

Gyro-Trac is the ONLY machine allowed to fight the East Fork Fire that raged in the Bradwill Bay Wilderness Refuge – a part of the Apalachicola National Forest.

From the USDA Forest Service, Florida
April 27, 2004



A Gyrotrac mows brush

Bradwill Bay Wilderness: Apalachicola National Forest — Wilderness is a special area designated by Congress to be set aside as wild places where “man is just a visitor, and does not remain.” In general, human influences on the environment are minimized: no roads, buildings, or other structures, and the use of motorized vehicles and mechanical equipment is prohibited. Depending on the risks associated with a particular wildfire, however, firefighters can request special permission to use equipment and vehicles for fighting wildfires.

When permission is granted, it usually comes with a caveat: a wilderness resource advisor must be present on firefighting operations to ensure wilderness values and characteristics are not permanently impaired or destroyed. These resource advisors are specifically trained in wildfire suppression and protecting wilderness values, and it just so happened that the Forest Service was hosting the agency's “Wilderness Resource Advisor” training in Tallahassee the week of April 12-17 when the East Fork Fire was burning in Bradwell Bay Wilderness.

The East Fork Fire had a wilderness resource advisor on site watching the operations, and the Apalachicola National Forest obtained the rare permission to use equipment in wilderness. With firefighter safety being a top priority, chainsaws were used to fell deadly tree snags left standing from the 1998 Holiday Fire. Snags and high brush was removed along the perimeter roads to reduce the risk of embers starting new fires. The Gyrotrac worked along the perimeter roads, penetrated about 300 feet into the wilderness in some spots to remove hazardous snags that posed a threat to firefighters working in the area, and took down burning snags too close to the perimeter. In a few weeks, an observer looking into the wilderness or hiking through the Florida National Scenic Trail will be hard pressed to find any evidence of the East Fork Fire suppression activities.

CLICK HERE TO READ THE ENTIRE STORY, AND SEE THE FLORIDA DIVISION OF THE USDA FOREST SERVICE’S OPINION OF GYRO-TRAC.

<http://www.southernregion.fs.fed.us/florida/news/ApalachicolaNationalForestNewsroom.shtml>

For more information, contact at Gyro-Trac at 1-866-800-3900. On the web: www.gyrotrac.com