



LANDOWNER ASSISTANCE PROGRAM

Habitat Conservation Scientific Services (HCSS)

This document highlights some of the private landowner tools available through and/or supported by the FWC's Landowner Assistance Program.

The HCSS Mission:
 Provide science-based resource management recommendations and financial assistance to conserve and enhance Florida's habitat resources.
www.MyFWC.com/LAP

PROGRAM	PURPOSE	MORE INFORMATION
EDUCATION AND OUTREACH		
Habitat Management Workshops and Field Days	Offered year round to the public. Provides educational information and learning opportunities about habitat management. HCSS staff help organize and implement at least 10 workshops statewide every year. If interested in attending a workshop or field day, please visit the website and/or contact a HCSS biologist.	www.myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/ConservationYou_LAP_workshops.htm
Florida Forest Steward Newsletter	The newsletter is produced quarterly and intended to provide landowners with current and useful information on land management from a multiple-use perspective. The newsletter is free of charge.	www.sfrc.ufl.edu/Extension/florida_forestry_information/additional_pages/newsletter.html
Wildlife Habitat Management Calendar	The Calendar provides monthly habitat management tips and reminders for landowners in Florida. Visit the web to download a copy or contact a HCSS biologist to request a calendar.	www.myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/ConservationYou_LAP_contact.htm
LAND CONSERVATION		
Conservation Easements	A voluntary option for conserving your property forever. HCSS staff can provide information on local land trusts available to help landowners explore easement options.	www.landchoices.org/preserve.htm and/or http://edis.ifas.ufl.edu/uw194
Florida Forever Program	A conservation land buying program administered by the Division of State Lands. HCSS biologists can assist with evaluation of specific areas targeted for acquisition.	www.dep.state.fl.us/lands/acquisition/FloridaForever/
TECHNICAL ASSISTANCE		
General Technical Assistance	HCSS biologists are available to provide general technical assistance related to wildlife-habitat management. Please contact a HCSS biologist if you are in need of general technical assistance for your property.	www.myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/ConservationYou_LAP_contact.htm

Florida's Wildlife Conservation Guide	An online resource which facilitates effective land use planning, project design, and habitat management while conserving the rural and environmentally sensitive areas important to Florida's fish and wildlife species.	www.myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/FWCG.htm
Conservation Technical Assistance Program (CTA)	Administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Conservation Technical Assistance Program provides technical assistance supported by science-based technology and tools to help landowners conserve, maintain, and improve their natural resources. The Program provides the technical capability, including direct conservation planning, design, and implementation assistance that consider soil, water, air, plants, and animals. HCSS staff help implement the Conservation Technical Assistance Program and can provide more detailed information on how this program can help you.	www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cta
Forest Stewardship Program (FSP)	Administered by USDA's Florida Division of Forestry. The Forest Stewardship Program seeks to help private landowners develop a plan designed to increase the economic value of their forestland while maintaining its environmental integrity for future generations. Stewardship is based on the multiple-use land strategy. Please visit the website to learn more about the program and how to apply. HCSS staff help implement the Forest Stewardship Program and can provide more detailed information as needed.	www.fl-dof.com/forest_management
FINANCIAL ASSISTANCE		
Landowner Assistance Program (LAP)	Administered by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. The purpose of LAP is to improve habitat conditions for wildlife by focusing conservation efforts on high priority habitats outlined in Florida's Wildlife Action Plan (www.myfwc.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/Legacy_index.htm). HCSS biologists make specific recommendations (i.e. prescribed burning, ground cover restoration, etc.) that can be cost-shared to restore and conserve degraded habitats such as sandhill and scrub.	www.myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/ConservationYou_LAP_financial.htm
Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (PFW)	Administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. Provides technical and up to 50 percent cost-share assistance to private landowners and other partners who conduct habitat restoration and improvement activities on their land. The focus of the program in Florida is on restoration of native habitats, restoration of degraded streams and wetlands, and eradication of invasive, exotic species. Please visit the website or contact a HCSS biologist for more information.	www.fws.gov/southeast/partners/

Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)	Administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Provides both technical and financial assistance to establish and improve fish and wildlife habitat. HCSS staff help implement WHIP and can provide more information as needed. Please visit the website to determine eligibility and contact your local NRCS agent or a HCSS biologist if interested in enrolling.	www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flwhip.html
Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)	Administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Provides both technical assistance and up to 75 percent cost-share assistance to farmers and ranchers who face threats to soil, water, air, and related natural resources. HCSS staff help implement EQIP and can provide more information as needed. Please visit the website to determine eligibility and contact your local NRCS agent or a HCSS biologist if interested in enrolling.	www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/eqip/fleqip.html See Also: Conservation Innovation Grants at: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/cig/
EASEMENT PROGRAMS		
Conservation Reserves Program (CRP)	Administered by USDA's Farm Service Agency. Provides annual rental payments and cost-share assistance to establish long-term, resource conserving covers on eligible farmland. Please visit the website to determine eligibility and contact your local NRCS agent or a HCSS biologist if interested in enrolling.	www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flcrp.html
Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)	Administered by USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service. Provides an opportunity for landowners to receive financial incentives (through an easement agreement or a cost-share agreement) to restore, protect, and enhance wetlands in exchange for retiring marginal land from agriculture. Please visit the website to determine eligibility and contact your local NRCS agent or a HCSS biologist if interested in enrolling.	www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flwrp.html
Grassland Reserve Program (GRP)	Administered by USDA's Natural Resource Conservation Service. Offers landowners the opportunity to protect, restore, and enhance grasslands on their property. The program conserves vulnerable grasslands from conversion to cropland and other uses by helping maintain viable ranching operations through cost-sharing and rental payments. Please visit the website to determine eligibility and contact your local NRCS agent or a HCSS biologist if interested in enrolling.	www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flgrp.html

OTHER OPPORTUNITIES		
Conservation Security Program (CSP)	Defines and rewards those farmers and ranchers (producers) who meet the highest standards of conservation and management on their operations. Landowners must own land in the watershed being targeted each year in order to receive assistance through this program. Please check the website or contact your local NRCS agent or a HCSS biologist for more details on the program and targeted watersheds this year.	www.fl.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/flcsp.html
Conservation Cooperatives	Creating a cooperative helps coordinate conservation efforts on a landscape level while providing multiple benefits to participating landowners (public and private) such as: increased communication, tool sharing, work days, dedicated assistance from resource professionals, etc. Contact a HCSS biologist to learn more about existing cooperatives and/or how to create a cooperative in your area.	www.myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/ConservationYou_LAP_contact.htm
Ecosystem Restoration Partnership Teams	Administered by The Nature Conservancy (TNC). These teams are being made available to assist landowners directly on-the-ground with habitat management efforts such as prescribed burning and invasive/exotic plant removal. HCSS biologists can help direct landowners to these sources of assistance. Please check the websites to find out more information on locations being targeted by existing strike teams.	North West Florida: www.cooperativeconservationamerica.org/viewproject.asp?pid=544 North Central Florida: not available Lake Wales Ridge Scrub: www.nature.org/initiatives/fire/work/art15394.html
Gopher Tortoise Recipient Site Program	FWC administers the statewide gopher tortoise management plan and accepts applications from eligible landowners who are interested in becoming a gopher tortoise recipient site. Please visit the website for additional information and application details.	www.myfwc.com/WILDLIFEHABITATS/GopherTortoise_Permits_RecipientSite.htm
Safe Harbor Program	Participating landowners are relieved of regulatory concerns regarding endangered species land management when agreeing to manage for the species' net benefit. Please visit the website for more information and contact a HCSS biologist if interested.	www.myfwc.com/safeharbor/default.htm
Operation Oak Program	Administered by the National Wild Turkey Federation. Designed to create and restore wildlife habitat by providing free, mast-producing trees to willing landowners. Please visit the website or contact a HCSS biologist for more details.	www.nwtf.org/conservation/regional_habitat_programs.html

RECOGNITION PROGRAMS		
Private Lands Fish and Wildlife Stewardship Award	Administered by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Nominations must be submitted by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission. This national award is presented annually to one landowner.	www.fishwildlife.org/annualmeetawards.html
Landowner Assistance Program Certification	Administered by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.	(coming soon)
Wildlife Friendly Designation Program – for new developments	Administered by the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission.	(coming soon)
Agricultural-Environmental Leadership Award	Administered by the Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services.	www.florida-agriculture.com/agenvironmental/index.htm
Forest Stewardship Program (FSP) Certification	Administered by the USDA's Florida Division of Forestry.	www.fl-dof.com/forest_management/cfa_steward_index.html
Wild Turkey Woodlands Program	Administered by the National Wild Turkey Federation.	www.nwtf.org/conservation/hunting_heritage.html
Gopher Tortoise Conservation Awareness	Administered by the American Forest Foundation, Forests for Watersheds and Wildlife Program.	www.conservationforestry.org/Programs/programs_AppAwarenessSign.cfm?Sign=Application_GopherSign.html
Certified Family Forest	Administered by the American Tree Farm System.	www.treefarmssystem.org/cms/pages/26_19.html
Certified Backyard Wildlife Habitat Program	Administered by the National Wildlife Federation.	http://secure.nwf.org/backyardwildlifehabitat/certify/signOrder.cfm and/or www.wec.ufl.edu/extension/landscaping/fblw/

For assistance with any of these programs or additional inquires please contact us at:
www.myfwc.com/CONSERVATION/ConservationYou_LAP_contact.htm
or you may call the Landowner Assistance Program coordinator at 850-488-3831.