

A photograph of an old-growth forest. The scene is dominated by tall, slender tree trunks, many of which are heavily covered in vibrant green moss and lichen. The forest floor is lush with various types of ferns and other undergrowth. Sunlight filters through the dense canopy, creating a dappled light effect. The overall atmosphere is one of a mature, undisturbed natural environment.

Murray Pacific Corporation

Old-growth forest.
John and Karen
Hollingsworth/USFWS



Bald eagle. © Photodisc

Murray Pacific Corporation

Location: Washington

Acreage: 55,000 acres

Species Covered: Bald eagle, grizzly bear, gray wolf, northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, and unlisted species found within the plan area.

Challenge: Murray Pacific, along with the FWS and NMFS, developed an HCP covering all species currently listed, and those that may become listed in the future, that are found on its tree farm, while allowing the company to effectively manage its lands. This was the first multi-species timber HCP developed and also the first to require assistance and approval by both the FWS and NMFS.



Northwestern riparian habitat/USFWS

Benefit: Under the HCP, Murray Pacific committed to significant conservation measures including maintaining at least 10 percent of its tree farm in no-harvest reserves (e.g., riparian and upland areas) during the term of the permit and management measures designed to conserve a variety of habitats that will conserve species. Restrictions for road use and construction, down log retention, use of fire, and protection of habitats will follow existing Washington State Forest Practices Rules. Unique habitats, such as wetlands, ponds, and caves will be protected and enhanced to conserve species associated with these unique habitats. Finally, the Murray Pacific Corporation committed to exceed Washington State's Forest Practices Rules for retaining snag and green trees in harvested areas.



Old-growth Douglas fir forest. John and Karen Hollingsworth/USFWS

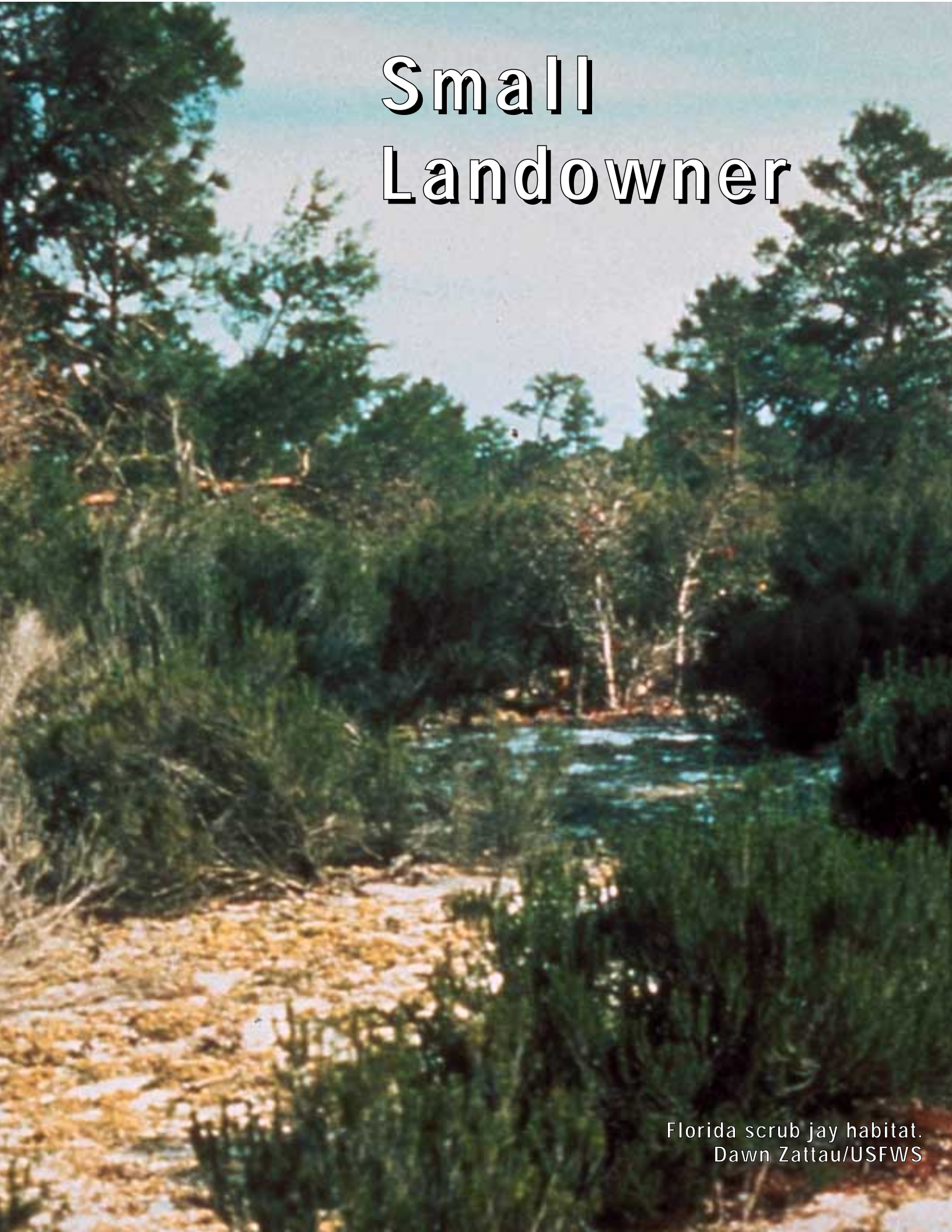
"Approval of this Habitat Conservation Plan is proof that cooperative approaches between the government and business can achieve substantial results for the environment and the landowner. We are all proud and excited with the new Habitat Conservation Plan we are signing because it provides excellent protection for fish and wildlife and gives us the certainty we need to operate our family business."

*Toby Murray, Vice President
Murray Pacific Corporation*



Marbled murrelet chick. John and Karen Hollingsworth/USFWS

Small Landowner



Florida scrub jay habitat.
Dawn Zattau/USFWS

Small Landowner

Location: Florida
Acreage: 1/2 acre subdivision lot
Species Covered: Florida scrub jay



Florida scrub jay. Barron Crawford/USFWS

Challenge: With limited acreage, individuals face a special challenge in developing HCPs without the process becoming burdensome, because ultimately, the individual is still required to minimize and mitigate for the activity. The specific challenge facing Mary Presley, a private landowner, was how the FWS could help her develop a plan that allowed her to build a private residence in scrub jay habitat while protecting the listed scrub jay. The Florida scrub jay is native to peninsular Florida and found throughout the specific area where the Presleys wanted to build a house. The jay is found in numerous areas, and development, both large- and small-scale, has encroached on its habitat. This long-lived bird is highly territorial and if its habitat is destroyed, it typically perishes. The FWS must work with all of the applicants in the HCP process to provide consistency throughout the bird's range, ensuring that the cumulative effect of many individual permits will not threaten its survival and recovery.

Benefit: Benefits gained through this HCP include allowing Ms. Presley to build a private residence on her subdivision lot inhabited by the threatened Florida scrub jay. While improving the quality of the remaining scrub habitat, the agreement also focused on specific mitigation and minimization efforts and avoided any construction during the jay's nesting season. Also, the HCP promoted native landscaping as a means to offset the minor loss of jay habitat resulting from construction of the single-family home. It is expected that this HCP will allow Ms. Presley and her resident scrub jays to be good friends and longtime neighbors.

"We were getting ready to build in a subdivision that was about 75 percent completed, when someone saw scrub jays in the area and all the work stopped. That caught us by surprise; we had contracted to build our house, and we weren't happy. Eventually, we got in touch with a biologist at the Fish and Wildlife Service, who spelled out our options — one of which was to write a Habitat Conservation Plan on our own. My husband spent about a full weekend writing, we paid a small fee, and it all worked out fine. We left 25 to 30 percent of our lot uncleared and we like it like that — for privacy, as well as for the birds."

Mary Presley
Homeowner

International Paper

An aerial photograph showing a residential development in the foreground, characterized by winding roads and numerous houses. In the background, a large quarry or industrial site is visible, surrounded by dense forest. A road with several vehicles runs horizontally across the middle of the image. The overall scene depicts a mix of natural and developed land.

Salamander habitat.
USFWS



Red Hills salamander. Emmett Blankenship/
USFWS

International Paper

Location: Alabama

Acreage: 6,400 acres

Species Covered: Red Hills salamander

Challenge: To provide International Paper with regulatory certainty that allowed the company to establish a timber management plan on its Alabama property that also harbors the threatened Red Hills salamander. The salamander requires closed canopy forest and burrows into highly erodible soils that could be damaged by intensive timber management practices. The company wanted to manage its lands effectively while conserving this listed species.



Red Hills salamander. Robert H. Mount/
USFWS

Benefit: The HCP negotiated between the FWS and International Paper resulted in the issuance of a permit that increased the amount of timber available for harvest while conserving this native salamander. The HCP provided the company more management options than was originally anticipated. As mitigation for the potential “incidental take” of the salamander, the HCP establishes a “refugia” in the most optimal salamander habitat where there will be no timber harvesting conducted for the 30-year duration of the permit. In addition, there will be no cutting within these specific habitats and a 50-foot buffer will be maintained around those habitats. To facilitate implementation of the HCP, training workshops are required for all of International Paper’s foresters and technicians who work in the HCP planning area. The workshops will train the employees to recognize habitat types, and properly establish buffers, and will familiarize them with the details of the HCP, as well as encourage their involvement in implementing and monitoring the activities.

“For nearly 100 years, our company has operated on the principle that environmental protection and economic success go hand-in-hand. Our Red Hills salamander HCP demonstrates this clearly. We have set aside 4,500 acres of prime salamander habitat on our property, limiting forest management to adjacent company lands. Nearby landowners soon followed our lead and implemented their own conservation strategies for the salamander that are patterned after our approach.”

*Sharon Haines, PhD
Manager, Natural Resources
International Paper*