

NARIVA SWAMP

TRINIDAD & TOBAGO

Florida-Caribbean Fire & Invasives Learning Network

28,000 acres



Growing tall and thick, as it does here along a stream in the Asa Wright Preserve, invasive bamboo can intensify inappropriate fire

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THE NARIVA SWAMP is a mosaic of tropical forest, swamp forest, palm forest, mangroves, marsh and open water on the east coast of Trinidad. In 1992 it was declared a Wetland of International Importance under the Ramsar Convention. Illegal rice farming has led to altered hydrology, which has made the area more susceptible to wildfire, and many acres have burned in recent years; an active fire suppression program is now in place, but increased monitoring and education are needed to make the program successful.

Other parts of the country face similar threats from fire and from the invasive species that promote or take advantage of fire. Of particular concern are *Leucaena leucocephala* (a prolific seed bearer), *Acacia mangium* (which colonizes after fire), fire-hardy vines and bamboo. Until the current effort, the management of fire and invasives have not been considered together. Partners in Trinidad and Tobago are now working to strengthen the collaborative efforts that will continue existing management efforts that include an active fire prevention and education program during the fire season, fire patrols, monitoring fire behavior, controlled burning in teak plantations, removal of fire hazards along roads in plantations and clearing trees infested with invasive vines. In addition, they are working to gain recognition for the importance of invasive species, add an invasives management component to an existing fire protection unit, increase staffing in the unit that looks after invasives and promote the use of fire in the management of ecosystems for community benefit.

LANDSCAPE PARTNERS

Anse Fromager Community
Based Organization

Buccoo Reef Trust

Caribbean Agricultural
Research and Develop-
ment Institute (CARDI)

Private estate owners

Trinidad & Tobago

Environmental

Management Authority

Trinidad & Tobago Fire

Services

UN FAO

University of Trinidad &
Tobago

University of West Indies

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LANDSCAPE OBJECTIVES

Partners are working to minimize the risk of invasive species and to reduce the frequency and intensity of fire in fire-sensitive habitats.

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