



FLORIDA DEPARTMENT OF ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION DIVISION OF RECREATION AND PARKS, FLORIDA PARK SERVICE

The Florida Park Service (FPS) provides resource-based recreation across 175 State Parks while also preserving, interpreting, and restoring associated natural and cultural resources. Since 2015, F4 Tech has directly supported FPS in the area of natural resources management and their mission to conserve the Real FloridaSM. During this time, F4 Tech has helped FPS reach and exceed internal natural resources management goals and objectives by providing data-driven planning, decision making, and project implementation services.

Initially, F4 Tech assisted the FPS in baselining current conditions by designing, developing, and implementing a forest/vegetation inventory system. F4 Tech's technology suite – SilvAssist – was used to inform future planning efforts by streamlining field data collection and workflows, enhancing reporting, tracking project progress, and supporting an increased level of analytics.

After analyzing, interpreting, and summarizing baseline inventory data, F4 Tech developed a data-driven process to objectively score and evaluate ecosystem health. Building on this, we developed an interactive desktop planning tool that enables users to run management scenario options to help improve ecosystem condition scores, allocate resources, estimate project implementation costs, inform annual budgeting, and facilitate strategic planning.

By far, the greatest amount of assistance provided by F4 Tech has involved planning, scoping, implementing, and managing over 300 natural resources management field projects in 54 State Parks. These projects have required consistent communications with FPS staff and dozens of subcontractors charged with prescribed burning, invasive species control, and forest management.

Further, when Hurricanes Matthew, Irma, and Michael impacted the State of Florida, FPS turned to F4 Tech for assistance. Following these natural disasters, F4 Tech and its subcontractors worked collaboratively with FPS strike teams to open 48 State Parks by clearing downed trees from roads and wooded areas, re-establishing and creating new fire lines, and salvaging damaged timber.



PROJECT HIGHLIGHTS

Client since 2015

Mapped forest stands across 796,000 acres in 175 State Parks.

Collected forest/vegetation data from nearly 38,000 plots in 73 State Parks representing approximately 300,000 acres.

Assisted FPS in establishing land/natural resources management records (2016-2018):

- Treated over 25,000 acres impacted by invasive/exotic plant species.
- Used prescribed fire to manage 175,000 acres.

Helped FPS open 48 state parks following natural disasters. Following Hurricane Michael:

- Restored or created more than 70 miles of firelines in areas at risk from wildfire.
- Salvaged storm-damaged timber on 1,500 acres.

