Conserving Treasured Landscapes in America's Great Outdoors

Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area

Kansas

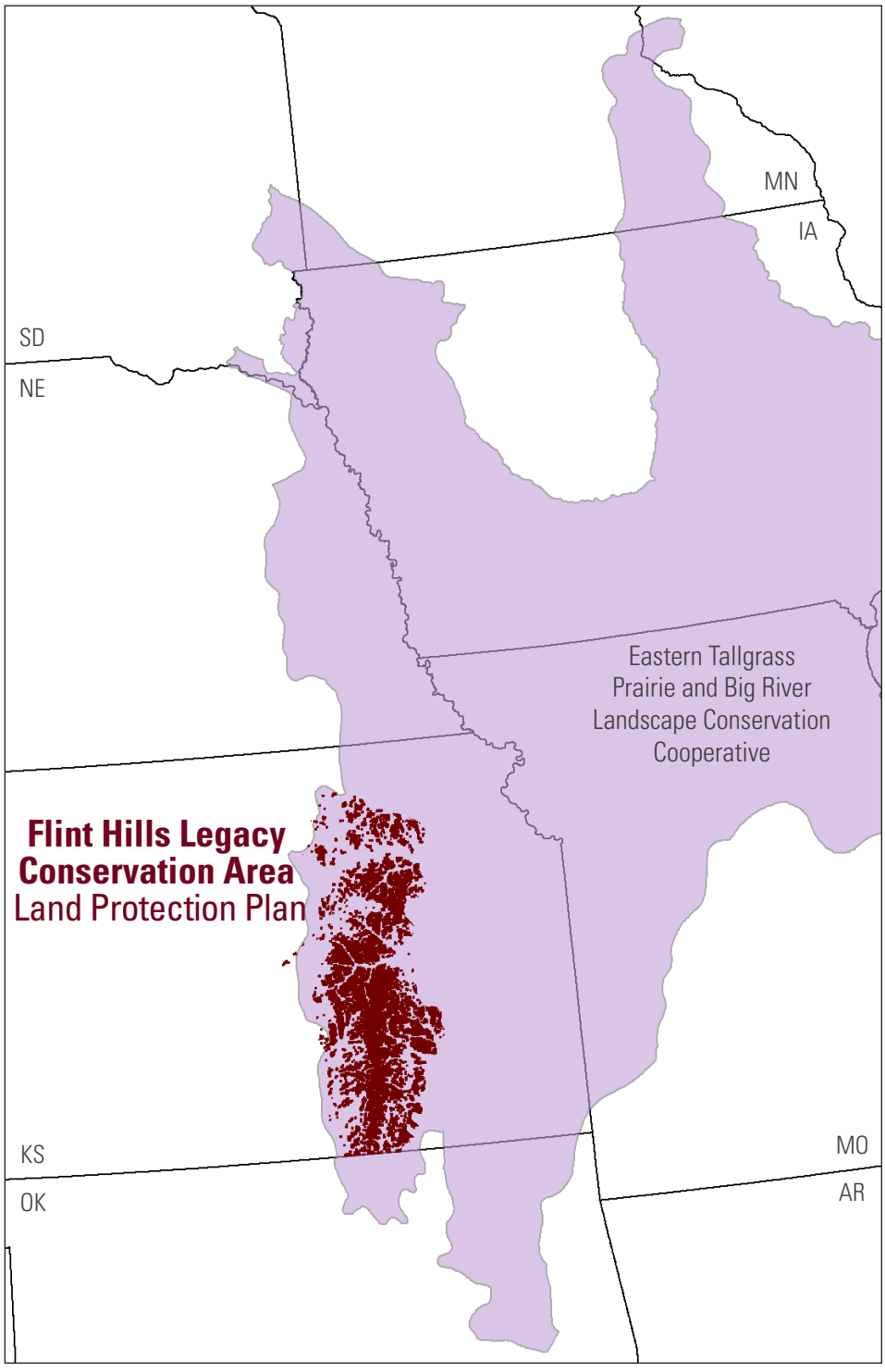
Under the leadership of Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, the Mountain-Prairie Region of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with partners on landscape-level conservation projects.

The Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area project will protect up to 1.1 million acres, conserving important ecosystems for wildlife and for the enjoyment of the American people.

The Service is using a strategic habitat conservation model that integrates scientific information with management concerns to set priorities and achieve the greatest possible conservation and management benefits.

This project will be delivered with our partners via landscape conservation cooperatives, addressing the challenges of climate change and other wildlife habitat concerns. The resulting priorities will guide the Service in sound conservation actions designed to maintain tallgrass prairie and other vital habitats important for trust resources.

Perpetual conservation easements with private landowners will be the primary means of habitat protection. Important habitats under grassland and wetland conservation easements will be protected from development to ensure their restoration or preservation. Additionally, these lands will remain private property with easement provisions that will generally allow for continued agricultural uses such as livestock grazing and haying.



Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area Land Protection Plan

The Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area in eastern Kansas is a landscape-level project designed to preserve the integrity of tallgrass prairie and grassland bird habitat, the water quality of streams, and the rich ranching heritage of the Flint Hills.

Today, less than 4 percent of the once-vast tallgrass prairie remains, most of which lies within this highly diverse area. Tallgrass prairie in eastern Kansas is rapidly being lost to residential and commercial development, fragmenting important habitat.

The Service will strategically establish up to 1.1 million acres of conservation easements in tallgrass prairie. Through this project, we intend to play a constructive role in keeping working ranches on the landscape while continuing to conserve habitat for wildlife and provide unique tallgrass vistas.

© Dave Bryan

More than 500 native prairie plant species are found in the Flint Hills of Kansas, and there are about 90 native grass species.

October 2010