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News Release



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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Provides Grants for Wetlands Conservation

More than 6,500 acres of wetlands will be restored and protected in Idaho, Montana and Oregon with the help of \$16.5 million in Federal funding and partner contributions.

“These grants are important to successful collaborative conservation efforts here in the Pacific Northwest,” said Ren Lohofener, Pacific Region Director. “Nearly 30 partners have come together to restore and protect our wetlands, which will benefit a myriad of migratory birds, fish, aquatic plants and other wildlife.”

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission recently approved funding to purchase waterfowl habitat and fund an array of wetlands, migratory waterfowl and associated conservation projects in the U.S. and Mexico.

The Commission approves projects for funding under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. This Federal funding encourages partnerships to protect, enhance, restore, and manage wetlands and other habitats for migratory birds and other wildlife resources in North America. The Commission also approves the use of Migratory Bird Conservation Funds – supported in large part by Federal Duck Stamp sales – to purchase lands for the National Wildlife Refuge System.

More than \$22.6 million were approved under the North American Wetlands Conservation Fund to support 34 conservation projects in 14 states. Partners in the 21 U.S. projects will add more than \$74.1 million to restore more than 121,156 acres of wetlands and associated uplands.

The Commission also approved the use of more than \$13 million under the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund to acquire 6,566 acres of habitat for the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Fund receives revenue from Duck Stamp sales, import duties on firearms and ammunition and right-of-way payments to the refuge system.

The three North American Wetlands Conservation Act grants approved in the Pacific Region include the following projects:

A \$1,000,000 grant was awarded for the Upper Willamette Wetlands Conservation Initiative in Oregon and will protect, enhance and restore 2,151 acres of riparian and wetland habitats in the Upper Willamette River floodplain. About \$3,998,683 was contributed from federal and non-governmental organizations as this project’s second phase continues to build on their previous accomplishments. Several hundred species of fish and wildlife will benefit from this project including a variety of waterfowl, shorebirds, migratory songbirds, raptors, etc., as well as 11 different federally listed species. The partners in this project include McKenzie River Trust, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, Bella Vista Foundation, McKenzie Watershed Council, East Lane Soil and Water Conservation District, Art Johnson, Dale Bergey, Larry Bangs, MDAC Farms LLC, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service’s Mid-

Willamette National Wildlife Refuge Complex and USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service.

An \$880,500 grant was awarded for the Willamette River Restoration project, which will help partners acquire and restore the 369-acre Joint Water Commission Springhill Road Tract, and will restore another 348 acres on private tracts and Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge. Contributed funds to the project exceed \$2 million and will affect 1,237 acres throughout the project area. Shallow excavation, berm construction, water-control structure installation will be carried out on six private tracts, enhancing a total of 520 acres. Partners in this project include Ducks Unlimited, Joint Water Commission, Wally Remmers, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Clean Water Services, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

“This grant shows a diverse partnership coming together to restore and protect crucial waterfowl habitat in the Willamette River Delta, says Manager of Conservation Programs Chuck Lobdell. “These NAWCA grants are absolutely critical to DU’s ability to restore and protect wetlands. Partners from both the public and private sector are stepping up and helping DU to leverage our conservation dollars, and the support of our members to conserve even more habitat”

The Lower Clark Fork River/Lake Pend Oreille Watershed Project in Idaho and Montana will receive \$1,000,000 to protect, restore and enhance 3,174 **acres** of public and private lands in the watershed—on more than 20 parcels in total. More than \$7 million has been contributed to the project by federal and non-federal organizations thus far. This grant will help protect the 41-acre Wild Horse Trail Tract through fee-title donation and conservation easement acquisition; purchase a perpetual conservation easement on the 133-acre Ruen Tract; protect the 67-acre Dunnagan Tract along Pack River through a donated conservation easement; restore 3 acres of Granite Creek; and enhance 574 acres of Pack River Delta wetlands in Idaho. The grant will also be used to acquire fee title on the 2-acre Graves Creek Tract and on 1,281 acres in the State’s Bull River Wildlife Management Area; purchase conservation easements on two parcels totaling 189 acres along Bull River; permanently protect another 824 acres along Bull River through donated conservation easements on three parcels; and restore 17 acres of riparian and wetland habitats on six tracts, and enhance 43 acres on another four tracts, along tributaries of the Lower Clark River in Montana. Partners in this project include the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Avista Corporation, Robert Dunnagan, Judy Hutchins, Wild Horse Trail, The Conservation Fund, Montana Fish, Wildlife, and Parks, Trout Unlimited, Clark Fork-Pend Oreille Conservancy, U.S. Forest Service, Green Mountain Conservation District, Sanders County Resource Advisory Committee and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Additional information can be found on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Website.

U.S. project descriptions:

<http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/US/ApprovProj.shtm>

Summary Table Fact Sheet:

http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/Standard/files/2007_March_StandardGrantSummaryTable.pdf

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.