



Best Practices

The Florida Recreation and Park Association adopted a comprehensive Strategic Plan in 2015. That Plan is based on four foundational pillars – Health, Community Building, Environmental Sustainability and Resiliency, and Economic Impact/Development.

The Association is in search of Best Practices in each of these four areas, which can serve as a resource for parks and recreation professionals. We realize that “Best Practice” can be broadly applied and the meaning varies depending on the environment and industry one works within.

For the purposes of the FRPA Strategic Plan, the Association’s Board of Directors has adopted and will apply the following definition:

FRPA Strategic Best Practices – Methods, professional guidance, benchmarks and technical expertise centered around a FRPA strategic pillar (Health, Environment, Community Building, Economic Impact) that are evidence-based or proven through experience to support positive results and may be replicated or utilized by other parks and recreation agencies toward achieving a similar desired outcome.

“Evidence-based or proven through experience” indicates that the best practice has had some research, or long term monitoring conducted to show that the practice is having a positive outcome when applied. For example: When applying the best practice of mowing and over-seeding in this manner, for a period of one year, we have been able to extend the life of our turf by 6 months thus reducing expenses \$X; OR When integrating physical activity and nutrition education in our after school programming, we partnered with the University of XYZ to measure increased health of participants, and have shown a 24% reduction in BMI of participants.

We realize that there may be a plethora of “success stories” that are not evidence based, but have produced positive results for an agency, and may also have value as a shared resource.

Submissions will be evaluated by the Best Practice Workgroup to determine if the submission meets the criteria of “Best Practice” as we have defined, or if it should be catalogued as a “success story”.



Best Practice Submission

Agency: City of Hialeah Department of Parks and Recreation

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Area of Best Practice: ENVIRONMENTAL PILLAR: Invasive Exotics
ex: managing spread/public outreach/identification/eradication

Summary of Best Practice: (include description of the practice, reason for adopting/implementing best practice, measurement of effectiveness of the practice, what is your evidence that the practice is working, etc.)

- Our city has been dealing with the invasion of iguanas for many years now. They have gone into our canal banks and caused major damage. In addition, they are also found in several of our parks. They have burrows holes and caused damage to vegetation.
- There are more than 200 species of exotic animals living and breeding in the state of Florida. Most of these animals were once pets, or they are the offspring of pets. Once they escape or are set free by pet owners, many non-native animals find Florida a great place to live.
- Because of our climate, there is plenty of vegetation available here for the iguanas to survive and mass breeding is very favorable for them. These animals love to consume our plentiful lush year round green vegetation. Our waterways are full of fish, algae and plants. Another benefit that allows this invasive exotic creature to thrive in Florida is that our winters are mild, enabling all sorts of species to survive in the wild. Animal species native to tropical climates can live and breed throughout the year here.



Frequency Best Practice is Applied: (daily, weekly, monthly, quarterly, bi-annually, annually)

- Daily

Who Performs the Best Practice Function within your Agency: (contracted, in-house parks staff, in-house recreation staff, citizens, etc.)

- These services are provided by contracted and in-house park staff.

Positive Outcome of the Best Practice (please summarize the evidence based benefit that has been derived by the agency from the best practice):

- Our city has hired a licensed trapper in the past to reduce the iguana population humanely. In addition, our city has begun constructing canal embankments made of concrete to prevent them from creating a habitat in our canal banks.

Awards/Recognitions/Designations Received as a Result of the Best Practice (please share any awards or designations received, or publications that have featured this best practice):

- N/A

Grants or Funding Received (if any):

- N/A

What other Best Practices would you suggest we collect?

- N/A

Submit this Form electronically to charla@frpa.org

Type directly onto this document, and submit as a Word Document. Please DO NOT pdf the form.