

News Release



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Secretary Salazar Announces More Than \$53 Million in Grants to Support Land Acquisition and Conservation Planning for Endangered Species

Hawai'i Receives \$1.5 Million in Funding

Interior Secretary Ken Salazar today announced more than \$53 million in grants is going to 17 states to support conservation planning and acquisition of vital habitat for threatened and endangered fish, wildlife and plants. The grants, awarded through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund (CESCF), will benefit numerous imperiled species ranging from the Peninsular bighorn sheep to the Hawaiian hoary bat.

Hawai'i was awarded \$1,159,881 through the HCP Planning Assistance Grants Program and \$391,000 through the Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program for a total amount of \$1,550,881.

"Our solid partnership with states is clearly a major key to the Interior Department's success in conserving and recovering threatened and endangered species throughout this country," Salazar said. "These grant awards will support numerous state efforts aimed at building and strengthening vital conservation partnerships with local groups and private landowners to benefit threatened and endangered wildlife and plants."

Authorized by Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act (ESA), 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.

This year, the CESCF will provide approximately \$10.7 million through the Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants Program, \$28.6 million through the Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition 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 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.

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 State of Hawai‘i was awarded \$259, 281 for the Coordination and Planning of the Kaua‘i Seabird HCP. This funding will be used to expand the scope of the Kaua‘i Seabird HCP to include incidental take of Hawaiian hoary bat and complete an Environmental Impact Statement instead of an Environmental Assessment, as originally planned. The HCP will benefit the federally listed Hawaiian hoary bat, Hawaiian petrel, and Newell’s shearwater, as well as the band-rumped storm petrel, a candidate for listing. In addition, approximately 18 listed plants will benefit.

The State of Hawai‘i will receive \$900,000. This grant will fund baseline surveys to evaluate abundance and distribution of Hawaiian hoary bat and abundance and distribution of active burrows of Hawaiian petrel in Kahikinui, the proposed off-site mitigation area for two Wind Power HCPs. In addition, an assessment will be made of habitat conditions for both Hawaiian hoary bat and Hawaiian petrel at Kahikinui. This information will assist with the development of appropriate mitigation and minimization measures of the Kawailoa Wind Power HCP and the Auwahi Wind Energy LLC HCP.

The Recovery Land Acquisition Grants Program provides funds to states and territories to acquire habitat for endangered and threatened species having 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 State of Hawai‘i was awarded \$391,000 for the acquisition of a permanent conservation easement on over 3,550 acres located upslope of the towns of Makawao and Ha‘ikū on the Island of Maui. The property is at the center of the 100,000-acre East Maui Watershed Partnership managed by six major landowners. The property provides habitat for 13 rare or endangered birds, including the ‘ākohekohe and Maui parrotbill, which are among the rarest birds in the U.S. It is also critical habitat for *Geranium multiflorum* and eight other federally listed plants as well as a number of other rare plants and animals.

The ESA provides a critical safety net for America’s native fish, wildlife, and plants. The 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/>.

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. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at 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>.

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