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IMPORTANT USE AREAS OF MIGRATORY SUB-ADULT FLORIDA BALD EAGLES IN GEORGIA. *Elizabeth K. Mojica*^{1,5}, *J. Michael Meyers*², *Brian A. Millsap*³, *Katherin Haley*⁴

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Abstract: During migrations and summers of 1998-2003, we tracked Florida sub-adult Bald Eagles (*Haliaeetus leucocephalus*) using satellite telemetry to determine important use areas (IUAs) of eagles. We defined IUAs as locations used by two or more eagles or one eagle in multiple years within a 25-km radius. We mapped and described IUAs in Georgia for 14 of 69 migratory Florida sub-adult eagles. When they were nestlings, each of the 14 sub-adult eagles had been fitted with a 5-yr satellite transmitter. Nearest-neighbor clustering (CrimeStat III) analysis identified five IUAs in Georgia from daytime satellite locations (≤ 1 -km accuracy). These areas were located in eastern Georgia on the Ogeechee River, Sapelo River, J. Strom Thurmond (Clark Hill) Lake, Turnpike Creek, and Alabama



River. Size of IUAs ranged from 126 km² to 1,340 km² ($\bar{x} = 759$ km², 95% CI: 371–1,146 km²). We believe that repeated use of these five IUAs indicated that they may be important for recruitment of the 14 sub-adult eagles (to breeding eagles). Conservation of IUAs in Georgia may benefit the future Florida breeding population as well as resident adult and sub-adult eagles of Georgia.

