

# News Release



Oregon Fish and Wildlife Office  
2600 SE 98<sup>th</sup> Avenue, Suite 100  
Portland, OR 97266  
Phone: 503-231-6179; Fax: 503-231-6195  
<http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo>

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Contact: Janet Lebson (503) 231-6179  
[janet\\_lebson@fws.gov](mailto:janet_lebson@fws.gov)

## Grants Support Habitat Conservation for Endangered Species

The State of Oregon is receiving three grants worth nearly \$1.2 million (out of a nationwide total of \$53 million in grants to 17 states) supporting habitat conservation for fish, wildlife, and plants protected under the Endangered Species Act. The grants, awarded annually through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, will benefit numerous imperiled species throughout the United States, ranging from the Peninsular bighorn sheep to the Karner blue butterfly.

“Our solid partnerships with states are key to Interior’s continued success in preventing the extinction of hundreds of threatened and endangered species, and recovering species, such as the bald eagle, brown pelican, and American alligator,” said Interior Department Secretary Ken Salazar. “These grant awards will support important state efforts to build and strengthen conservation partnerships, and to conserve and protect vital habitat for threatened and endangered animals and plants.”

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

The Oregon grants include:

### **Upper Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (Jefferson, Crook, and Deschutes Counties) \$410,000**

This funding will continue work for the seven primary irrigation districts in the Deschutes Basin that comprise the Deschutes Basin Board of Control and the City of Prineville. Development of this HCP will benefit aquatic and riparian-dependant species in the upper Deschutes Basin, including bull trout and steelhead, while meeting current and future irrigation and municipal water needs in a balanced, economically viable, and sustainable manner. When completed, the HCP will provide ecosystem benefits to large areas of the upper Deschutes River Basin, which includes the Metolius, Crooked, and Deschutes River Basins.

### **Willamette Valley Species Conservation Easement (Yamhill County) \$500,000**

This grant funds the acquisition of a permanent conservation easement on 284.6 acres of upland and riparian habitat in the Mount Richmond Conservation Opportunity Area of Yamhill County. The easement will benefit critically important populations of Fender’s blue butterfly, Kincaid’s lupine, and Nelson’s checkermallow.

### **Yamhill Oaks – Pugh Acquisition (Yamhill County) \$267,000**

The Nature Conservancy, as a sub-grantee to the Oregon Department of State Lands, will secure the permanent protection of the 48-acre Pugh property and manage the tract as an addition to the 272-acre Yamhill Oaks Preserve. The property supports habitat for six federally listed species, including Fender’s blue butterfly, Kincaid’s lupine, golden paintbrush, Willamette daisy, Bradshaw’s lomatium, Nelson’s checkermallow, and an additional 19 at-risk or species of concern.

“Ensuring the survival of imperiled species depends on long-term partnerships and voluntary landowner participation,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe. “The vital funding provided by these grants empowers landowners and communities to safeguard habitat for threatened and endangered species and foster conservation stewardship efforts for future generations.”

This year, the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund will provide approximately \$28.6 million through the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants Program, \$10.7 million through the Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants Program, and \$14 million through the Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program. The three programs were established to help advance creative partnerships for imperiled species conservation and recovery.

A complete list of the 2011 grant awards under these programs (Catalog of Federal Domestic Assistance Number 15.615) is available online at <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/grants/index.html>.

Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs) are agreements between a landowner and the Service. These agreements allow a landowner to undertake otherwise lawful activities on their property, even if they may impact listed species, when that landowner agrees to conservation measures designed to minimize and mitigate the impact of those actions. HCPs may also be developed by a county or state to cover certain activities of all landowners within their jurisdiction and may address multiple species.

Under the HCP Land Acquisition Grants Program, the Fish and Wildlife Service provides grants to states or territories for land acquisition that complements the conservation objectives of approved HCPs.

The HCP Planning Assistance Grants Program provides grants to states and territories to support the development of HCPs through the funding of baseline surveys and inventories, document preparation, outreach, and similar planning activities.

The Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program provides funds to states and territories to acquire habitat for endangered and threatened species with approved recovery plans. Habitat acquisition to secure long-term protection is often an essential element of a comprehensive recovery effort for a listed species.

The Endangered Species Act provides a critical safety net for America’s native fish, wildlife, and plants. The Fish and Wildlife Service is working to actively engage conservation partners and the public in the search for improved and innovative ways to conserve and recover imperiled species. To learn more about the Endangered Species Program, visit <http://www.fws.gov/endangered/>.

For more information on the Fish and Wildlife Service’s endangered species conservation and recovery efforts in Oregon, visit [www.fws.gov/oregonfwo](http://www.fws.gov/oregonfwo).

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*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 [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov). Connect with our Facebook page at [www.facebook.com/usfws](http://www.facebook.com/usfws), follow our tweets at [www.twitter.com/usfwshq](http://www.twitter.com/usfwshq), watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.*