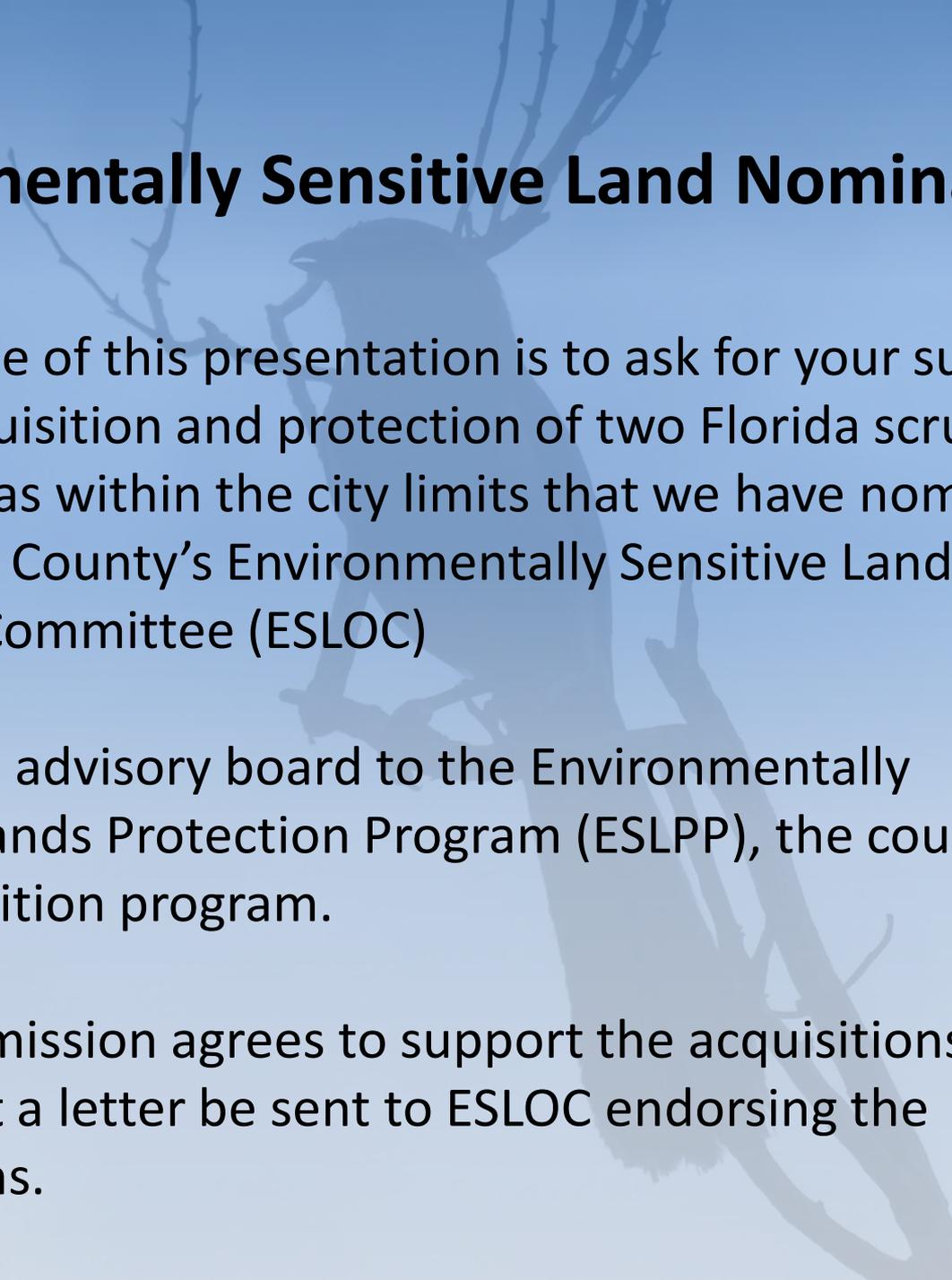


# Environmentally Sensitive Land Nominations

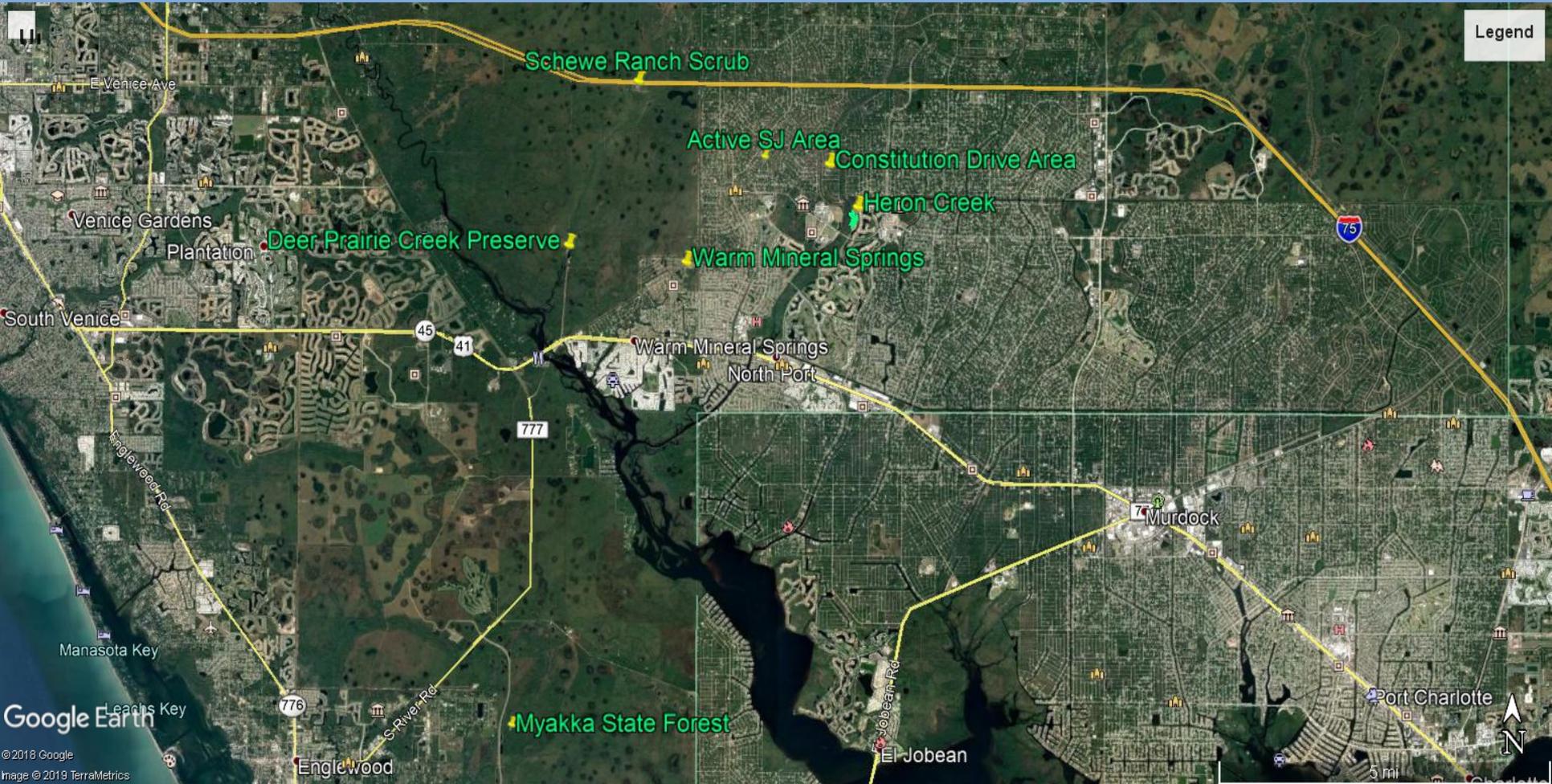


The purpose of this presentation is to ask for your support for the acquisition and protection of two Florida scrub-jay habitat areas within the city limits that we have nominated to Sarasota County's Environmentally Sensitive Lands Oversight Committee (ESLOC)

ESLOC is an advisory board to the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Protection Program (ESLPP), the county's land acquisition program.

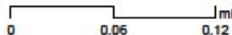
If the Commission agrees to support the acquisitions, then we ask that a letter be sent to ESLOC endorsing the nominations.

# Map Overview



# Active Scrub-Jay Area

Two scrub-jay families presence documented,  
one family currently nesting



**SCPA Map**



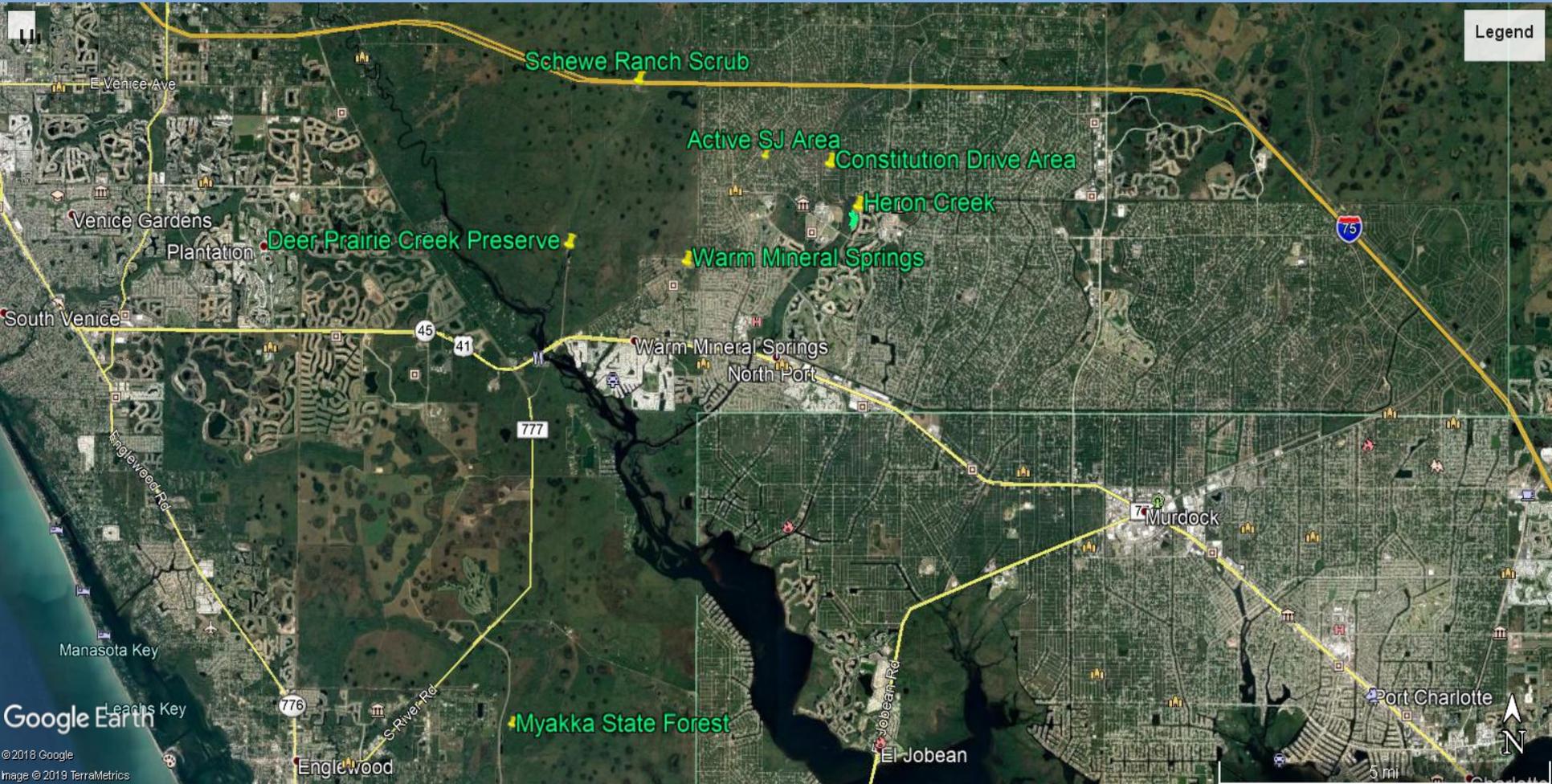
**Bill Furst**  
**SARASOTA COUNTY**  
**PROPERTY APPRAISER**

This map is a product of the Sarasota County Property Appraiser's Office.  
No warranties are expressed or implied.

# Description of Active Scrub-jay Area

- Approximately 140 vacant lots (~35 acres)
- Approximately 10% of the area includes developed lots that are not part of the nomination
- Nominated area will support 2.5 scrub-jay families (one family requires 13 acres)
- Rare habitat (scrubby flatwoods)
- Listed species

# Map Overview



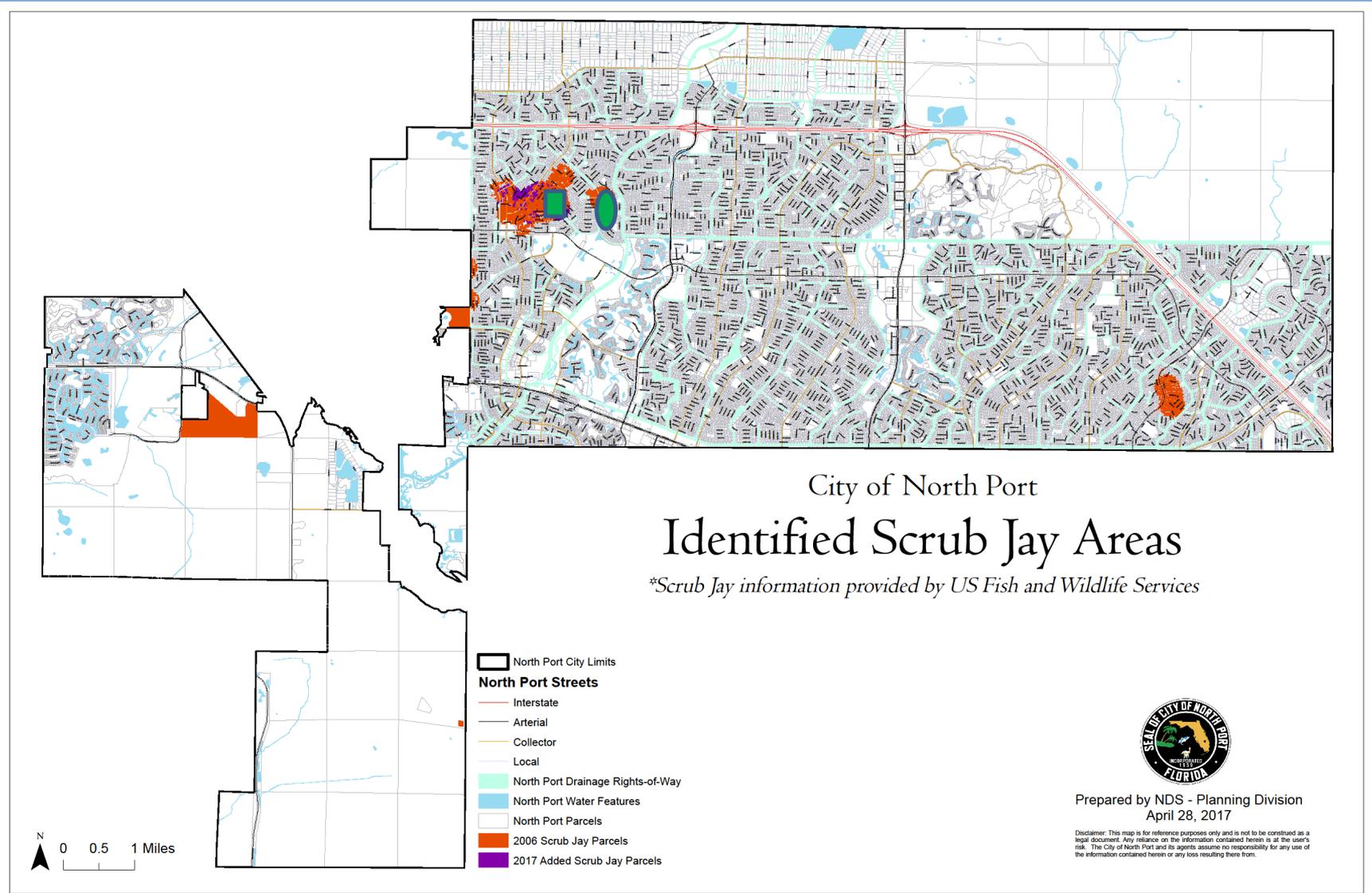
# Constitution Drive Area Map



# Description of Constitution Drive Area

- Approximately 125 acres; 50% of site has suitable habitat for up to 5 scrub-jay families
- No houses or developed lots within nomination area
- Roads are not maintained and there are no utilities or power lines
- Rare habitat (scrubby flatwoods)
- Listed species
- Historically occupied by scrub-jays but recent surveys have not documented any in this area.
- Adjacent to Myakkahatchee Creek
- Adjacent to Myakkahatchee Greenway Corridor
- Northern portion is included in city's scrub-jay areas map

# City of North Port Identified Scrub-Jay Areas



# Inhabitants of Nominated Parcels



# Benefits of Acquisition

- Protect federally and state threatened Florida scrub-jays and other listed species
- Studies have shown, with proper management, scrub-jays will return to previously occupied sites
- Protect species biodiversity
- Protect globally imperiled scrubby flatwoods
- Protect areas that the city has already designated as Environmentally Sensitive (ULDC-Chapter 9)
- Enhance flood protection and water quality

# Additional Benefits of Land Acquisition

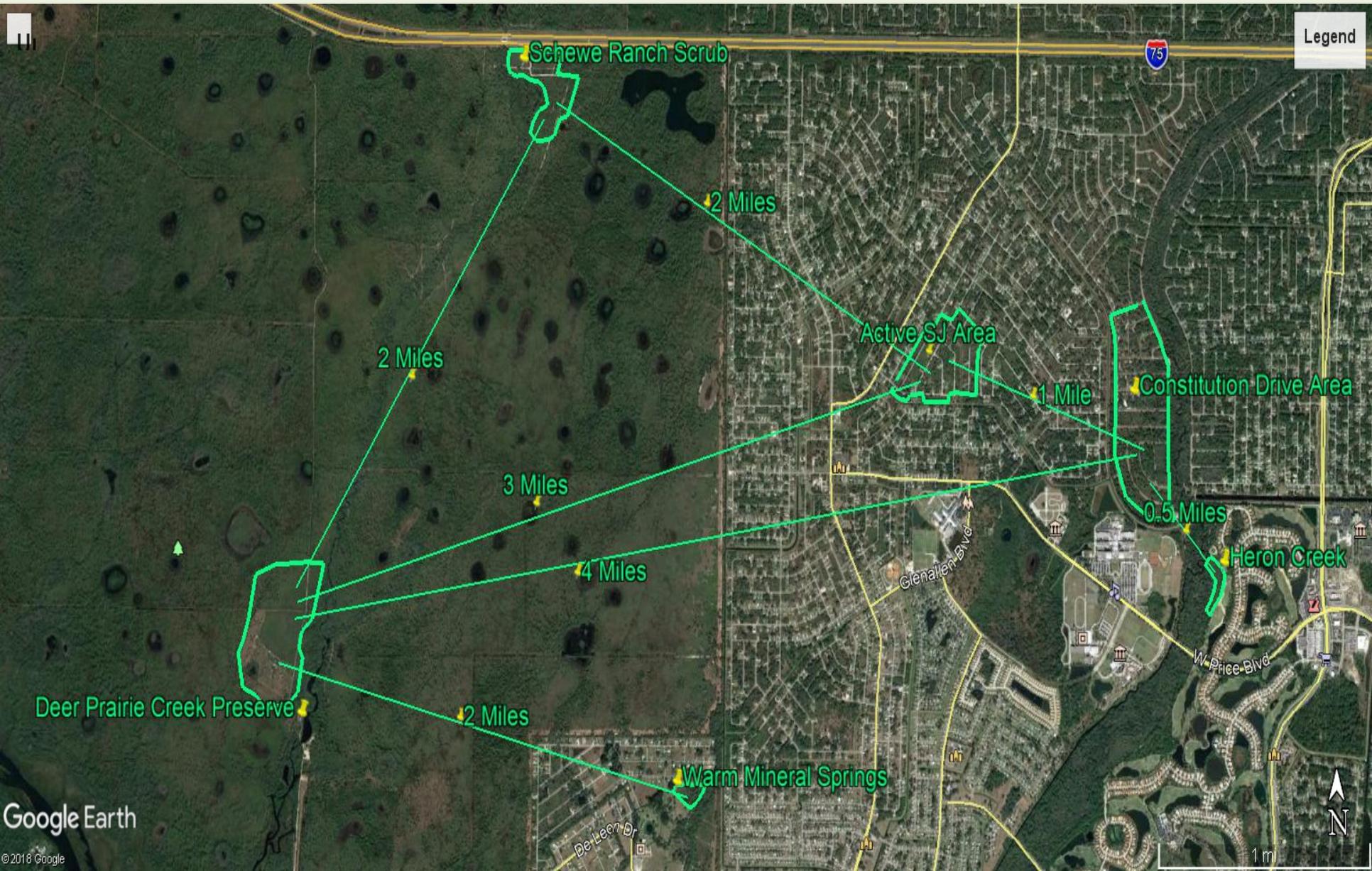
- Provide much needed urban park space
- Parks are as important as roads, schools and bridges. All of which foster a healthy community
- Property values increase when urban parks exist nearby
- Acquiring these lots provides lot owners with the opportunity to sell and avoid the cost of developing in scrub-jay areas

# Management of Nominated Sites

- Under ESLPP, the nominated sites would have funding in place for ongoing maintenance and management
- Successfully managing rare habitats and listed species requires skill and knowledge
- Sarasota County Parks, Recreation and Natural Resources Department has qualified land management staff to manage parks and preserves that have special management needs



# Connecting the Dots - Stepping Stones



# Scrub-Jay Challenges

- Urban scrub-jay families need a minimum of 13 acres
- Scrub-jays don't fly far, 1 – 4 miles. They have been known to fly further on rare occasions.
- Unmanaged and/or poor habitat
- Urban development
- Traffic
- Feral cats



# SOS - Save Our Scrub-Jays

- Scrub-jays are losing ground and barely holding on
- Their populations have declined 89% in Sarasota County in the last 17 years
- Scrub-jays cannot survive without scrub habitat
- Umbrella species - by protecting SJ habitat we also protect other listed species who utilize the same habitat
- Economic driver – bird watching is the fastest-growing outdoor activity in the United States. Based on a survey by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 51.3 million Americans report that they watch birds
- North Port Eco-Tourism – Bird watchers spend over \$41 billion annually on trips and equipment. Local economies benefit from the \$14.9 billion that bird watchers spend on food, lodging and transportation.



# In Closing



- We ask that the city commission write a letter in support of the two nominations to be sent to the Environmentally Sensitive Lands Oversight Committee before the Aug 1<sup>st</sup> meeting at which time the nominations will be reviewed.



*“Look closely at nature. Every species is a masterpiece, exquisitely adapted to the particular environment in which it has survived. Who are we to destroy or even diminish biodiversity?”*

E. O. Wilson - American biologist, theorist, naturalist and author. Also known as the father of biodiversity.