



Community Services Parks and Natural Resources **Florida Scrub-Jay Habitat Conservation Plan 101**

In December 2014, Charlotte County was issued an Incidental Take Permit (ITP) and associated Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) from the US Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to address impacts to the state and federally protected Florida scrub-jay.

A comprehensive countywide Scrub-jay HCP reduces the need, time, and cost associated with the development of individual HCPs for parcels on a project-by-project basis while ensuring the persistence of scrub-jays throughout Charlotte County.

The principal objectives of the Charlotte County Scrub-Jay HCP are to ensure compliance with the Endangered Species Act, provide greater regulatory certainty for development, and enhance the recovery and long-term viability of the scrub-jay within Charlotte County. Property owners still reserve the right to coordinate directly with the FWS for compliance with the Endangered Species Act.

The HCP's biological objectives are as follows:

1. Maintain and manage existing County owned scrub.
2. Acquire a minimum of 1300 acres as identified in the Reserve.
3. Coordinate with other public lands.
4. Increase the baseline population of scrub-jays within the Reserve.
5. Conduct scrub-jay translocations as appropriate.
6. Conduct scrub-jay monitoring.
7. Implement vegetation monitoring program.
8. Implement long-term management plans.

Properties within the HCP Plan Area that choose to utilize the County plan have two requirements:

1. Pay the HCP Development Fee.
 - The fee is based on the size of the platted parcel at the time the plan was adopted in 2015. The fees are adjusted annually for inflation.
 - The HCP Development Fee provides long-term funding for Land Acquisition, Habitat Assessment Planning & Restoration, Habitat Management, Monitoring & Adaptive Management, Changes Circumstances and Plan Administration.
2. Comply with all minimization requirements:
 - No vegetation clearing permitted during scrub-jay nesting season which runs from March 1st – June 30th.
 - Recommendation to plant native scrub oaks.
 - Compliance with additional covered species protection as outlined in the HCP.
 - Parcels over 3 acres may have additional on-site conservation requirements.