

Chuck Hess, U.S. Forest Service

The red-cockaded woodpecker translocation program was implemented as a regional management program in 1989, the first birds being moved from the Apalachicola National Forest to several other national forests in Florida and Mississippi. As the wildlife biologist on the Apalachicola National Forest I implemented and directed that program. I had several very capable wildlife technicians to assist me. Chuck Hess was one of them. As most of you know, Chuck is still on the Apalachicola, now a wildlife biologist, and is responsible for the translocation program. He has been involved in translocating subadult birds from the Forest for 12 years. To date, over 250 birds have been relocated to other populations. All of you who have worked with Chuck, either in preparing birds to be relocated or as recipients of Apalachicola birds, know that he takes his job very seriously, with spirit and enthusiasm while practicing the highest degree of professionalism, with legitimate concern for both the recipient and the donor population. We will be hearing about many successful population growth stories this week that are a direct result of Chucks incredibly hard work, long hours and dedication to the mission of providing birds. Chuck exemplifies the tenacity of the best agency wildlife biologists who continue on with the job in spite of poor budgets and little to no field assistance. Why? Because he believes in the mission, thrives on the success and loves to be in the woods. We cannot ask for much more from field biologists. In addition to his administration of the translocation program, he has also trained many other biologists in the trapping, banding and handling of both adult and nestling red-cockaded woodpeckers. Those of you in this audience, and I know there are quite a few, who have been trained by Chuck, I am sure would attest to the professionalism and quality of the training you received. For your long-term dedication to helping others grow their populations through training and by supplying birds, we are pleased to present you this award. Thank you Chuck.