

organizations or businesses, available for public inspection in their entirety.

The Florida scrub-jay (scrub-jay) is geographically isolated from other species of scrub-jays found in Mexico and the western United States. The scrub-jay is found exclusively in peninsular Florida and is restricted to xeric uplands (mostly consisting of oak-dominated scrub). Increasing urban and agricultural development has resulted in habitat loss and fragmentation, which has adversely affected the distribution and numbers of scrub-jays. The total estimated population is between 7,000 and 11,000 individuals.

The scrub-jays using the Applicants' residential lot and adjacent properties are part of a larger complex of scrub-jays located in a matrix of urban and natural settings in Charlotte County. Construction of the Project's infrastructure and facilities will result in the destruction of 0.22 acre of foraging, sheltering, and possibly nesting habitat and is expected to result in the take, in the form of harm, of one family of scrub-jays, incidental to the carrying out of these otherwise lawful activities. The Applicants propose to minimize and avoid incidental take by conducting clearing activities outside of the nesting season, and landscaping with scrub oaks and other native vegetation where possible. The Applicants propose to avoid landscaping with trees that will grow greater than 30 feet tall and potentially provide perch trees for predators that may prey on scrub-jays on this lot and surrounding unimproved lots. The Applicants propose to avoid having any free-roaming cats on the lot as they can be a potential predator on young scrub-jays.

The Applicants propose to mitigate the take of scrub-jays through contribution of \$11,660 to an approved scrub-jay conservation fund. Funds from this contribution would be earmarked for use in the conservation and recovery of scrub-jays and may include habitat acquisition, restoration, and management. The Applicants would make this contribution prior to any land clearing activities affecting scrub-jay habitat.

The Service has determined that the Applicants' proposal, including the proposed mitigation and minimization measures, will individually and cumulatively have a minor or negligible effect on the species covered in the HCP. Therefore, the ITP is a "low-effect" project and qualifies as a categorical exclusion under the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA), as provided by the Department of Interior Manual (516 DM 2, Appendix 1 and 516

DM 6, Appendix 1). This preliminary information may be revised based on our review of public comments that we receive in response to this notice. Low-effect HCPs are those involving: (1) minor or negligible effects on federally listed or candidate species and their habitats, and (2) minor or negligible effects on other environmental values or resources. The Applicants' HCP qualifies for the following reasons:

1. Approval of the HCP would result in minor or negligible effects on the Florida scrub-jay population as a whole. The Service does not anticipate significant direct or cumulative effects to the Florida scrub-jay population as a result of the project.

2. Approval of the HCP would not have adverse effects on known unique geographic, historic, or cultural sites, or involve unique or unknown environmental risks.

3. Approval of the HCP would not result in any significant adverse effects on public health or safety.

4. The project does not require compliance with Executive Order 11988 (Floodplain Management), Executive Order 11990 (Protection of Wetlands), or the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, nor does it threaten to violate a Federal, State, local, or tribal law or requirement imposed for the protection of the environment.

5. Approval of the Plan would not establish a precedent for future action or represent a decision in principle about future actions with potentially significant environmental effects.

The Service will evaluate the HCP and comments submitted thereon to determine whether the application meets the requirements of section 10(a) of the Act (16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*). If it is determined that those requirements are met, the ITP will be issued for incidental take of the Florida scrub-jay. The Service will also evaluate whether issuance of the section 10(a)(1)(B) ITP complies with section 7 of the Act by conducting an intra-Service section 7 consultation. The results of this consultation, in combination with the above findings, will be used in the final analysis to determine whether or not to issue the ITP. This notice is provided pursuant to Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act and NEPA regulations (40 CFR 1506.6).

Dated: March 30, 2006.

Cynthia K. Dohner,

Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force Meeting

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of meeting.

SUMMARY: This notice announces a meeting of the Aquatic Nuisance Species (ANS) Task Force. The meeting is open to the public. The meeting topics are identified in the **SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION** section.

DATES: The ANS Task Force will meet from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m. on Wednesday, May 24 and Thursday, May 25, and from 8 a.m. to 12 p.m. on Friday, May 26, 2006.

ADDRESSES: The ANS Task Force meeting will be held at the Cape Codder Resort, 1225 Iyanough Road (Route 132 & Bearse's Way), Hyannis, MA 02601; (888) 297-2200. Minutes of the meeting will be maintained by the Chief, Division of Environmental Quality, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Suite 322, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, Virginia 22203, and will be made available for public inspection during regular business hours, Monday through Friday.

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: Scott Newsham, ANS Task Force Executive Secretary, at (703) 358-1796, or by e-mail at Scott_Newsham@fws.gov.

SUPPLEMENTARY INFORMATION: Pursuant to section 10(a)(2) of the Federal Advisory Committee Act (5 U.S.C. App.), this notice announces meetings of the ANS Task Force. The ANS Task Force was established by the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990.

Topics to be covered during the ANS Task Force meeting include: Committee and Regional Panel reports, ANS priorities of the Northeastern states, development of the Asian Carp Management Plan, allocation of state ANS management plan funds, and consideration for approval of Louisiana's state management plan for aquatic invasive species. The agenda and other related meeting information can be viewed on the ANS Task Force Web site at: <http://anstaskforce.gov/meetings.php>.

Dated: March 29, 2006.

Mamie A. Parker,

Co-Chair, Aquatic Nuisance Species Task Force, Assistant Director—Fisheries & Habitat Conservation.

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