may just take them awhile to get rooted and take off.

Doug noted the Royal Palms look "puny" and may need additional fertilizer to improve condition. We may need to do some applications in addition to the normally scheduled (3x per year) applicatons.

Doug pointed out some of the Gumbo Limbo trees have Croton Scale. The spiralling white fly pest has become much less of a problem, and the propulation has plummeted due to other predators realizing they were a food source. Some of the Gumbo branches had been trimmed incorrectly, leaving stubs. The stubs should be removed.

We looked at the smaller Bromeliads that had done poorly, and the opinion was that they were probably planted too deep and staying too wet. Tom Hecker noted that Bromeliads don't really need irrigation, and those zones could be turned off.



Pigeon Plum/Spider lily area



Spider Lily die-off area

OVERGROWTH & TRIMMING

Several of the Gumbo Limbo trees have branches hanging into the travel lanes, and should be trimmed, as this presents a safety hazard. Proper reduction cuts should be made while doing the trimming. This item has been noted in previous reports dating back to 2/10/14. In addition to the trimming of branches adjacent to the roadway, many of the trees in the middle of the medians have put on very vigorous growth, and have weeping branches hanging down to the ground. We should budget and plan for a structural pruning as soon as possible for all the Gumbo Limbos.

The Silver Buttonwood trees have also put on a lot of growth, and should be trimmed and lifted up. This item has also been noted in previous reports.

The Bougainvillea has a lot of rangy growth and should be trimmed.

In general, with the weed growth and the overgrown plant material, the project has a very unkempt appearance, and does not compare well to other medians in the area at this point.



Silver Buttonwoods to be trimmed



Gumbo Limbo branches out into travel lanes

BROMELIAD PLANTINGS AT TIPS OF MEDIANS

The Bromeliad plantings were started, then halted due to confusion over the planting pattern and concern with some of the varieties. Some of bromeliads that Al had received at his nursery were already showing signs of sunburn, and we determined it would not be beneficial to go ahead and plant them. It is typically recommended by Bromeliad growers to plant them in the fall/winter, so they have an adjustment period with less sun exposure. Most Bromeliads are shade-grown, and even if they are sun-tolerant varieties, they require an adjustment period. We first discussed the Bromeliad planting option in December 2013, and thought the plantings could be accomplished in the winter/spring season. However, it has taken longer to get to actual planting, and ended up being the middle of summer. So we decided it would be best to wait and do the plantings in October.

In the meantime, we reviewed the varieties that were specified, and Darryl compared notes with other MSTU districts that had used Bromeliads. We decided to limit the number of varieties for simplicity of installation, and to go with just 2 varieties - the Orange one that has done well, and a Dwarf Orange in the sightline areas. Al has found a grower with the Dwarf Orange variety.



Wrong Bromeliad variety supplied, to be replaced

OBSERVATIONS TYPICAL THROUGHOUT MEDIANS

1. Median # 31 (closest to Santa Barbara) was re-planted with Dwarf Bougainvillea to replace the Mimosa that was overtaken by weeds.
2. One Buccaneer Palm on Median #31 is weak and likely to die. Other Buccaneer Palms should be monitored and fertilizers applied as necessary.
3. The Golden Creeper is growing in well, but has weed growth throughout.
4. The Silver Palm and Silver Thrinax Palm groupings are in fair condition. ALS is to remove the dead/brown fronds and apply Epsom salts where the foliage is yellowed out. The viney weed should be removed.
5. The Silver Saw palmetto is still struggling and has a lot of brown foliage.
6. The Muhly grass looks good and is putting out a lot of new growth.
7. The Bird of Paradise are in fair -good condition.
8. Several of the Sabal minor palms still have yellow fronds, but they are mostly the older fronds. ALS is to monitor and apply Epsom salts if the newer fronds start showing signs of yellowing.
9. All of the Imperial Bromeliads have been stolen. Apparently a local favorite.



Spider Lily blooming

INFORMATION OR ACTION REQUIRED

- ALS is to:
- Weed Control
 - Trim Silver Buttonwood trees
 - Trim Gumbo Limbo branches in travel lanes
 - Install Bromeliads later in fall

DISTRIBUTE TO

All attendees
RRE MSTU Committee