



# News Release

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**Southwest Region (Arizona • New Mexico • Oklahoma • Texas)** [www.fws.gov/southwest/](http://www.fws.gov/southwest/)

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## **Secretary Salazar Announces Nearly \$66 Million in Grants to Conserve Habitat of Threatened and Endangered Species**

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar today announced nearly \$66 million in grants, awarded through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, to enable 25 states to work with private landowners, conservation organizations and other partners to protect and conserve the habitat of threatened and endangered species. Representing the Southwest Region, Texas and Arizona will receive over \$3,700,000 combined grant funding.

“These grants are part of our ongoing commitment to work with states and other partners to ensure America’s beautiful land and wildlife are conserved for future generations,” Salazar said. “They provide the means for states to develop the long-term partnerships with landowners and communities necessary to conserve habitat and foster stewardship that will bring species back from the threat of extinction.”

“The success of our partners in receiving these competitive grants highlights the importance of the work we are doing together to protect imperiled species in the southwest,” said Benjamin N. Tuggle, PhD, director of the Service’s Southwest Region. “These efforts will provide benefits far into the future for many species, especially those threatened with extinction.”

Authorized by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, these competitive grants enable states to work with private landowners, conservation groups and other agencies to initiate conservation planning efforts and acquire and protect habitat to support the conservation of threatened and endangered species.

The Cooperative Endangered Species Fund provides grants through the Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants Program, the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants Program, and the Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program. These three programs were established to help avoid potential conflicts between the conservation of threatened and endangered species and land development and use.

In the Service’s southwest Region the 5 recipients are:

Travis County, Texas, (Balcones Canyonlands – Spezia Tract) will receive an HCP Land Acquisition Grants Program grant of \$1,330,243. This will enable the acquisition of an approximately 109-acres in-holding of high-quality habitat for the endangered golden-cheeked warbler, black-capped vireo, and species of concern Jollyville Plateau Salamander. The work by Service partners, primarily Travis County and the City of Austin, has resulted in 28,426 acres of

protected lands, and will move the Balcones Canyonlands Conservation Plan (BCCP) closer to the ultimate conservation goal of protecting 30,428 acres, with 93 percent of the BCCP already protected.

A Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants Program grant of \$299,795 went to the City of Tucson, for their Greater Southlands HCP (Pima County, AZ). The planning proposal will provide a comprehensive, long-range, regional plan for 14 covered species within a 130,000-acre planning area facing strong development pressures within the City of Tucson, Pima County, Arizona. Completion of this segment of the planning proposal will position the City of Tucson to finalize the Greater Southlands HCP and work with the public and stakeholders as part of the NEPA to develop an EIS and a final draft HCP.

Recovery Land Acquisition Grants went to 3 recipients:

**Arizona Game and Fish Department (AGFD) \$1,025,000.** This grant will enable the AGFD to acquire the Triangle Bar Ranch in Pinal County, Arizona. This is an approximately 925-acre tract located at the confluence of the San Pedro River and Aravaipa Creek. The acquisition would primarily benefit the endangered southwestern willow flycatcher and threatened loach minnow;

**Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) \$260,250,** for whooping crane habitat in Aransas County, Texas (Holiday Beach). The grant will enable the TPWD to acquire this 168-acre tract located on the Texas coast and currently used by endangered whooping cranes. The whooping crane, a spotlight species, is threatened by urban encroachment on the wintering grounds and potential future sea level rises associated with climate change. Because of the continued loss of wintering habitat, habitat protection in wintering grounds is a vital part in the conservation of this species;

and

**Texas Parks and Wildlife Department \$800,000.** The grant will enable the TPWD to acquire a 413-acre tract in Bandera County, Texas, that will provide protection for nesting habitat of the golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo, both of which are spotlight species for the Southwest Region. The property is also expected to benefit the endangered Tobusch fish-hook cactus.

For a complete list of the 2010 grant awards for these programs (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 15.615), see the Service's Endangered Species Grants home page at <http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/section6/index.html>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov/>.

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