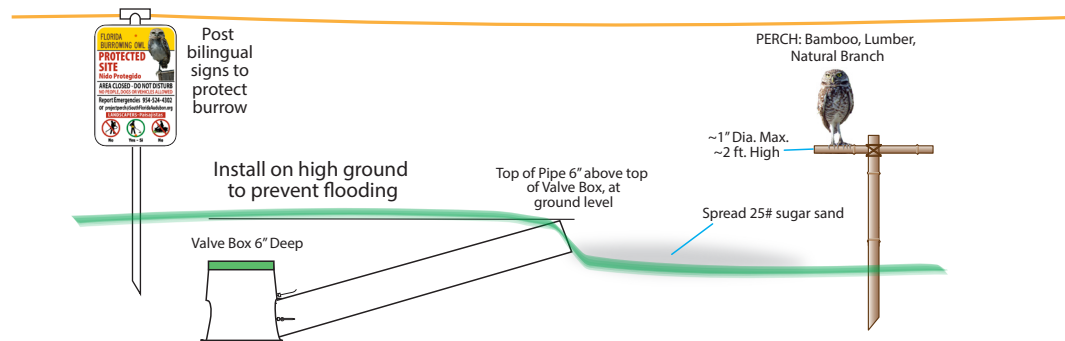


A Flood Zone – Artificial Burrow System (FZ-ABS)

Designed specifically
for the Florida Burrowing Owl
(*Athene cunicularia floridana*)

By Dr. Brian Mealey and Project Perch



Why this Design?

Florida's Burrowing Owls dig it (literally) & the FZ-ABS gives them a head start!

Reduces Flooding:

- Burrows put in on high ground, & above Florida's water table
- Pipe cut-out provides good drainage & water can't funnel down the pipe
- Pipe slightly angled, keeps tunnel closer to the surface

Reduces Burrow Collapse:

- Sewer pipe is durable
- Rugged valve control box protects nesting area
- Fence protects burrow from heavy mowers

Simulates Natural Burrows:

- 6" PVC pipe has similar opening & size
- Pipe cut-out allows the owls to dig & move soil around
- Pipe slows sod overgrowth (owls can't dig through sod)
- White sugar sand mimics sandier Florida soil
- 2 Burrows close together is common

Provides More Security:

- Fence protects from other disturbances
- A close perch gives good visibility & quick access to the burrow
- 2 Burrows keep an owl family safer, can reduce predation
- Signs help people report problems

(Abstract) In 2005, Dr. Brian Mealey designed a Flood-Zone Artificial Burrow System (FZ-ABS) to mitigate for the Florida burrowing owl, *Athene cunicularia floridana*, in South Florida. The FZ-ABS is tailored to provide maximum drainage, a shallower installation above a higher water table and is made of a more durable pipe so it can withstand the constant pressure of commercial mowing equipment. In complete contrast to its Western cousin, the Florida burrowing owl digs and maintains its own burrow. The FZ-ABS better simulates a natural burrow by allowing the owl to maintain its burrow using their talons in the dirt. This article also documents what improvements have been made to the design and why. An effective FZ-ABS is part burrow design but also placement in the environment and protection from disturbance. In the last 10 years, the FZ-ABS continues to prove its effectiveness in passively attracting owls, retaining owls and allowing owls to nest in a landscaped environment. When expansion FZ-ABS are provided, there has been documented growth in the owl populations evidenced by the need for additional burrows.

For the full article, visit:
projectperch.org

Visit: projectperch.org for downloadable files

Visit (<https://myfwc.com/license/wildlife/protected-wildlife-permits/burrowing-owl/>) for permit regulations

