The following document summarizes the input received during and immediately following the 2018 Controlled Wood Regional Meetings and provides rationale for the resulting mitigation options for the Central Florida Critical Biodiversity Area (CBA), along with definition of any identified gaps in the final set of options.

The US Controlled Wood National Risk Assessment identifies Pine Flatwoods as the primary driver of biodiversity in this CBA and recognizes that it may be threatened by forest management activities. Threats from forest management activities, proposed mitigation options and feedback received for this CBA are very similar to those associated with the Native Longleaf Pine System (NLPS) risk topic. Therefore, as the specified risk area associated with this CBA overlaps with the specified risk area associated with HCV 3 Native Longleaf Pine Systems (NLPS), any Organization that is mitigating risks associated with sourcing from specified risk areas for NLPS that are within this CBA will already be mitigating the identified risk associated with this CBA, and no additional mitigation is needed. However, if the Organization is only sourcing from the portion of the CBA that is not within the specified risk area for NLPS, one of the following revised options is required.

*Consultation Insights: Overall, stakeholder feedback on the proposed mitigation options for the Central Florida CBA was generally limited. However, this limited feedback does provide support for the following thematic approaches: education and outreach, implementation of management activities, and conservation initiatives. Additionally, comments on similar themes for other risk topics have consistently suggested merging similar mitigation options, adapting options to provide greater flexibility (e.g., avoid specifying any particular NGO for collaboration, avoid limiting the management tools that may be used for conserving biodiversity), and providing more information on the intent of the mitigation option and what it is expected to achieve. Finally, consistency of mitigation approaches between risk topics should provide the potential for efficiencies for Organizations that would like to take similar approaches for different risk topics, or in different regions, and therefore, the following revised options draw from options for similar themes that were developed for other risk topics, particularly NLPS.*

**Please note that almost any of the proposed mitigation options may be done individually or in collaboration with other certificate holders, or other entities that have similar desired outcomes. Collaboration is encouraged to scale up potential mitigation impact, and FSC US will seek to assist with that collaboration when feasible.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Education & Outreach**

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| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Option(#5) Develop and offer educational opportunities for loggers and foresters that increase knowledge about pine flatwoods. Look for opportunities to do this through existing programs/initiatives, instead of re-inventing the wheel.  | Topline Input* Support for efforts related to education and outreach
* Audience of loggers, foresters, and landowners
* Collaboration with forestry and landowner associations on education
* Emphasis on education and outreach opportunities that may already exist
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**Proposed Revised Mitigation Options**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Using materials (as described below), and with a desired outcome of engaging landowners, foresters, and loggers within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area in conservation of the biodiversity of the pine flatwoods, communicate to audiences (as described below) the social benefits and values of biodiversity in the pine flatwoods, threats from poorly implemented forest management and other activities (i.e. introduction of non-native species, hydrologic alteration, substrate disturbance, conversion to agriculture and pine plantations, altered fire regime, etc), and opportunities for conservation through management that enhances biodiversity and reduces or eliminates these threats.**

* **Materials: Developed by, or developed in cooperation with, organizations/individuals with expertise in pine flatwoods biodiversity conservation, or FSC US, and delivered in a manner that will be the most effective in achieving the desired outcome of engaging landowners, foresters, and loggers in conservation of pine flatwoods biodiversity, while reflecting the specific context and characteristics of the Organization.**
* **Audiences: Audiences will reflect the specific context and characteristics of the Organization, but communications should be directed toward those audiences where the communications will be most effective in helping to achieve the desired outcome of engaging landowners, foresters, and loggers within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area in conservation of pine flatwoods biodiversity. Depending upon the Organization’s location in the supply chain, communications may be directly with landowners, foresters, or loggers, or through intermediaries such as community members, suppliers, or in collaboration with organizations/individuals already working for conservation of pine flatwoods biodiversity.**

**The following is offered as an option for Organizations with suppliers that are land managers or that purchase directly from the source forest:**

**Develop/adapt a procurement policy that reflects the above communications themes and clearly states the expectation that suppliers will promote conservation of pine flatwoods biodiversity and will not provide materials from forests where these HCV were threatened as a result of the forest management activities that produced the forest materials. This will require providing a description of the forest type (as it occurs in the supply area), potential threats from forest management activities, and the kinds of activities that would maintain or enhance pine flatwoods biodiversity in the supply area.**

**NOTE: Actions to demonstrate policy enforcement and communicate policies on sourcing to suppliers should be audited under the Due Diligence system requirements within the 40-005V3-1 standard section 1.1**

**CENTRAL THEME: Implement Management Activities**

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| Original Proposed Option(#4) Work with potential suppliers/landowners (particularly the larger ones) to get them to agree that they will manage for pine flatwoods.Participant Proposed Option: Work with forestry associations, landowner associations and others to promote proper management techniques for pine flatwoods | Topline Input* Promote proper management techniques for pine flatwoods
* Work with the forestry associations, landowner associations, etc
* Change wording (i.e. encourage, support, or promote?)
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**Proposed Revised Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to conservation organizations or similar entities (as described below) that are facilitating active, on the ground implementation of management activities (as described below) to restore, maintain or enhance pine flatwoods, with a goal of long-term conservation of the biodiversity in the pine flatwoods, within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area.**

* **Conservation Entities/Associations: These may include: non-governmental organizations that have active programs/projects to conserve pine flatwoods; federal, state and/or local agencies with natural resource conservation responsibilities; and/or organizations that have active programs/projects focused on habitat conservation for species dependent upon pine flatwoods.**
* **Management Activities: These should include efforts to: increase and improve the use of management practices that conserve the biodiversity of the pine flatwoods; increase the use of prescribed fire as a management tool; restore and maintain native understory communities; and restore and maintain essential hydrology.**

**CENTRAL THEME: Conservation Initiatives**

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| --- | --- |
| Original Proposed Option(#1) Support and enhance efforts to implement Florida’s Cooperative Conservation Blueprint regional pilot in central Florida. The purpose of the Blueprint was to develop broad agreement on both voluntary and non-regulatory conservation incentives along with a comprehensive vision of wildlife habitat and connectivity priorities to which existing and new incentive ideas can be applied. | Topline Input* Limited direct feedback or comments
* Single text documents indicate general support for an approach along these lines
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**Proposed Revised Mitigation Option**

**The following is offered as an option that could be scaled for any impact level:**

**Engage with and/or provide monetary or in-kind resources to conservation organizations or similar entities that are supporting or promoting programs or projects to develop new or augment existing programs that will restore, enhance, or maintain the biodiversity of the pine flatwoods; or result in increased access to incentive programs for landowner who restore, maintain or enhance forests within the specified risk area and the Organization’s supply area in a way that will conserve biodiversity of pine flatwoods. These entities may include: non-governmental organizations and/or federal, state and/or local governmental organizations that have active programs/projects to conserve the biodiversity of the pine flatwoods.**

**GAPS IN THE SET OF MITIGATON OPTIONS**

FSC US Staff evaluation of this set of mitigation options, through the lens of the shared criteria, did not identify any significant gaps, with the possible exception of the requirement for 'auditability.' We will be looking to your comments for suggestions on how to address this potential gap, as well as for identification of any other gaps and suggestions for their resolution. Additionally, we will be meeting with Certification Bodies during the consultation and expect that they will also provide input on improvements in auditability.