

2017 Sarasota County Florida Scrub-Jay Survey



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Presentation Outline

- Habitat Conservation Plan & Model
- Review past surveys (2000 and 2004)
- 2017 VHB Survey
- Current Status
- Management

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Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)

- Developed to address regulatory process and conservation goals
- 2000 and 2004 surveys used for population model and recommendations
- Identified key tracts for protection and restoration
- HCP development ended in 2009 due to changed circumstances in US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) regulatory approach, drop in development, etc.
- Use of interim strategy to coordinate with USFWS

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HCP Model Predictions

- 78% loss by 2025
- Slow chipping away of habitat would lead to group isolation
- Instability of suburban groups (77)
- Population sink at Oscar Scherer State Park, low reproductive output

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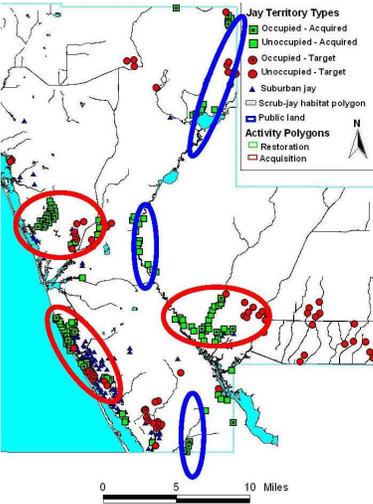
 **HCP Recommendations**

- Restore and manage existing protected habitat
- Adaptive management and monitoring
- Acquire key parcels to augment preserves

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 **HCP Recommendations**

- Focus on major sources
 - Oscar Scherer State Park
 - Lemon Bay Preserve
 - Deer Prairie Creek
- Restore movement corridors
 - Myakka River
 - Verna Wellfield
 - Myakka State Forest



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2017 Survey

- Goal to assess population for regulatory update
- Conducted from Aug 2016 – July 2017 by Vanasse Hangen Brustlin, Inc. (VHB)
- Monitored 297 stations using previous survey methods

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2017 Survey

- 3 metapopulations present
- Found 25-30 groups at call stations
- Loss as predicted by HCP model
- Found in 7 publicly-owned areas, noted suitable habitat
- Most of suburban jay groups lost

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2017 Survey

Survey Year	Groups
2000	171
2004	132
2017	25-30

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2017 Jay Groups

- Verna Well Field Scrub (1-2)
- Oscar Scherer State Park (5)
- Shamrock Park & Caspersen Beach Park (3)
- South Venice Lemon Bay Preserve (3)
- **Lemon Bay Preserve Suburbs (3)***
- Lemon Bay Park & Buchan Airport (1)
- Myakka State Forest (1)
- **Deer Prairie Creek Preserve (2)***
- City of North Port (2)
- Suburban Sites (3)

- *ESLOC sites

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Current Status

- Jays present in core population areas
- Protected habitat exists in movement corridors between core populations
- Maintained connectivity to Manatee and Charlotte Counties

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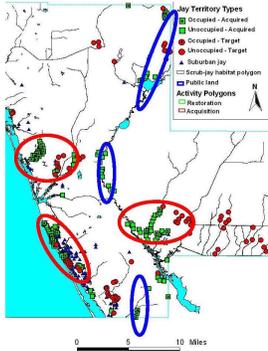
Next Steps

- Coordination with USFWS to update development review based on new data
- Scrub habitat management in County Parks
- Partnership with Oscar Scherer State Park and Southwest Florida Water Management District (SWFWMD), use of technical guidance from Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission (FWC) and USFWS

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 **ESLOC Sites**

- 2017 Survey noted jay groups on ESLOC sites
- 2/3 of Fitzpatrick's core populations
 - Deer Prairie Creek Preserve
 - South Venice Lemon Bay Preserve



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 **South Venice Lemon Bay Preserve**

- Goal of maintaining habitat mosaic
- Vegetation management through mowing and roller chopping
- Scrub overstory restoration through pine thinning
- Prescribed fire planned for this season



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Deer Prairie Creek Preserve

- Vegetation management followed by prescribed burns planned this season
- Ongoing discussion with SWFWMD for habitat management



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Questions?



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