



# United States Department of the Interior

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Washington, D.C. 20240



MAY 17 2017

In Reply Refer To  
FWS/WSFR/POP:065561

Memorandum

To: Director

From: Assistant Director, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program

Subject: State Wildlife Grant Competitive Program – Fiscal Year 2017

This memorandum seeks your review and approval of awards for the Fiscal Year (FY) 2017 State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Competitive Program.

The purpose of the SWG Program is to provide wildlife conservation grants to States for the development and implementation of programs for the benefit of wildlife and their habitats, including species that are not hunted or fished. The SWG Program has been funded annually since 2001 through appropriations of Congress.

The Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) recommends fully funding 16 projects (see Attachments 1 and 2).

WSFR received 20 eligible applications from 12 States and one regional association of fish and wildlife agencies in response to the published funding opportunity. A national panel consisting of Service Regional SWG Program managers scored and ranked the applications.

The total FY 2017 funds available for the State Wildlife Grant Competitive Program are \$6,374,462. The awarded Federal funds for these proposals will be matched by over \$3.6 million in non-Federal funds. This will result nearly \$10 million to be expended for projects that conserve and protect species of greatest conservation need and their habitats, as described and included in these States' Wildlife Action Plans.

If you have questions, please contact Mr. Tom Busiahn, Chief, Division of Policy and Programs, Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, at (703) 358-2231.

Approved: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: 6/12/17

Attachments

Deputy  
Director

FY2017 State Wildlife Grant Competitive Program Recommended Projects

Region	Lead State	Project Title	SWG Federal Share	Non-Federal Match	Total Project Costs
1	Hawai'i	Conservation of Rare and Endangered Land Snails	\$250,000	\$87,838	\$337,838
1	Hawai'i	Egg Collection for Captive Propagation of Critically Endangered Birds	\$144,247	\$48,030	\$192,277
1	Hawai'i	Protection and Restoration of Laupahoehoe Forest	\$250,000	\$250,000	\$500,000
1	Hawai'i	Restoring Moth Pollination Services to Support Native Ecosystems	\$249,400	\$87,650	\$337,050
1	Idaho	Identifying and Implementing Conservation Actions for Bumble Bees	\$316,537	\$217,523	\$534,060
1	Washington	Conservation of Pollinators in Washington and Oregon Prairie Habitat	\$499,998	\$369,871	\$869,869
1	Washington	Western Pond Turtle Conservation in Washington, Oregon, and California	\$498,777	\$440,843	\$939,620
3	Minnesota	Cedar River Revival: Restoring Native Mussels and Ecosystem Services	\$455,012	\$188,254	\$643,266
3	Ohio	Assessing Impacts on Tree-Roosting Bats Killed at Wind Turbines	\$487,702	\$326,265	\$813,967
3	Ohio	Distribution, Density, and Demography of Spotted and Eastern Box Turtles	\$425,602	\$210,296	\$635,898
3	Wisconsin	Conserving Pollinators and Habitats in the Driftless Area	\$500,000	\$205,953	\$705,953
4	Florida	Multi-State Wetlands Ecological Restoration Project	\$468,170	\$156,057	\$624,227
5	Virginia	Conservation and Management of the Spotted Turtle	\$490,588	\$163,532	\$654,120
6	Colorado	Assessment of Lesser Prairie-Chicken Response to Translocation	\$345,435	\$159,181	\$504,616
6	Nebraska	American Burying Beetle Conservation Through Adaptive Management	\$493,000	\$164,334	\$657,334
	WAFWA	Predicting Short-Eared Owl Population Size and Distribution	\$499,994	\$545,691	\$1,045,685
<b>Totals</b>			<b>\$6,374,462</b>	<b>\$3,621,318</b>	<b>\$9,995,780</b>

## *Summaries of Proposed Projects*

Competitive State Wildlife Grant (SWG) Program, Fiscal Year 2017

Total Amount Available: \$6,374,462

### **Recommended for Funding (16 projects):**

#### **Region 1**

##### **Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources**

**Title:** Conservation of Rare and Endangered Land Snails on the Islands of Maui, Moloka'i, and Lana'i

**State(s):** Hawai'i

**Project Summary:** Rare and endangered Hawaiian terrestrial snails are experiencing devastating levels of extinction by invasive predators across the islands. The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources will protect and conserve 18 snail species of greatest conservation need on the islands of Maui, Moloka'i and Lana'i, collectively known as Maui Nui. Benefiting species include the Newcomb's and Lana'i tree snails, which are listed by the Service as Endangered. The project combines management of wild populations with captive propagation in a facility managed by the Snail Extinction Prevention Program, which is a State-Service partnership. These efforts will provide immediate extinction intervention as well as planning and conservation actions contributing to the long-term recovery of the species.

**Federal Funds Requested:** \$250,000; **Non-Federal Match:** \$87,838

##### **Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources**

**Title:** Egg Collection for Captive Propagation of the Critically Endangered 'Akikiki and 'Akeke'e

**State(s):** Hawai'i

**Project Summary:** The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources will take timely conservation action to help avert potentially imminent extinction of two birds endemic to the Island of Kauai. 'Akikiki and 'Akeke'e are small Hawaiian honeycreepers that are listed as Endangered by the Service, and agency biologists fear the species could become extinct in as little as three years if actions are not taken immediately. The agency will build upon work initiated in 2015 including nest identification and egg collection to build captive flocks as an insurance policy against the loss of wild populations. Staff will acquire and use radio-telemetry technology to improve nest searching, helping the agency gather key information about disease exposure, diet, habitat use, and landscape-level movements of this poorly understood species.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$144,247; **Non-Federal Match:** \$48,030

### **Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources**

**Title:** Protection and Restoration of Laupahoehoe Forest on the Island of Hawai'i

**State(s):** Hawai'i

**Project Summary:** The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources will cooperate with the Mauna Kea Watershed Alliance to implement critical conservation actions benefiting a variety of endemic birds, bats, and insects in a State- and Service-designated Priority Conservation Area. The partners will focus on exclusion of invasive feral pigs from a 1,071 acre management unit, creating a secure area for further management and research. This area is part of a larger forest landscape that includes State, Federal and private lands protected through a voluntary public-private partnership. Other essential conservation actions include restoration of native forest habitat. Laupahoehoe Forest is one of the most diverse and intact forests on the Big Island of Hawai'i.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$250,000; **Non-Federal Match:** \$250,000

### **Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources**

**Title:** Restoring Moth Pollination Services to Support Native Ecosystems in Hawai'i

**State(s):** Hawai'i

**Project Summary:** The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources seeks to reestablish populations of three rare Hawaiian leafroller moths, helping restore pollination services to native Hawai'ian flora. The agency will use captive-reared individuals to establish new populations in the most suitable habitat on islands where the species have been extirpated. Suitable habitat for each species will be identified by modeling habitat suitability based on historical and contemporary distribution records, as well as projecting distributions based on predicted climate change. Releases of captive reared individuals will be conducted systematically, and post-release monitoring will be completed at each site to assess species establishment.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$249,400; **Non-Federal Match:** \$87,650

### **Idaho Department of Fish and Game**

**Title:** Identifying and Implementing Conservation Actions for Bumble Bee Species in Idaho and Washington

**State(s):** Idaho, Washington

**Project Summary:** Pollinators are essential to the reproduction of more than 85 percent of the world's flowering plants, and an estimated 25 percent of North American bumble bee species face risk of extinction. The Idaho Department of Fish and Game and the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will cooperate with the non-profit Xerces Society to improve habitat, address knowledge gaps, and reduce threats to five bumble bee species in the two States. Partners will leverage the voluntary participation of master naturalists and other citizen scientists to collect species data on distribution and habitat/plant associations. New information will assist the agencies in implementing a strategic plan for bumble bee conservation. Restoration actions will be

implemented at six locations, improving habitat for the targeted bees and other pollinators such as the monarch butterfly.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$316,537; **Non-Federal Match:** \$217,523

**Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife**

**Title:** Conservation of Pollinators and Other Species in Washington and Oregon Prairie Habitat  
**State(s):** Washington, Oregon

**Project Summary:** Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife will partner with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife to substantially improve the population status of 14 rare and/or declining species of greatest conservation need and provide secondary benefit to over a dozen additional sensitive species that are associated with prairie habitats of western Oregon and Washington. Conservation actions including restoration of 469 acres of prairie habitats and monitoring will move Candidate species such as island marble butterfly closer to recovery and reduce the likelihood of the need to list species under the Endangered Species Act.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$499,998; **Non-Federal Match:** \$369,871

**Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife**

**Title:** Advancing Western Pond Turtle Conservation in Washington, Oregon, and California  
**State(s):** Washington, Oregon, California

**Project Summary:** Partnering State agencies will address knowledge gaps and implement priority conservation actions to improve the population status of Western pond turtles, a species currently being reviewed by the Service for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The turtle is listed as State Endangered in Washington, State Sensitive-Critical in Oregon, and a Species of Special Concern in California. Working across State borders, the agencies will produce a comprehensive, range-wide population assessment using new genomic and field data. The results will provide critical information for identifying priority areas for conservation at the range-wide and local levels. Active habitat restoration will be conducted at five sites supporting key life functions of the turtle. These actions may reduce the need for listing under the Endangered Species Act and will provide vital information for the Service's status review.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$489,777; **Non-Federal Match:** \$440,843

**Region 3**

**Minnesota Department of Natural Resources**

**Title:** Cedar River Revival: Restoring Native Mussels and Ecosystem Services  
**State(s):** Minnesota, Iowa

**Project Summary:** The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will collaborate with the Iowa Department of Natural Resources to propagate, rear, and release seven native mussel species in the Cedar River watershed of Minnesota and Iowa. North American freshwater mussels are among the world's most imperiled groups of organisms, with projected extinction rates as high as 50 percent by the end of this century. Host requirements for the larval stage of three-horn wartyback, three-ridge, and Wabash pigtoe mussels will be studied to facilitate future propagation. Partners will conduct surveys to locate populations of mudpuppies, host to salamander mussels, which will help enable future reintroduction of the species. Reintroduction sites will be monitored annually to measure outcomes of mussel releases.

**Federal Funds Requested:** \$455,012; **Non-Federal Match:** \$188,254

### **Ohio Department of Natural Resources**

**Title:** Distribution, Density, and Demography of Spotted Turtles, Eastern Box Turtles, and Red-Headed Woodpeckers in Oak Openings of Ohio and Michigan

**State(s):** Ohio, Michigan

**Project Summary:** The partnering State agencies propose to collect field data on the distribution, density, demography and habitat associations of spotted turtles, Eastern box turtles, and red-headed woodpeckers in managed oak savanna habitats. The data from these systematic surveys, assessments, and radio-telemetry monitoring will inform spatially explicit models that will be used in ongoing and future adaptive management plans at restoration sites within the Great Lakes region. The project offers an opportunity for a collaborative partnership to address landscape-scale habitat requirements for three species of greatest conservation need within imperiled habitats. Additional support and matching funds are provided by the Black Swamp Bird Observatory, the University of Toledo, and a network of volunteer citizen scientists.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$425,602; **Non-Federal Match:** \$210,296

### **Ohio Department of Natural Resources**

**Title:** Using Novel Biomarkers to Assess Geographic Scale and Demographic Impacts on Three Species of Tree-Roosting Bats Killed at Wind Turbines

**State(s):** Ohio, Pennsylvania, Virginia, Maryland

**Project Summary:** A largely unanticipated impact of utility-scale wind-energy development has been widespread mortality of tree-roosting bats, yet the geographic and demographic impact of this mortality is poorly understood because of a lack of tools for assessing movement and population size in these difficult-to-study species. Partnering States propose a multi-investigator study to validate and apply data from three novel biomarkers obtained from bat tissue to obtain information on the scale and demographic impact of these mortalities. This information can be used by State and Federal agencies to assess and potentially mitigate the impact of wind-energy facilities on tree-roosting bats at the population and species level.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$487,702; **Non-Federal Match:** \$326,265

## **Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources**

**Title:** Conserving Pollinators and Habitats in the Driftless Area of Wisconsin and Minnesota

**State(s):** Wisconsin, Minnesota

**Project Summary:** Wisconsin and Minnesota Departments of Natural Resources will expand upon a successful partnership that has resulted in restoration of over 11,000 acres of public and private lands for the benefit of species of greatest conservation need. Conservation actions include habitat restoration on both private and public lands, targeting dusted skipper, Leonard's skipper, and regal fritillary butterflies, and the rusty patched bumble bee. This bumble bee was listed as Endangered by the Service in February, 2017, and regal fritillary is currently under review for listing. Conservation actions include invasive plant control, interseeding, prescribed burning, and brush removal. Habitat restoration will focus on high priority areas outlined in each state's Wildlife Action Plan, including Conservation Opportunity Areas in Wisconsin and Conservation Focus Areas in Minnesota.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$500,000; **Non-Federal Match:** \$205,953

### **Region 4**

## **Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission**

**Title:** Multi-State Wetlands Ecological Restoration in Florida and Georgia

**State(s):** Florida, Georgia

**Project Summary:** Despite their importance for wildlife, isolated wetlands throughout the Southeast are overgrown and hydrologically altered due to fire exclusion and incompatible fire, greatly reducing their ability to support native wildlife. Partnering State agencies will conduct wetland restoration activities in Florida and Georgia with safe and effective reintroduction of prescribed fire and other restoration techniques. This landscape-scale conservation project will restore 45 isolated wetlands across the Florida panhandle and southern Georgia. Utilizing an adaptive management approach, the partners will measure the effectiveness of wetland restoration methods in both states to inform future restoration activities. These actions will benefit five species of rare and imperiled salamander, frog, and newt species, including the striped newt, a Candidate for listing under the Endangered Species Act.

**Federal Funds Requested:** \$468,170; **Non-Federal Match:** \$156,057

### **Region 5**

## **Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries**

**Title:** Conservation and Management of the Spotted Turtle and Seasonal Wetland Habitats in the Eastern United States

**State(s):** Connecticut, the District of Columbia, Florida, Georgia, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Virginia

**Project Summary:** Spotted turtles have declined across their range and are of conservation concern throughout the United States and Canada. The turtle has been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act. The partnering State agencies will quantify turtle status, distribution, and effects of climate change and habitat fragmentation. The project utilizes standardized population assessments that will inform a comprehensive adaptive management strategy, identifying priority habitat and population management actions across the region. The partners seek to maintain populations of spotted turtles at or above their current levels and achieve zero net loss of suitable habitat at high priority sites. The agencies anticipate that the project will improve population stability and provide valuable information as the Service considers the need for listing the spotted turtle.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$490,588; **Non-Federal Match:** \$163,532

### Region 6

#### **Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife**

**Title:** Assessment of Lesser Prairie-Chicken Response to Translocation

**State(s):** Colorado, Kansas

**Project Summary:** Since the mid-1990s, conservation concern for the lesser prairie-chicken has been elevated to consideration for listing under the Endangered Species Act, and in November 2016, the Service initiated a 12-Month Status Review of the species. The Colorado Division of Parks and Wildlife will partner with the Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks, and Tourism, Kansas State University, and the United States Forest Service to help secure the long-term persistence, resiliency, and distribution of lesser prairie-chicken populations in the Sand Sagebrush Ecoregion. Project goals include restoration of core populations and assessment of the feasibility of translocating the species to help restore population abundance and habitat occupancy. The partners will supplement existing populations in priority landscapes through translocation of at least 390 birds. Site fidelity and survival of translocated lesser prairie-chickens will be quantified through ground and aerial monitoring of individuals fitted with transmitters.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$345,435; **Non-Federal Match:** \$159,181

#### **Nebraska Game and Parks Commission**

**Title:** American Burying Beetle Conservation Through Adaptive Management

**State(s):** Nebraska, South Dakota

**Project Summary:** With limited and disjunct populations, the presence of a contiguous population of American burying beetle between the neighboring states of Nebraska and South Dakota presents an opportunity to collaboratively conserve this Federally Endangered species. With few existing populations, threat reduction is imperative for a long-term sustainable population. The targeted population occupying portions of Nebraska and South Dakota is the westernmost American burying beetle population known. Partnering State agencies will conduct regular monitoring to detect

changes in distribution and abundance. Direct conservation actions including prescribed fire, invasive tree control, and planned grazing strategies on public and private lands will improve and enhance 3,400 acres for the beetle and other sensitive species in the Loess Canyons and Elkhorn River Headwaters Biologically Unique Landscapes in Nebraska.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$493,000; **Non-Federal Match:** \$164,334

**Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA)**

**Title:** Predicting Responses of Short-Eared Owl Population Size, Distribution and Habitat in a Changing Climate

**State(s):** California, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming

**Project Summary:** The short-eared owl is a widespread open-country bird that has undergone a substantial decline in abundance across North America. The short-eared owl has been classified by one researcher as “climate endangered”, with an anticipated loss of greater than 50 percent of its current range by 2050. The greatest predicted losses occur in the western United States. The owl is State-listed as threatened or endangered in at least 12 States. The Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies will implement a coordinated, eight-state effort that will address high priority conservation needs of the short-eared owl, an umbrella species for western grasslands and shrublands. Partners will quantify short-eared owl abundance, distribution, and habitat associations across the West. The project presents a means to prioritize landscapes for conservation by implementing an adaptive management approach to various grazing treatments, aligning results with predicted changes in climate.

**Federal Funds requested:** \$499,994; **Non-Federal Match:** \$545,691