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# News Release



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## **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Awards Grants for Species Conservation And Wildlife Habitat**

States, tribes and private landowners in the Pacific Region will receive more than \$3.4 million in grants this year to protect and conserve fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats in Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Hawaii.

The grants, announced today in Washington, D.C., are among \$32 million awarded nationally through four U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service programs: the Private Stewardship Grant Program, the Landowner Incentive Program, the Tribal Landowner Incentive Program and the Tribal Wildlife Grant Program.

“Conservation, especially conservation of imperiled species, must be a partnership between the American people and their government,” said Interior Secretary Gale Norton. “By providing these grants, we empower citizens to restore habitat on their land and take other steps to protect and recover endangered, threatened and at-risk species.”

Among the projects funded in the Pacific Region, the grants will benefit dozens of native species and habitat in Hawaii; bull trout, salmon and steelhead in Idaho; threatened and endangered plants and the endangered Fender’s blue butterfly in Oregon; and the highly endangered Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit in Washington.

“Throughout the Pacific Region and the nation, Indian tribes, states and private landowners are helping us achieve our mission,” said Dave Allen, director of the Service’s Pacific Region. “Thanks to these grant programs we are strengthening our partnerships to promote species conservation and to protect healthy ecosystems for future generations.”

The **Private Stewardship Grants Program** provides federal grants on a competitive basis to individuals and groups engaged in voluntary conservation efforts on private lands that benefit federally listed endangered or threatened species, candidate species or other at-risk species. Under this program, private landowners and groups working with private landowners submit proposals directly to the Service for funding to support these efforts. The grants require at least a 10 percent match in non-federal dollars or in-kind contributions.

Nationally, the Service awarded \$5.7 million in Private Stewardship grants to individuals and groups in 38 states and one territory. The full list can be seen at [http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/private\\_stewardship/index.html](http://endangered.fws.gov/grants/private_stewardship/index.html)

In the Pacific Region, Private Stewardship Grants awarded total \$979,157. They are:

#### **Hawaii:**

- **Habitat Restoration on Kona Hema Preserve – (application by The Nature Conservancy of Hawaii and Zoological Society of San Diego) – Hawaii, \$100,000**  
The objectives of this project are to fund the first year of restoration of The Nature Conservancy's Kona Hema Preserve totaling 6,291 acres of montane 'ohi'a and koa/'ohi'a forest habitat. Restoration includes alien animal removal and outplanting of native plant species. The restoration will benefit the 'alala or Hawaiian crow, 'io or Hawaiian hawk, 'akiapola'au, 'ope'ape'a or Hawaiian hoary bat, Hawaii 'akepa, Hawaii creeper and many native Hawaiian plants. Captive propagation of 'alala by the Zoological Society of San Diego for potential release in the Kona Hema Preserve is a part of the project that will be funded through other sources.
- **North Kona Fencing and Habitat Restoration – (application by Hawaiian Silversword Foundation) – Hawaii, \$300,000**  
Working with federal, state and local partners, the Hawaiian Silversword Foundation will protect and restore 11,000 acres of native mamane forest habitat in the District of North Kona. These lands are of high conservation value and have the potential to support palila and three other endangered bird species as well as ten endangered plant species. Protection of this forest through fence construction and feral ungulate control are the critical first steps in the restoration of this property.
- **Stewardship of the West Maui Mountains Watershed – (application by Malama Kahalawai Inc.) – Maui, \$118,192**  
The project includes building phase one of a two-phase pig fence on Maui Land & Pineapple Company, Inc. (ML&P) land that will integrate into the existing Kahakuloa Natural Area Reserve and ML&P protective fences. The 5,200-foot fence will help protect native Hawaiian plant species such as nanu, koki'o, nuku 'i'iwi, ha'iwale, pauoa, 'oha 'oha wai and haha.
- **Waihe'e Coastal Wetlands and Dune Restoration Project – (application by Maui Coastal Land Trust) – Maui, \$62,006**  
The Maui Coastal Land Trust, working with Maui Nui Botanical Garden, the Hawaii Department of Land and Natural Resources, Ducks Unlimited, Native Hawaiian Plant Society, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Maui Heros Project, Pacific Whale Foundation, Maui Community College and Maui Public Schools, will conduct a portion of a long-term (10-year plus) ecological restoration project for the 213-acre Waihe'e Preserve. As part of a comprehensive strategy designed to enhance the quality of the native coastal ecosystem on the preserve, this grant will restore habitat essential for

endangered bird species including the ae‘o or Hawaiian stilt, ‘alae ke‘oke‘o or Hawaiian coot, ‘alae ‘ula or Hawaiian gallinule and koloa or Hawaiian duck and improve habitat for endangered plants.

#### **Idaho:**

- **Badger Creek Channel Restoration – (application by Trout Unlimited) – Butte County, Idaho – (\$97,400)** – Trout Unlimited, in partnership with the Pancheri family, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Bureau of Land Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Idaho Department of Fish and Game, will design and construct 1/2 mile of naturally functioning stream channel through lower Badger Creek to provide a bull trout migration corridor between the Little Lost River and more than 7 miles of pristine spawning and rearing habitat in Badger Creek. Native vegetation will be planted and a fence constructed along the newly constructed stream channel to stabilize the channel, create a functioning riparian area and protect the habitat from cattle grazing.
- **Iron Creek Reconnection and Habitat Restoration Project – (application by a private landowner) – Lemhi County, Idaho – (\$23,400)** – This project will eliminate four irrigation diversions in the lower 2.5 miles of Iron Creek, resulting in greater in-stream flows that are expected to reconnect flows in Iron Creek with the Salmon River. This reconnection will restore passage for the bull trout, summer steelhead and spring/summer Chinook salmon, all threatened species and will provide thermal refuge during summer months. Project partners include the Lemhi Soil & Water Conservation District in addition to State and Federal agencies.

#### **Oregon:**

- **Miller Creek Fish Passage Barrier Removal – (application by Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District) – Columbia County, Oregon – (\$50,000)** – Replacement of this culvert will eliminate the first significant fish passage barrier in the Clatskanie River and will provide access to 6.4 miles of high quality spawning and rearing habitat for coho, steelhead and cutthroat trout. Project partners include the Columbia Soil and Water Conservation District, Evenson Timberland Agency, Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board, Natural Resources Conservation Service and the Lower Columbia River Watershed Council.
- **Restoration of Prairies, Oak Woodlands and Riparian Habitat in the Willamette Valley – (application by The Nature Conservancy) – Benton, Lane, Linn and Marion Counties, Oregon – (\$108,392)** – Working with four private landowners, The Nature Conservancy will advance conservation on 270 acres to directly benefit Fender's blue butterfly, Kincaid's lupine, Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, Bradshaw's lomatium, Willamette Valley daisy and other native plants. All five projects seek to reduce or control invasive non-native or undesirable vegetation and replace it with native species associated with prairie, riparian forest and creek habitats. A portion of this proposal is a native seed enhancement program, which will extend long-term benefits to many additional plant and animal populations, acres and sites.

#### **Washington:**

- **Beezley Hills Restoration Project – (application by The Nature Conservancy) – Grant and Douglas Counties, Washington – (\$57,815)** – The goal of this project is to restore 200 acres of Conservation Reserve Program land dominated by non-native grasses to a native shrub-step habitat

and prepare the area for the eventual reintroduction of the highly endangered Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit. Habitat restoration will also benefit other species, including sage grouse and the Washington ground squirrel. This project is a collaborative effort between the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington Department of Natural Resources, U.S. Bureau of Land Management and The Nature Conservancy.

- **Morgan Weir Prairie Restoration Project – (application by The Nature Conservancy) – Thurston County, Washington – (\$61,952)** – The Nature Conservancy will restore 130 acres of prairie habitat suitable for the colonization or introduction of seven at-risk animal species and establish new populations of two at-risk plant species and three species recently petitioned for emergency listing. The restoration effort will be guided by the South Puget Sound Prairie Landscape Site Conservation Plan, a regional plan that was produced through a cooperative effort of federal, state and local agencies, conservation organizations, universities and landowners. The land is adjacent to and will compliment the conservation area of the Fort Lewis Weir Prairie through the enhancement of a contiguous private property.

The **Landowner Incentive Grants Program** establishes or supplements existing landowner incentive programs that provide technical or financial assistance to private landowners. All grants need to be matched by at least 25 percent from a non-federal source. The program supports collaborative efforts with private landowners interested in conserving natural habitat for imperiled species on private land while continuing to engage in traditional land-use practices. It is implemented by state fish and wildlife agencies.

Nationally, the Service awarded \$19 million in grants under this program. The full list can be seen at <http://www.fws.gov>

In the Pacific Region, states received a total of \$1,379,446 in grants. They are:

- **Hawaii (\$314,446):** The award provides for technical and financial assistance for projects involving as many as 14 private landowners and nearly 100,000 acres of land. Habitat protection will benefit as many as 129 federally protected threatened or endangered species and 136 state species of concern.
- **Idaho (\$180,000):** The award provides for coordination of the LIP program, outreach to private landowners to enhance their understanding of the importance of conservation on private lands and biological technical assistance to private landowners.
- **Oregon (\$705,000):** The award provides for technical and financial assistance to private landowners to implement as many as six high-priority habitat protection, restoration and enhancement projects to benefit as many as 60 at risk species and to develop additional projects in the state's Landowner Incentive Program.
- **Washington (\$180,000):** The award provides for LIP program administration and integration with other statewide private land conservation programs.

The **Tribal Landowner Incentive Program** helps federally recognized Indian tribes protect, restore and manage habitat for at-risk species, including federally listed endangered and threatened species and proposed or

candidate species on tribal lands. The Tribal Wildlife Grant Program provides grants to federally recognized Indian tribes to benefit fish and wildlife and their habitats, including species that are not hunted or fished. Nationally, \$8.1 million was awarded to 45 federally recognized tribes. The full list can be seen at <http://www/fws/gov>

In the Pacific Region, Tribal Landowner Incentive grants total \$402,981. They are:

**Washington:**

- **Lummi Indian Nation (\$150,000)** for Upper South Fork in-stream project design.
- **Nooksack Tribe (\$103,000)** for replacement of multiple fish passage barriers.
- **Yakama Indian Nation (\$149,981)** for shrub-steppe rehabilitation and management project.

**Tribal Wildlife** grants awarded in Idaho and Washington total \$398,815. They are:

- **Coeur d'Alene Tribe (\$182,399)** for a study to detect the presence of fisher and lynx on the ceded territory of the Coeur d'Alene Indian Tribe.
- **Nooksack Tribe (\$216,416)** for the South Fork Nooksack floodplain restoration/Lower Acme Reach Project.
- **Puyallup Tribe (\$244,343)** for the South Rainier elk herd management and habitat protection project.

Summaries of the tribal grant projects in the Pacific Region can be found at <http://pacific.fws.gov/ea/tribal>.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 545 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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