

News Release

Office of Communications
4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS-330
Arlington, VA 22203
Phone: 703-358-2220
Fax: 703-358-1973
<http://www.fws.gov>



April 22, 2014

Contact: Gavin Shire, 703-358-2649, gavin_shire@fws.gov

New Report: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Habitat Restoration Programs Create 3,973 New Jobs, Pump \$327.7 Million into Local Economies



A Nevada landowner visits a sage grouse habitat restoration site with Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program biologists. The Partners program generated jobs and income for local economies in FY 2011, an analysis shows. Photo: Joe Milmoë/USFWS

San Diego, CA — The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced today that a peer-reviewed analysis finds that the agency’s habitat restoration programs are extraordinary engines for the U.S. economy. The report, *Restoration Returns: The Contribution of Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and Coastal Program Projects to Local U.S. Economies*

(www.fws.gov/home/restoration_returns.html), finds that, in working directly with partners to implement vital on-the-ground habitat restoration, Service programs created more than 3,900 jobs in Fiscal Year 2011, generating a total economic stimulus of \$327.6 million.

“The Partners for Fish and Wildlife and Coastal programs are important drivers for creating employment. The benefits reach far beyond the

local communities where these projects take place to provide national economic stimulus,” said Service Director Dan Ashe. “At the same time, this restoration work provides benefits to all Americans by creating healthy natural areas, including shorelines, streams, wetlands and forests on privately owned lands.”

Each year, the Service completes more than 3,500 public-private partnership habitat restoration projects under the two programs, which leverage government dollars to generate private sector investment that is channeled into local communities. This report examined how the Service’s restoration spending cycles through the economy via jobs, contractor income, support services, indirect business taxes and labor force spending. It is the most comprehensive look to date at the economic impact of Service spending on habitat restoration.

The “restoration economy” is a subset of green jobs that includes such industries as heavy equipment providers and operators, plant nurseries, landscape architects, and construction companies, among other firms.

The Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife program works one-on-one with willing landowners to improve wildlife habitat. Landowners agree to maintain the improvement projects for at least 10 years, but otherwise retain full control of their land. In Fiscal Year 2011:

- \$18.6 million was invested nationwide through the program, leveraging more than \$142 million in private sector contributions, totaling \$161 million in restoration spending.
- When cycled through the economy, the projects generated more than \$292 million for local economies, a return of \$15.70 for every federal dollar spent.
- More than 3,500 jobs were created from this program.

Thirty-nine percent of Americans live in coastal shoreline counties. The Service's Coastal Program works with communities and partners to undertake projects that protect and restore vital wildlife habitat. Projects include removing invasive species, replanting salt marsh and sea grasses, and installing living shorelines to prevent erosion. In Fiscal Year 2011:

- \$2.8 million was spent through the program on projects, leveraging that amount with more than \$16 million in spending from project partners, totaling 19.2 million in project funds.
- After cycling through the economy, these project funds provided \$35.6 million in local economic stimulus, a return of \$12.78 for every federal dollar spent.
- More than 470 jobs were created from this program.

The South San Diego Bay Salt Ponds restoration project, where the report was released today, encompasses partnerships with 11 federal, state and local agencies, along with nonprofit organizations. The Coastal Program worked with these partners to restore 300 acres of shorebird habitat. The work, completed by contractors, created 130 jobs for this project alone.

Download the entire report at: www.fws.gov/home/restoration_returns.html.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit www.fws.gov, or connect with us through any of these social media channels:

