

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Division of International Conservation  
Mexico Program  
FY 2018 Summary of Projects**

In FY 2018, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Mexico Program awarded funding to eight projects in Mexico, totaling \$352,697 and leveraging \$327,451 in additional matching funds.

**Modifications to existing grants**

**MX1619**

**Award # F16AP00248**

***Sustainable production projects as a comprehensive strategy to ensure the conservation and recovery of natural resources in the Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve.*** In partnership with *Alternare, A.C.* The Monarch Butterfly Biosphere Reserve (MMBR) is the overwintering site for the eastern population of the monarch butterfly. In Mexico, monarchs are threatened by habitat loss as a result of illegal logging and forest degradation. The intent of this project is to conserve the forests of the MBBR, by reconciling the conservation of monarchs and their habitat with economic and social development opportunities for local communities. Past funding from USFWS supported the reforestation of 220 hectares of community-owned forests; the establishment of 32 tree nurseries; training on natural resource conservation for 25 rural communities; training eight generations of community promoters; and the export of 7,000 kilograms of organically produced berries to the U.S. Unfortunately, illegal logging operations, together with the arrival of the avocado boom, are undermining decades of conservation efforts and continued support is required to ensure the recovery of the overwintering forests. Additional resources will be used to: (1) support the implementation of seven workshops on tree production and reforestation in 30 schools; (2) increase the number of farmers involved in the production of organic berries; (3) provide technical advice to six berry production groups; (4) renew eight community water management agreements; and (5) produce and distribute two educational documentaries on water conservation and organic agricultural practices.

USFWS: \$70,000

Leveraged Funds: \$175,866

**MX1642**

**Award # F16AP00239**

***Restoration and conservation of Mayan Forest Reserves in two regions of the Yucatan Peninsula.*** In partnership with *Etnobiología para la Conservación, A.C.* This project promotes habitat connectivity along the corridor connecting the Calakmul - Balam Cax – Sian Ka'an Biosphere Reserves, through the restoration of existing community forest reserves. The area harbors jaguars, crocodiles, Baird's tapirs, white-lipped peccaries, and more than 230 bird species. Some of the biggest threats to biodiversity conservation in the Yucatan peninsula are the degradation of vast tropical forest areas owned by rural communities as a consequence of unregulated land-use change, the establishment of unlicensed landfills, and colonization by invasive species. Past funding from USFWS for this project has supported a certificate training program on restoration and conservation for 400 community leaders and rangers; the

establishment of four restoration demonstration plots; the restoration/rehabilitation of 20 hectares of abandoned paddocks; and the implementation of sustainable agriculture, forestry, and solid waste management practices by the communities. Additional funds will now be used to: (1) reduce habitat loss and degradation by increasing the number of hectares restored in the project area; (2) deliver training workshops on land restoration; (3) support invasive species removal and solid waste disposal, bring recycling and commercialization to 14 additional communities; (4) provide technical support to communities' restoration efforts; and (5) develop habitat restoration strategies and work plans for the three biosphere reserves.

USFWS: \$69,923

Leveraged Funds: n/a

## **MX1706**

### **Award # F17AP00515**

#### ***Community Led Recovery of Native Species of the Tropical Rain Forest within the Framework of the Scarlet Macaw Reintroduction Program in Los Tuxtlas, Veracruz, Phase II.***

In partnership with *Bosque Antiguo, A.C.* The goal of this project is to establish a population of 500 scarlet macaws (*Ara macao cyanoptera*) in Los Tuxtlas Biosphere Reserve in Mexico. Habitat loss and poaching for the illegal pet trade have reduced the scarlet macaw population in Mexico to 250 individuals distributed in two geographically isolated areas, making this effort nationally and regionally important. Past funding for this project achieved the following conservation outcomes: release and management of 132 macaws; establishment of community monitoring groups; reforestation of 50 hectares of paddocks to increase habitat connectivity; implementation of agroforestry activities; and piloting of apiculture and agouti farms to improve habitat quality and provide economic alternatives to local communities. This first request for additional funds and a time extension provides support to continue species reintroduction efforts and reduce threats. Additional resources will fund the gradual and supported release of a new group of scarlet macaws; (2) community monitoring patrols to prevent poaching; (3) an educational pride campaign for local communities; (4) the establishment of small-scale beekeeping enterprises as an economic alternative to cattle ranching that reduces habitat loss; and (5) reforestation and restoration efforts along five hectares of degraded tropical rainforest.

USFWS: \$49,990

Leveraged Funds: n/a

## **MX1715**

### **Award # F17AP00516**

#### ***Coral reef conservation in the Mexican Pacific.***

In partnership with *Costa Salvaje, A.C.* (WildCoast). This project strengthens the conservation of 686,767 acres of coral reefs in six Marine Protected Areas (MPAs) in the Mexican Pacific through biological monitoring, infrastructure development, park ranger capacity building, and by reducing threats from uncontrolled tourism activities through the promotion of sustainable tourism and of a culture of conservation for tourism outfitters, local communities, and visitors. In 2017, USFWS supported the establishment of a standardized coral reef monitoring protocol for MPAs; installed a system of 206 buoys for reef protection in one MPA; trained 22 rangers in autonomous diving, first aid, buoys installation, and monitoring and analysis of coral reef data; trained 132 tourism outfitters in tourism best practices; and educated 500 children and 5,000 tourists in best practices for coral reef observation and conservation. Additional funding will allow for: (1) the expansion of monitoring activities to two additional MPAs; (2) the publication of the first coral reef

conservation report for the Mexican Pacific; (3) the installation of a system of 20 conservation buoys in one MPA; (4) the publication of a diver's guide to marine life and rules of behavior for MPAs; and (5) delivering coral reef conservation education and outreach activities for 1,500 visitors and coastal communities.

USFWS: \$40,000

Leveraged Funds: \$130,724

## **MX1726**

### **Award # F17AP00518**

#### ***Integrated management of jaguar habitat through community engagement in western Mexico.***

In partnership with *Fondo Noreste, A.C.* (FONNOR). This project has been working with communities from Jalisco, Nayarit, and Durango to reduce jaguar mortality through environmental education and livestock management practices that encourage species survival. In Mexico, approximately 100 jaguars die annually due to habitat loss, poaching, and lack of prey due to overhunting. Project results so far include: the development of 30 community-based maps through participatory socio-environmental diagnostics exercises using an inclusive and culturally sensitive approach; strengthening the capacities of 64 leaders to monitor jaguars and analyze their movement patterns so jaguar-cattle conflicts can be prevented; and developing a jaguar integrated monitoring strategy for Western Mexico. Additional time and funds will allow for: (1) training communities on governance, community-based zoning, and land use planning and management; (2) implementing workshops on livestock predation avoidance techniques and on how to access the livestock compensation program; (3) establishing a compensation fund to reward farmers participating in jaguar photo-trap monitoring activities; (4) continuing behavior change campaigns to address negative sentiments toward jaguars; and (5) supporting community-based monitoring and patrolling committees through 2020.

USFWS: \$40,000

Leveraged Funds: \$13,160

## **MX1742**

### **Award # F17AP00524**

***Living with felines: community and conservation.*** In partnership with the Northern Jaguar Project. This project protects jaguar, ocelot, mountain lion, and bobcat populations across a region 125 miles south of the U.S.-Mexico border, where poaching and poisoning are immediate threats. The goal is to reduce mortality and to extend protections for an estimated 120 jaguars and other felines on ranches surrounding the Northern Jaguar Reserve. Past funding for this project rewarded the presence of felines on ranches and developed long-term relationships with 16 ranchers to minimize human-wildlife conflict, building tolerance for felines and improving habitat for biodiversity. Additional funds will: (1) increase the number of local youth serving as conservation ambassadors through activities designed to get them outdoors and connect with nature; (2) add two new ranches to the project, resulting in a total of 85,000 acres that will be under signed protective agreements with ranch owners, and a total of 18 landowners who have signed agreements not to harm wildlife, and who in exchange will be rewarded for the feline photos taken on their properties; (3) monthly monitoring activities to check for cattle losses and poaching in the participating ranches; (4) implementation of habitat and watershed restoration activities in five ranches to enhance habitat conditions; and (5) final designation of the Northern Jaguar Reserve as a federally protected area.

USFWS: \$25,000

Leveraged Funds: n/a

**MX1744****Award # F17AP00527**

***Preserving a key jaguar corridor through SMART conflict management and community engagement in the buffer zone of the Laguna de Terminos Protected Area.*** In partnership with Panthera. This project increases tolerance for jaguars among communities located along the Laguna de Terminos and the Calakmul Biosphere Reserve corridor by reducing conflict between jaguars and ranchers, educating communities about the species, and empowering residents to patrol for illegal activities. Mexico represents the northern-most edge of the jaguar's range, and the country is central to the jaguar's survival in the future. With an estimated 4,000 individuals in the wild, Mexico has the second largest population of jaguars in the world, following Brazil. The Yucatan peninsula, where this project is being implemented, holds the highest concentration of jaguars in Mexico. Past funding for this project has supported: the training of three community monitoring committees in camera trap monitoring; SMART (Spatial Monitoring and Reporting Tool)-based patrolling; identification and response of predator attacks on cattle, which prevented the retaliatory killing of two jaguars; delivering workshops for 45 ranchers on depredation prevention and response skills; and educating children on jaguar conservation. Additional funds will: (1) support community vigilance committees for an additional year; (2) allow for the hiring of a technician to guide communities on better livestock management practices to prevent jaguar attacks; (3) allow for the purchase of monitoring and patrolling equipment; and (4) support implementation of jaguar-cattle conflict mitigation workshops for 60 landowners.

USFWS: \$39,784

Leveraged Funds: \$7,701

**MX1774****Award # F17AP00548**

***Securing connectivity for jaguars along expanding highways of the Sky Islands.*** In partnership with the Wildlands Network. The purpose of this two-year project is to conserve jaguars in the Sky Islands region of northern Mexico, by preventing deaths caused by collisions with vehicles and by maintaining habitat connectivity. Habitat fragmentation is one of the main drivers of jaguar extinction with roads being responsible for reducing habitat functionality and causing their deaths in wildlife-vehicle collisions. Past funding supported: training of 100 local road ecology and engineering experts in skills necessary to monitor, prevent, and reduce the impact of highways on wildlife; delivering of recommendations to Mexican transportation authorities; educating drivers on the need for habitat connectivity and the purpose of wildlife crossings; carrying out wildlife monitoring activities along drainages and infrastructure to understand how wildlife use them; and organizing a forum on introducing wildlife crossings to Mexico's Lower Chamber of Congress. This modification will support four additional training workshops for transportation professionals in northern and central Mexico. These workshops will address the basic concepts of road ecology, and wildlife crossings as a mitigation option to preserve or enhance wildlife mobility, habitat connectivity, and motorist safety. Funds will also support additional wildlife monitoring actions along highways and will educate local audiences on the problems and solutions related to wildlife-vehicle collisions.

USFWS: \$18,000

Leveraged Funds: n/a