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VOLUNTEERS TO PLANT WILDFLOWERS AT PEPPER PARK

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Contributed by: Erick Gill on 7/23/2007

FORT PIERCE - St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department is planning a Wildflower Planting Day for Saturday, July 28 at Pepper Park's west side on North Hutchinson Island.

Volunteers from the Surfrider Foundation, Lakela's Mint Chapter of the Florida Native Plant Society, St. Lucie County Master Gardeners and the North Beach Association will be planting a diversity of species such as scorpion's tail, wild petunia, yellowtop, dune sunflower, red sage, wild plumbago, necklace pod, fiddlewood, firebush, and beauty berry. The wildflowers chosen are native, coastal species which offer nectar and larval food sources for butterflies and berries for birds and other wildlife.

"The fact that these species are adapted to coastal habitats means that they are drought-tolerant once established, and many are also salt-tolerant, both of which are valuable traits for landscaping along St. Lucie County's coastline," said Yvette Alger, environmental planning coordinator for St. Lucie County.

The planting will take place from 8:30 - 11:30 a.m. Saturday, July 28. Volunteers are asked to bring shovels (small or large), gloves, water, hats and sunscreen.

This project is being funded through a grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation, as well as in-kind donations from St. Lucie County Environmental Resources and Parks and Recreation Departments. The \$2,041 grant from the Florida Wildflower Foundation was raised through the sale of the "wildflower" motor vehicle license plate, and was used to purchase the planting materials as well as develop educational signs at the park.

Other similar projects coordinated by St. Lucie County's Environmental Resources Department include planting shade trees at the F.K. Sweet Elementary School playground; establishing a butterfly garden, shade trees, and native shrubs at the Fort Pierce Boys and Girls Club; transplanting rescued trees to the St. Lucie Fairgrounds; planting rescued native vegetation at Savannas Recreation Area, and planting native flowers and shrubs at the St. Lucie Sheriff's Office.

To get involved with this or future volunteer opportunities through St. Lucie County Environmental Resources Department call (772) 462-2866 or visit: www.stlucieco.gov/erd.

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