

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service – Pacific Region Projects  
FY 2016 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund  
Project Descriptions**

**Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Land Acquisition Grants:**

**Hawai‘i - Helemano Wilderness Area (Honolulu County) \$2 million**

The Helemano Wilderness Area (HWA) project on Oahu will permanently protect over 3,000 acres of habitat for the federally listed endangered Hawaiian hoary bat. The proposed acquisition will complement mitigation efforts outlined in HCPs for three Oahu wind energy complexes. Half of the acquisition area contains bat habitat with no need for management or restoration and a substantial portion of the remainder will be reforested and incorporated into ongoing research studies on optimal bat habitat and forest design. The HWA project also includes upland portions of the Paukauila and Kiikii Watersheds. The Paukauila-Kiikii stream drainage basin is the largest on Oahu, supplying drinking water to communities from Pearl Harbor to the North Shore – a third of Oahu’s residents. Thus, in addition to aiding the recovery of the Hawaiian hoary bat, acquiring the HWA will protect and secure clean drinking water for Oahu’s residents.

**Washington - Mt. Si Area Old Growth Phase II (King County) \$2 million**

The objective of the second phase of this ongoing conservation effort is to acquire and permanently protect 1,415 acres of habitat for the marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, gray wolf, and 11 unlisted species including the Pacific fisher and wolverine. The acquisition will prevent habitat loss due to development and will complement the resource goals of the Washington Department of Natural Resource’s Forest Lands HCP. The acquisition will fill significant voids in the matrix of protected state and federal lands and prevent further fragmentation of high-quality habitat.

**Washington - Grand Coulee Ranch (Douglas County) \$2 million**

The Grand Coulee Ranch (GCR) project is part of an ongoing Washington Department of Fish Wildlife (WDFW) effort to conserve over 20,571 acres of shrub-steppe habitat in Douglas County to protect and conserve shrub-steppe obligate species. The GCR project has completed two of three acquisitions, securing 13,321 acres for conservation, and establishing WDFW’s Big Bend Wildlife Area Unit. This grant will aid in the acquisition of 4,255 acres of the remaining 7,250 acres currently under purchase agreement. The Grand Coulee Ranch is one of the few large tracts of shrub-steppe suitable for conservation of the Columbia Basin pygmy rabbit, greater sage-grouse, Washington ground squirrel, and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. The area also provides important habitat for 24 state-listed wildlife and plant species. Acquisition will provide public access to a significant new natural area with roughly 13 miles of shoreline along the Columbia River’s Rufus Woods Reservoir.

**HCP Planning Assistance Grants:**

**Hawai‘i - Kaua‘i Seabird Habitat Conservation Program: Kaua‘i Island Utility Cooperative Habitat Conservation Plan (Kaua‘i County) \$906,105**

The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, is developing the Kaua'i Seabird Habitat Conservation Program – Kaua'i Island Utility Cooperative HCP (KIUC HCP) to address incidental take of the endangered Hawaiian petrel, the threatened Newell's shearwater, and the band-rumped storm petrel, a candidate for listing, due to light attraction and utility line collisions on the island of Kaua'i. Completion of the KIUC HCP will result in the implementation of landscape-scale conservation to mitigate for island-wide take and a thorough minimization plan for listed seabirds on Kaua'i. It is critical to the listed seabirds' survival that landscape-scale breeding colony management takes place to abate the current population declines.

**Hawai'i - Hawaiian Hoary Bat Habitat Conservation Plan for Biomass and Timber Harvest in the Hawaiian Islands (Hawai'i, Honolulu, Kalawao, Kaua'i, and Maui Counties) \$395,000**

The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, in cooperation with members of the Hawai'i Forest Industry Association and biomass industry, will develop an HCP to conserve the Hawaiian hoary bat (HHB) during biomass and timber harvest activities in the Hawaiian Islands. The HCP will result in a better understanding of the HHB's status and distribution in commercial forest stands, reduce and mitigate impacts from biomass and timber harvest operations, and conserve the HHB while allowing sustainable forest management practices, which will allow public and private landowners to meet economic, ecological, and social goals.

**Oregon - Deschutes Basin Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (Deschutes, Crook, Jefferson, Klamath, Wasco and Sherman Counties) \$700,000**

The Deschutes Basin Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan (DBHCP) is being prepared by eight Irrigation Districts and the City of Prineville to maintain and improve habitat for the federally-listed Oregon spotted frog, bull trout, Middle Columbia River steelhead, sockeye salmon, and Chinook salmon in the Upper Deschutes Basin, while meeting current and future irrigation and municipal water needs in a balanced, economically viable, and sustainable manner. The DBHCP will bring certainty to endangered species management and irrigated agriculture in the Upper Deschutes Basin, and will serve as a model for coordinated and cooperative use of water resources throughout the irrigated western United States. This year's funding will support the final phase of a multi-year collaboration between the eight Irrigation Districts, Prineville, State and Federal resource agencies, and non-governmental stakeholders in the Deschutes Basin.

**Recovery Land Acquisition Grants:**

**Hawai'i - Kalua'aha Ranch Conservation Easement (Maui County) \$500,000**

The Kalua'aha Ranch Conservation Easement on Moloka'i Island will permanently protect 969 acres to support the recovery of numerous endangered species, as well as minimize sedimentation of the near shore ecosystem and the Nation's largest fringing coral reef. Extending from near sea level to over 4,000 feet at the summit of the East

Moloka‘i Range, upper Kalua‘aha Valley has high-quality native forest currently being degraded by feral ungulates resulting in increased sediments flowing downstream, which smothers the reefs below. The Moloka‘i Land Trust, The Trust for Public Land, and the Hawai‘i Division of Forestry and Wildlife will permanently protect the upper Kalua‘aha Valley via a conservation easement. Surveys of the property have documented three highly endangered native plant species -- one of them having fewer than 50 extant individuals. Kalua‘aha Valley also provides habitat for endangered seabirds such as the Newell’s shearwater that nests in extremely steep valley walls as well as the Hawaiian goose (Nēnē). The Kalua‘aha Stream flows year round and ensures the vitality of the forest and its ability to absorb water will sustain the water supply and clean drinking water for East Moloka‘i.

**Oregon - Rogue River Recovery Land Acquisition (Jackson County) \$500,000**

This project will help acquire a 352-acre property, including two miles of Rogue River frontage in Jackson County. Few large parcels of land in such a relatively natural state remain on this stretch of the river. Acquisition by the Southern Oregon Land Conservancy will ensure the site’s exceptional natural characteristics will be protected and enhanced in perpetuity. The property provides connectivity between other protected areas and contains multiple threatened landscapes such as a gallery forest, an active, hydrologically-connected floodplain, vernal pools, oak woodland, and chaparral – all threatened landscapes. Over 100 species of birds and 300 vascular plant species are found on the property. Acquisition will permanently protect habitat for the federally-listed endangered large-flowered woolly meadowfoam and Gentner’s fritillary as well as the federally-listed threatened vernal pool fairy shrimp. Conservation of the property will ensure that it is not converted to large-lot home sites, as is currently occurring in other areas along the Rogue River.

**Oregon - Mountcrest Working Forest Conservation Easement (Jackson County) \$1 million**

The Mountcrest Working Forest Conservation Easement will allow permanent conservation on over 2000 acres of privately owned mature forestland straddling the Siskiyou Crest that divides the Rogue River and Klamath River watersheds, strategically linking habitats for the northern spotted owl. The property is also used by Pacific fisher and other species of the Pacific Northwest forests. Without this project, the property would likely have been developed in time. Acquisition of the easement by the Pacific Forest Trust not only ensures the forest remains intact and undeveloped but it also guides forest management to maintain and enhance ecological and hydrologic function while also retaining a continued contribution to the economic health of the region.

**Washington - West Rocky Prairie (Thurston County) \$2 million**

The West Rocky Prairie acquisition will protect one of the largest available tracts of mima mounded prairie-oak wetland habitat in western Washington. Habitat will be made available to enhance or reintroduce listed Taylor’s checkerspot butterfly, Mazama pocket gopher, Oregon spotted frog, golden paintbrush, and water howellia as recommended in the species’ recovery plans. The acquisition of this site protects the headwaters of salmon-bearing Allen and Beaver Creeks. This phase of this ongoing project will add a vital parcel to the 3,615-acre conservation network between Millersylvania State Park,

McIntosh Tree Farm, Rocky Prairie Natural Area Preserve, and West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area. Regionally, this property would be one of ten prairies conserved by the South Puget Sound Prairie Landscape Working Group across 105 square miles.

**Washington - South Puget Sound Prairie Species Conservation (Thurston County)**  
**\$600,000**

The South Puget Sound Prairie project will acquire a conservation easement on a 90-acre working farm inhabited by the listed Mazama pocket gopher. Pocket gophers in South Puget Sound inhabit some of the most productive agricultural soils and prime development land. This project will demonstrate that pocket gophers and agriculture can coexist, which would reduce disruption of the local economy. The ability to retain farming and pocket gophers on the same site is an important tool in the recovery toolbox. The target of this conservation easement is habitats with prairie soils. The remainder of the site is either in timber under county tax relief or in wetlands, for which the owner is seeking a NRCS wetland conservation easement. Acquiring a conservation easement on this property will protect the existing population of Mazama pocket gophers and be the first Reserve Priority Area conserved under the multi-agency Mazama Pocket Gopher Reserve System.