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News Release



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CALIFORNIA LANDOWNERS RECEIVE \$ 813,000 FOR ENDANGERED SPECIES CONSERVATION

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today announced grants totaling \$813,000 to private landowners and groups in California to undertake conservation projects on their land for endangered, threatened and other at-risk species. The Private Stewardship Grants Program will benefit species ranging from the federally threatened California gnatcatcher in Orange County to coho and Chinook salmon, steelhead, Pacific lamprey and green sturgeon in Humboldt and Mendocino counties.

Administered by the Service, each of the 9 grants awarded today require at least a 10 percent match in non-federal dollars or in-kind contributions.

“We recognize that endangered species can only successfully recover if we work cooperatively with landowners and communities to promote voluntary stewardship on private lands,” said Service Director H. Dale Hall. “Private Stewardship grants provide critical support to landowners who voluntarily conserve threatened and endangered species.”

Among recipients of today’s grants is Staunton Farms in Siskiyou County which will use a grant of \$145,000 to create rotational “walking” wetlands on agricultural lands in the Klamath Basin. The project will illustrate how agriculture can provide important habitats for imperiled species while improving crop yields, controlling weeds and reducing pesticide use, reducing cost, and increasing profitability. A total of 188 acres of wetland habitat will be created adjacent to the Klamath National Wildlife Refuge. In another example, the Alameda County Resource Conservation District will receive \$103,400 to restore and enhance deteriorating livestock ponds on 11 cattle ranches for the federally threatened California red-legged frogs, California tiger salamanders, and other imperiled species. The program will support livestock producers in practicing voluntary habitat-focused stewardship on their lands for the benefit of a variety of imperiled species.

Now in its fourth year, the Private Stewardship Grants Program provides federal grants on a competitive basis to individuals and groups engaged in voluntary conservation efforts on private lands that include species protected by the Endangered Species Act, candidate species or other at-risk species. Under this program, private landowners as well as groups working with private landowners submit proposals directly to the Service for funding to support these efforts. Nationally, the program awarded 6.9 million in grants to landowners in 35 states in 2006.

The Private Stewardship Grant program is one of a variety of tools under the ESA that help landowners plan and implement projects to conserve species. Other cooperative measures under the ESA include Habitat Conservation Plans, Safe Harbor Agreements, and Candidate Conservation Agreements. These grants and

cooperative agreements provide incentives to foster citizen participation in the stewardship of our nation's natural resources.

A list of the California 2006 Private Stewardship Grant Program recipients can be found at ([LINK TO CALIFORNIA AWARDEES](#))

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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