



United States Department of the Interior

U. S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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IN REPLY REFER TO:

David S. Hobbie
Chief, Regulatory Division
Post Office Box 4970
Jacksonville, Florida 32232-0019

RECEIVED

SEP 28 2008

JACKSONVILLE DISTRICT
USACE

September 18, 2008

Subject: North Florida Field Office Programmatic Concurrence for Eastern Indigo Snake and Wood Stork Keys

Service Section 7 Consultation Code: 41910-2008-I-0485

Dear Mr. Hobbie:

Thank-you for your September 09, 2008, programmatic concurrence request received by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's North Florida Ecological Services Field Office (Service) on September 11, 2008, regarding the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Jacksonville District (Corps) and the Service's joint efforts to streamline the consultation process for the federally threatened eastern indigo snake (*Drymarchon corais couperi*) and the endangered wood stork (*Mycteria americana*), associated with the Corps' wetland permitting program.

After receiving input from Dr. Stuart Santos, project managers and section chiefs throughout the District regarding the development of the wood stork and Eastern indigo snake keys, we have determined that the enclosed keys with the associated attachments satisfy both agencies responsibilities under the Endangered Species Act, and achieves our mutual goal for all users to make consistent effect determinations regarding these two species.

Use of the "Wood Stork and Eastern Indigo Snake Keys" both dated September 2008, in conjunction with the attached documents, to review projects located in all referenced counties in our geographic work area, leads the Service to concur with the Corps determination of "may affect, not likely to adversely affect" (NLAA) for the wood stork and Eastern indigo snake. The biological rationale for this determination is contained within these associated documents, and is submitted in accordance with section 7 of the Endangered Species Act of 1973, as amended (Act) (87 Stat. 884; 16 U.S.C. 1531 *et seq.*).

Should additional information on these two referenced species become available, or circumstances change that affects our conclusions contained therein, the determinations may be reconsidered as deemed necessary by both agencies. This finding fulfills our agency's responsibility under the Act. Any questions or comments regarding these "Keys" should be directed to Jay Herrington at the letterhead address or by telephone at (904) 731-3326. Thank you for your continued cooperation with our agency.

Sincerely,



David L. Hankla
Field Supervisor

cc: Vero FO
Panama City FO
FWC – Dr. Elsa Haubold

Attachments:

Eastern Indigo Snake Key
Service Area Map – Appendix 1
Standard Protection Measures for the Eastern Indigo Snake – Appendix 2
Gopher Tortoise Burrow Excavation Guidelines – Appendix 3
Wood Stork Key
Wood Stork Core Foraging Areas – Appendix 1
Habitat Management Guidelines for the Wood Stork in the SE Region – Apdx. 2
Foraging Habitat Assessment Procedure (Draft) – Appendix 3