

Ridge of southeastern Florida. Martin and northern Palm Beach counties have experienced tremendous human population growth over the last 100 years, and as a result, much of the natural environment in this area has been altered. Much of the commercial and residential development has occurred on the xeric uplands that historically supported scrub-jay populations. What remains is largely degraded, due to the invasion by exotic species and by interruption of the natural fire regime, which is needed to maintain xeric uplands in conditions suitable for scrub-jays.

Scrub-jays using the project site are part of a larger complex of this species that occupy xeric uplands of southeastern Florida, from northern Palm Beach County northward to the St. Lucie River in northeastern Martin County. The largest assemblage of scrub-jays in this metapopulation occurs in and around Johnathan Dickinson State Park. The continued survival and recovery of scrub-jays in this area is dependent on the maintenance of suitable habitat and the restoration of unsuitable habitat.

Scrub-jay use of the project site and adjacent lands has been assessed on several occasions. Scrub-jay surveys were conducted by Environmental Services, Inc., from June 30 to July 3, 2003. A Service biologist confirmed the survey results and delineated additional habitat being utilized for foraging by three scrub-jays on November 19, 2003. The project site comprises areas of bare sand, concrete pads, native and exotic vegetation, and can be classified as disturbed upland scrub. Scattered sandy patches interspersed with low growing vegetation provide foraging and caching opportunities for scrub-jays.

The project site is surrounded by Great American RV on the south and by Cypress Manor Apartments on the west. The project site and surrounding lands have been negatively influenced by previous land clearing, development, and invasion by exotic species. Due to the proximity of the project site to existing residential development and urban infrastructure, fire has been actively excluded due to safety concerns. As a result, the condition of the xeric habitat within the project site is degraded; periodic fire or land management practices that mimic fire are required to maintain habitat conditions suitable for the scrub-jay.

Land clearing in preparation for a combination of office space and three-story town homes would destroy habitat and could result in death of, or injury to, scrub-jays, incidental to the carrying

out of these otherwise lawful activities. Habitat alteration associated with the proposed development would reduce the availability of foraging habitat for scrub-jays.

The Applicant's HCP and the Service's EA describe the following minimization and mitigation strategy which would be employed by the Applicant to offset the impacts of the project to the scrub-jay:

- The Applicant agrees to contribute \$109,830.97 to the Florida Scrub Jay Conservation Fund. As discussed in the Applicant's HCP, this amount will purchase 1.4 acres of scrub habitat (providing a 2:1 compensation ratio) at current land values, plus a fee for perpetual management, along with a 5 percent administrative (overhead) fee.
- The Applicant agrees to plant a 0.20 acre portion of the landscape buffer, required by local building codes, with scrub vegetation as part of the Casa del Sol project.
- The Applicant agrees that no land clearing activities will take place during the scrub-jay breeding or nesting season (March-June).

The EA considers the environmental consequences of one action alternative that would require issuance of an ITP and two alternatives in which an ITP would not be issued. The preferred alternative would result in the loss of about 0.70 acre of occupied scrub-jay habitat according to the HCP as submitted and described above. Under the proposed alternative, as mitigation, the Applicant would contribute funding for scrub-jay conservation. The Applicant's contribution to the Florida Scrub Jay Conservation Fund would be used to acquire and manage scrub-jay habitat in other areas in Palm Beach County, Florida and to help ensure the long-term survival of viable populations of the species.

As stated above, the Service has made a preliminary determination that the issuance of the ITP is not a major Federal action significantly affecting the quality of the human environment within the meaning of section 102(2)(C) of NEPA. This preliminary information may be revised based on our consideration of public comments received in response to this notice and is based on information contained in the EA and HCP.

The Service will also evaluate whether the issuance of a section 10(a)(1)(B) ITP complies with section 7 of the Act by conducting an intra-Service section 7 consultation. The results of the biological opinion, in combination with the above findings, will be used in the final analysis to

determine whether or not to issue the ITP.

Noreen Walsh,

Acting Regional Director, Southeast Region.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year 2006 Tribal Landowner Incentive Program; Request for Grant Proposals

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of request for proposals.

SUMMARY: We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), are soliciting project proposals for Federal assistance under the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program (TLIP). The Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 allocated \$23,886,000 (subject to potential rescission to meet other important national priorities) from the Land and Water Conservation Fund for conservation grants to States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, American Samoa, and Tribes under a Landowner Incentive Program. The Service has targeted \$2,388,600 for TLIP.

DATES: Project proposals must be postmarked by January 31, 2006 and submitted to the appropriate Regional Office (see Table 1 in **ADDRESSES**).

ADDRESSES: For information regarding collection requirements and application kit, applicants should contact the Native American Liaison in the Service's Regional Office for the State in which the proposed project would occur. The contact information for each Regional Office is listed in Table 1 below. Information on the TLIP is also available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of the Native American Liaison, 1849 C Street, NW., Mail Stop 3251, Washington, DC 20240, and electronically at <http://grants.fws.gov/tribal.html>.

Project proposals should be submitted to the Service's Regional Office for the State in which the proposed project would occur (see Table 1 under this section). You must submit one original and two copies of the complete proposal. We will not accept facsimile project proposals.

TABLE 1.—WHERE TO SEND PROJECT PROPOSALS AND LIST OF REGIONAL CONTACTS

Service region	States where the project will occur	Where to send your project proposal	Regional Native American liaison and phone number
Region 1	Hawaii, Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Nevada, and California.	Regional Director; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Eastside Federal Complex, 911 N.E. 11th Avenue, Portland, OR 97232-4181.	Scott L. Aikin (503) 231-6123
Region 2	Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma, and Texas	Regional Director; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 500 Gold Avenue, SW., P.O. Box 1306, Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306.	John Antonio (505) 248-6810
Region 3	Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Minnesota, Missouri, Ohio, and Wisconsin.	Regional Director; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1 Federal Drive, Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4080.	John Leonard (612) 713-5108
Region 4	Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, South Carolina, and Tennessee.	Regional Director; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1875 Century Blvd, Rm. 410, Atlanta, GA 30345.	Kyla Hastie (404) 679-7133
Region 5	Connecticut, Delaware, District of Columbia, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia, and West Virginia.	Regional Director; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 300 Westgate Center Drive, Hadley, MA 01035-9589.	D.J. Monette (413) 253-8662
Region 6	Colorado, Kansas, Montana, Nebraska, North Dakota, South Dakota, Utah, and Wyoming.	Regional Director; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 134 Union Boulevard, Suite 400, Lakewood, CO 80228.	David Redhorse (303) 236-4575
Region 7	Alaska	Regional Director; U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1011 East Tudor Road, Anchorage, AK 99503-6199.	Sue Detwiler (907) 786-3868

FOR FURTHER INFORMATION CONTACT: For further information, contact the Native American Liaison in the appropriate Regional Office (see Table 1 under **ADDRESSES** or Patrick Durham, Office of the Native American Liaison, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1849 C Street, Mail Stop 3012 MIB, Washington, DC 20240, (202) 208-4133.

Request for Proposals: The Service invites submission of grant proposals for the protection and management of habitat to benefit federally listed, proposed, or candidate species or other at-risk species from federally recognized Indian tribal governments (including Alaska Native Villages). This program supports the efforts of tribal governments in programs that develop or augment the capacity to manage, conserve, or protect fish and wildlife species of concern through the provision of funding and technical support.

For complete application guidelines, please refer to <http://www.fws.gov/grants/tribal.html> or contact the Native American Liaison in your Fish and Wildlife Service Region (see Table 1 in **ADDRESSES**). The Application Kit outlines program requirements, selection criteria, and award procedures.

Dated: October 24, 2005.

Paul Hoffman,

Acting Assistant Secretary, Fish and Wildlife and Parks.

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DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR

Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year 2006 Tribal Wildlife Grants; Request for Grant Proposals

AGENCY: Fish and Wildlife Service, Interior.

ACTION: Notice of request for proposals.

SUMMARY: We, the Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), are soliciting project proposals for Federal assistance under the Tribal Wildlife Grants program (TWG). The Department of the Interior and Related Agencies Appropriations Act for Fiscal Year (FY) 2006 authorized an appropriation of \$68,174,000 (subject to potential rescission to meet other important national priorities) for wildlife conservation grants to States and to the District of Columbia, U.S. Territories, and Tribes under provisions of the Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956 and the Fish and Wildlife Coordination Act, for the development and implementation of programs for the benefit of wildlife and their habitat, including species that are not hunted or fished. The Act further specified that

the Service use \$5,971,000 of the funds for a competitive grant program available to federally recognized Indian Tribes. This allows the Secretary, through the Director of the Service, to manage a separate Tribal grant program not subject to the provisions of the formula-based State Wildlife Grants program, or other requirements of the State Wildlife Grants portion of Public Law 107-63.

DATES: Project proposals must be postmarked by January 31, 2006 and submitted to the appropriate Regional Office (see Table 1 in **ADDRESSES**).

ADDRESSES: For information regarding collection requirements and application kit, applicants should contact the Native American Liaison in the Service's Regional Office for the State in which the proposed project would occur. The contact information for each Regional Office is listed in Table 1 below. Information on the TWG is also available from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Office of the Native American Liaison, 1849 C Street, NW., Mail Stop 3251, Washington, DC 20240, fax (202) 501-3524 and electronically at <http://grants.fws.gov/tribal.html>.

Send your project proposal to the Service's Regional Office for the State in which the proposed project would occur (see Table 1 under this section). You must submit one original and two copies of the complete proposal. We will not accept facsimile project proposals.