

Land Acquisition

Appropriations Language

For expenses necessary to carry out the Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460l-4 through 11), including administrative expenses, and for acquisition of land or waters, or interest therein, in accordance with statutory authority applicable to the United States Fish and Wildlife Service, [\$106,892,000]\$70,833,000, to be derived from the Land and Water Conservation Fund and to remain available until expended: Provided, That none of the funds appropriated for specific land acquisition projects may be used to pay for any administrative overhead, planning or other management costs. Note.--A full-year 2013 appropriation for this account was not enacted at the time the budget was prepared; therefore, this account is operating under a continuing resolution (P.L. 112-175). The amounts included for 2013 reflect the annualized level provided by the continuing resolution.

Authorizing Statutes

***The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956**, as amended (16 U.S.C. 742a). Authorizes acquisition of additions to the National Wildlife Refuge System for the development, management, advancement, conservation, and protection of fish and wildlife resources by purchase or exchange of land and water or interests therein.*

***Refuge Recreation Act of 1962**, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460). Authorizes acquisition of areas that are adjacent to or within, existing fish and wildlife Conservation Areas administered by the Department of the Interior, and suitable for (1) incidental fish and wildlife-oriented recreation development, (2) the protection of natural resources, (3) the conservation of listed, threatened or endangered species, or (4) carrying out two or more of the above.*

***Land and Water Conservation Fund Act of 1965**, as amended (16 U.S.C. 460l). Authorizes appropriations to the Fish and Wildlife Service to acquire land for National Wildlife Refuges as otherwise authorized by law. Authorization of Appropriations: Expires September 30, 2015.*

***National Wildlife Refuge Administration Act of 1966** (16 U.S.C. 668dd). Established overall policy guidance, placed restrictions on the transfer, exchange, or other disposal of refuge lands, and authorized the Secretary to accept donations for land acquisition.*

***Endangered Species Act of 1973**, as amended (16 U.S.C. 1534). Authorizes the acquisition of land, waters, or interests therein for the conservation of fish, wildlife, and plants, including those that are listed as endangered or threatened species, with Land and Water Conservation Fund Act appropriations.*

***Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986** (16 U.S.C. 3901). Authorizes the purchase of wetlands, or interests in wetlands, consistent with the wetlands priority conservation plan established under the Act.*

Land Acquisition
Justification of Fixed Costs and Internal Realignments
(Dollars In Thousands)

Other Fixed Cost Changes and Projections	PY (2012) Total or Change	PY (2012) to BY (2014) Change
Change in Number of Paid Days	+0	+44
<p>The combined fixed cost estimate includes an adjustment for one additional paid day between FY2012 and FY2013. The number of paid days do not change between FY2013 and FY2014.</p>		
Pay Raise	+0	+26
<p>The PY column reflects the total pay raise changes as reflected in the PY President's Budget. The BY Change column reflects the total pay raise changes between FY2012-FY2014.</p>		
Employer Share of Federal Health Benefit Plans	+35	+53
<p>The change reflects expected increases in employer's share of Federal Health Benefit Plans.</p>		
Rental Payments	+9	+0
<p>The adjustment is for changes in the costs payable to General Services Administration (GSA) and others resulting from changes in rates for office and non-office space as estimated by GSA, as well as the rental costs of other currently occupied space. These costs include building security; in the case of GSA space, these are paid to Department of Homeland Security (DHS). Costs of mandatory office relocations, i.e. relocations in cases where due to external events there is no alternative but to vacate the currently occupied space, are also included.</p>		

Internal Realignments and Non-Policy/Program Changes (Net-Zero)	2014 (+/-)
Land Protection Planning	+3,434
<p>The National Wildlife Refuge System's Land Protection Planning Program directly supports the Land Acquisition program. The Service proposes to transfer funding from the Resource Management appropriation (National Wildlife Refuge System activity \ subactivity) to the Land Acquisition Appropriation to better align the purpose of this program</p>	

Appropriation: Land Acquisition

		2013 Full Yr. CR (P.L. 112- 75)	2012 Enacted	Fixed Costs (+/-)	Internal Transfers (+/-)	Program Changes (+/-)	2014 President's Budget
Land Acquisition Management (\$000)		12,658	12,535	+123	0	+123	12,781
Land Protection Planning ¹ (\$000)		0	0	0	+3,434	0	3,434
Exchanges (\$000)		2,496	2,496	0	0	-996	1,500
Inholdings / Emergencies and Hardships (\$000)		4,492	4,492	0	0	+555	5,047
Highlands Conservation Act (\$000)		130	4,992	0	0	-4,992	0
Federal Refuges/Projects (\$000)		35,190	30,117	0	0	+17,954	48,071
Subtotal, Land Acquisition-Discretionary (\$000)		54,966	54,632	+123	+3,434	+12,644	70,833
FTE		86	89	0	+20	-3	106
Land Acquisition – Mandatory² (\$000)		0	0	0	0	+35,497	35,497
Total, Land Acquisition (\$000)		54,966	54,632	+123	+3,434	+48,141	106,330
FTE		86	89	0	+20	0	106

¹Land Protection Planning directly supports the Land Acquisition program. In the FY 2014 budget request, \$3,434,000 and 20 FTE will be funded under the Land Acquisition Appropriation instead of the Resource Management Appropriation. The FTE amounts reflect actual usage, not 2012 enacted formulation estimates.

²In addition to this discretionary request, the Administration will submit a legislative proposal to permanently authorize annual funding, without further appropriation, from the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

Summary of 2014 Program Changes for Land Acquisition

Request Component	(\$000)	FTE
• Federal Refuges/Projects	+17,954	0
• Inholdings / Emergencies and Hardships	+555	0
• Land Acquisition Management	+123	0
• Exchanges	-996	0
• Highlands Conservation Act	-4,992	0
Program Changes	+12,644	0

Justification of 2014 Program Changes

The 2014 budget request for Land Acquisition is \$70,833,000 and 106 FTE, a net program change of +\$12,644,000 and +0 FTE from the 2012 Enacted.

Federal Refuges/Projects

The Service makes acquisition decisions based on the resource values of lands and waters proposed for acquisition, ecosystem considerations, the potential for landscape-level conservation, and opportunities to advance and support projects involving partnerships with both public and private conservation partners.

Acquisition of land for conservation provides public health benefits and supports the America's Great Outdoors and the Rivers and Trails initiatives. National wildlife refuge lands provide affordable public outdoor recreational activities such as bird watching, wildlife observation, photography, environmental education, interpretation, fishing, and hunting.

More than 47 million people visited national wildlife refuges in 2012. Recreation opportunities provided by national wildlife refuges support local tourism, which supports local economies. Visitors stay in local lodges, eat at local restaurants, and shop in local stores. Local employment increases, and additional funding goes to local, county, and state governments from the increase in tax revenues.

Land acquired through conservation easements supports the America's Great Outdoors initiative by keeping land owners on their land to continue compatible activities to protect habitat and maintain ecosystems. Local communities benefit from the ecological aspect of enhanced wildlife corridors, providing habitat for wildlife and maintaining grasslands, wetlands, and forests.

Land Acquisition Mandatory Funds

The Department of the Interior's 2014 budget request proposes a multi-year strategy leading to full and mandatory funding for the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Mandatory funding would help to fulfill the commitment of LWCF: a fair return of the profits from oil and gas development to improve and increase the availability of outdoor opportunities for all Americans. Starting in 2015, \$900 million annually in mandatory funds will be requested. During the transition to mandatory funding in 2014, the budget proposes \$600 million in total LWCF funding, comprised of \$200 million mandatory and \$400 million discretionary funds. The amounts requested include the authorized levels for the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture. In 2014, the mandatory proposal includes \$35.497 million for the Fish and Wildlife Service Land Acquisition program. Together with this discretionary request, the complete listing would cover the top 18 FWS priorities. For project specific information, see the project data sheets that follow at the end of this section.

Federal Refuges/Projects – Discretionary (+\$17,954,000/+0 FTE)

The Service requests a total of \$48,071,000 for land acquisition projects, representing a \$17,954,000 increase over the 2012 Enacted. This funding will allow the Service to acquire and conserve important wildlife habitat for eight projects and 65,032 acres. The project descriptions later in this section provide details about the resource values of the lands and waters proposed for addition to the Department's network of conservation lands. The following list is the discretionary portion of the Service's request in priority order.

Inholdings / Emergencies and Hardships (+\$555,000/+0 FTE)

Increased funding will enable the Service to acquire additional lands that become available sporadically. With the economic downturn of the past few years, the Service has received a higher number of contacts from landowners offering to sell biologically diverse properties within approved acquisition boundaries. The Service has a waiting list of these landowners offering choice parcels for addition to the National Wildlife Refuge System. Emergencies and Hardships funding enables the Service to acquire land quickly from willing sellers who may have urgent medical or financial challenges.

Land Acquisition Management (+\$123,000/+0 FTE)

This increase will directly support the administration and execution of the Service's efforts to both acquire important fish, wildlife, and plant habitat for the conservation of listed endangered and threatened species, as well as managing the lands it already owns. Staff will work cooperatively with sister bureaus in the Department of the Interior (BLM and NPS) and the Department of Agriculture (FS) to acquire land for landscape-scale Collaborative Conservation projects.

Exchanges (-\$996,000/-3 FTE)

Decreased funding for Exchanges will allow the Service to concentrate efforts on changing priorities. The FTE change reflects multi-year adjustments from 2012 actual usage to the 2014 level.

Highlands Conservation Act (-\$4,992,000/+0 FTE)

Funding for the Highlands Conservation Act agreement is not needed beyond 2013 because no additional activity on this project is anticipated

FY 2014 Land Acquisition
Core and Collaborative Landscape Planning Acquisitions
(dollars in thousands)

Project (In Priority Order)	<u>Acres</u>	<u>2014</u>
1 MT Crown of the Continent ¹	21,874	11,940
2 ND/SD Dakota Grassland CA	23,053	8,650
3 FL Everglades Headwaters	1,250	5,000
4 GA/FL/SC Longleaf Pine: Okeefenokee NWR/St. Mark's NWR/Cape Romain NWR/Waccamaw NWR ²	3,900	9,481
5 KS Flint Hills Legacy CA	5,000	2,000
6 TX Neches River NWR	1,913	3,000
7 ND/SD Dakota Tallgrass Prairie WMA	6,122	3,000
8 AR Cache River NWR	1,920	5,000
Subtotal, FWS line-item projects - discretionary funds	65,032	48,071
9 RI John H. Chafee NWR	13	900
10 CA Desert Southwest: San Diego NWR ³	1,405	11,770
11 CT/NH/VT/ MA Silvio O. Conte NWR	3,700	4,600
12 CA San Joaquin River NWR	91	1,000
13 TX Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR	800	1,000
14 CA Grasslands WMA	475	1,000
15 IA Upper MS River NW&FR	300	1,000
16 MD Blackwater NWR	247	1,000
17 MN Northern Tallgrass Prairie NWR	80	567
18 PA/NM/WA National Historic/National Scenic Trails: Cherry Valley NWR/Valle de Oro NWR/Steigerwald Lake NWR ⁴	3,868	12,660
Subtotal, FWS line-item projects - mandatory funds	10,979	35,497
Subtotal, All FWS line-item projects	76,011	83,568
Subtotal, Federal Land Acquisition – Discretionary Funds		48,071
Subtotal, Federal Land Acquisition – Mandatory Funds		35,497
Total, Federal Land Acquisition		83,568

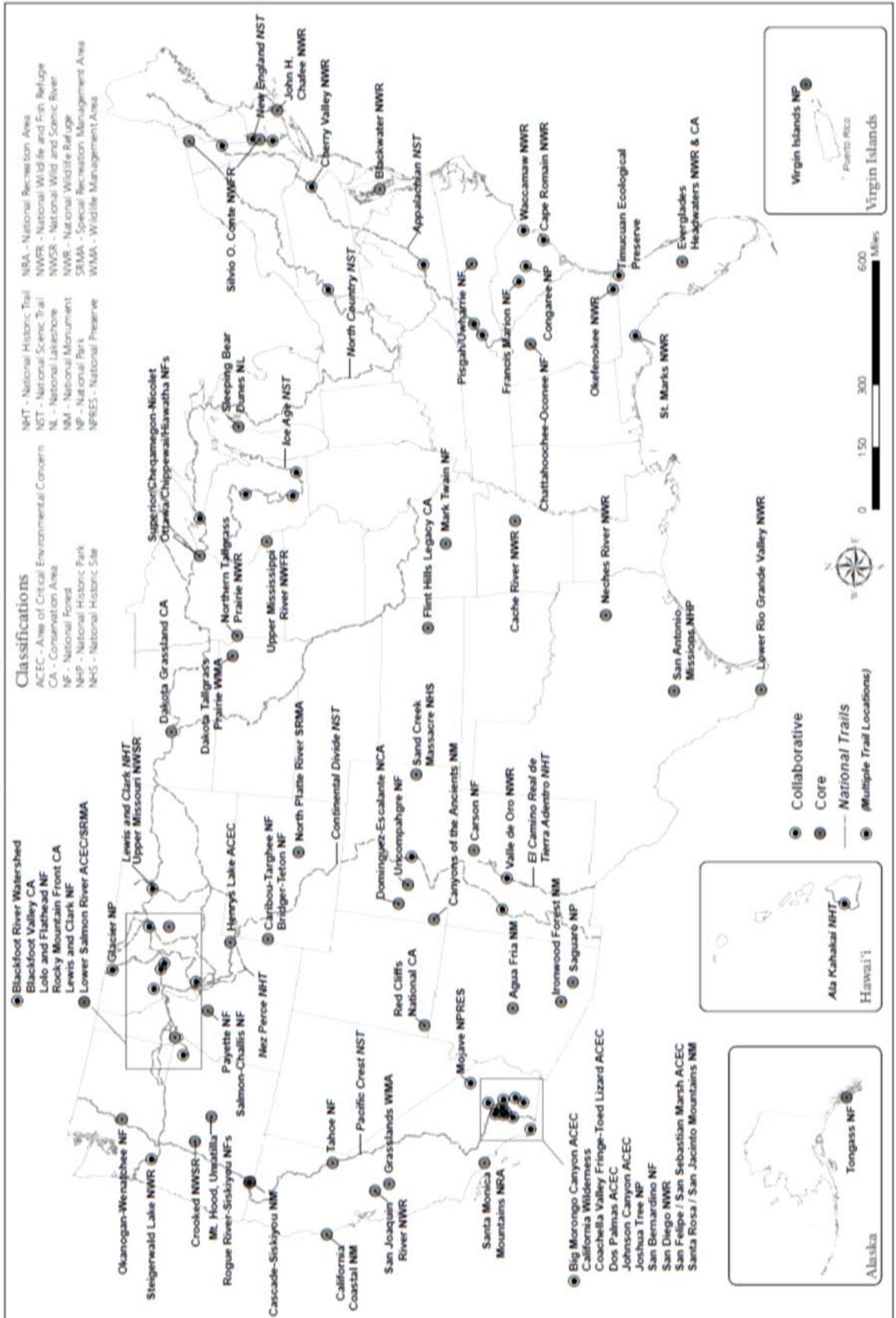
¹/These projects are part of the Collaborative Landscape Planning for the Crown of the Continent/ Northern Rockies landscape.

²/These project are part of the Collaborative Landscape Planning for the Longleaf Pine landscape.

³/These project are part of the Collaborative Landscape Planning for the Southwest Deserts landscape.

⁴/These projects are part of the Collaborative Landscape Planning for the National Trails landscape.

Land and Water Conservation Fund Land Acquisition Budget Proposal FY 2014



Information on this map is provided for purposes of discussion and visualization only.

Program Overview

Through the Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF), the Service receives funding to acquire lands and waters with the habitats required to support desirable populations of fish and wildlife, while providing outdoor recreational areas for the public, as authorized by acts of Congress. The Service acquires important fish, wildlife, and plant habitat for the conservation of listed endangered and threatened species, as additions to the existing National Wildlife Refuge System and the National Fish Hatchery System. Linking conservation actions to measurable biological outcomes of wildlife populations will increase the Service's ability to monitor future abundance and distribution of species.

The Land Acquisition Program uses alternative and innovative conservation tools, including conservation easements; implements projects that have the input and participation of the affected local communities and stakeholders; and leverages Federal dollars to the maximum extent possible.

Refuge Land Protection Planning

This planning program evaluates potential land acquisitions to support the strategic growth of the National Wildlife Refuge System. By using models of species-habitat interactions and decision support tools, landscape-scale conservation planning aids Service staff in prioritizing where conservation and/or management actions are needed to support sustainable fish and wildlife populations at desired levels. Connecting local actions to common State and regional conservation goals enhances attainability of landscape-scale habitat conservation goals. By addressing both regional and national goals for species for which fish and wildlife agencies have trust responsibility, the Service and conservation partners can accomplish much more than working as separate entities.

Refuge field stations work in cooperation with Federal, State, and local governments, in addition to private landowners, private organizations, and local and national conservation groups, to identify and protect habitats for migratory birds, and trust and other important species. In some cases, Land Protection Plans will be prepared to propose new or expand existing national wildlife refuges to address the needs of fish, wildlife, and plant communities. Specific activities include gathering background data, coordinating with state and local entities, involving the public, analyzing ecological, legal, and financial issues, and printing and distributing draft and final plan documents for public comment and information.

The Service has developed three draft planning policies to guide the strategic management of the Refuge System. When finalized, these policies will be incorporated into the Service Manual as sections on Strategic Growth, Land Protection Planning, and Land Acquisition Planning. The Strategic Growth policy provides guidance on identifying areas of ecological importance for conservation and potential land acquisitions or exchanges. The Land Protection Planning policy describes the specific procedures and documents used in the conservation planning processes. The Land Acquisition Planning policy provides criteria for prioritizing approved proposals for funding.

Strategic Outcomes and Results

The Land Acquisition Program fulfills its goals by acquiring habitat where biological communities will flourish. The Service's Land Acquisition Priority System (LAPS), a biological merit-based selection process, ranks lands proposed for acquisition using standardized biological criteria. The LAPS quantifies the biological contributions of fisheries and aquatic resources, endangered species, migratory birds, and larger ecosystems at the refuge level. Using this information, the LAPS is an objective and biologically - based starting point for the prioritization of active land acquisition projects with willing sellers.

The America's Great Outdoors initiative enhances the Service's science-based prioritization of land acquisition projects by focusing on landscape-scale conservation projects. The Service's projects support its mission-oriented priorities as well as potential cross-bureau collaborative conservation projects.

Cross-bureau conservation focus areas for FY 2014 include the Crown of the Continent, California Desert, Longleaf Pine, and National Trails. Many Service projects provide or enhance public outdoor recreation in close proximity to both urban and rural areas. Important factors for all projects proposed for the FY 2014 Budget include contribution of leveraged funds, partner participation, and urgency of project completion to protect ecosystems and wildlife species' habitats from development or other inappropriate uses.

The Rivers and Trails initiative works in conjunction with the Land and Water Conservation Fund to increase the economic benefits to local communities through ecotourism and recreation activities. Studies have been conducted by federal government agencies and non-profit organizations on the benefits of having a National Wildlife Refuge in close proximity for recreation. Local economies benefit from tourist dollars associated with the affordable public activities available on the refuge.

Means and Strategies

It is the Service's policy to request acquisition funding only for those areas within previously approved Refuge System boundaries. In every project for which the Service is requesting funding, the Service has completed the necessary National Environmental Policy Act process and has an approved Land Protection Plan.

Federal Refuge projects often have small amounts of funds remaining after land has been acquired. These amounts of funds are insufficient to acquire additional land. In 2014, the Service will institute a policy that line-item projects with residual funding less than \$50,000 will be reallocated to the Inholdings line item to acquire tracts of land on refuges that do not have project funding. This policy will increase the Service's flexibility to respond when tracts of land within refuge boundaries are put on the market. FY09 and FY10 projects would be excluded due to existing reprogramming restrictions.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Lands Mapper

The Service Lands Mapper is a web-based application for viewing Service managed lands and waters that is accessible DOI-wide as of 2012. The Lands Mapper mapping application is designed to provide an overview of the fee title lands, Service-owned lands without complete fee title rights, and inholdings in the Cadastral Program in all Service Regions. All lands and boundaries depicted are considered resource-grade, and include purchase information and data about a majority of the Service interest tracts at this time.

The Service has opened access to the Lands Mapper to enable the public to view maps of Service managed lands via the web. The external FWS Lands Mapper Lite shows Fee and Secondary lands, allows the Service to share, and directly access, data with the Department of Transportation, Federal Highway Administration, and Federal Lands Program, and display this information on the Mapper and provides interactive maps of the NWRS Refuges for the public. This application is a huge move forward in data sharing, saving time, and utilizing the resources of other federal agencies and has added significant, biologically-valuable lands to the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Service employees also use this application to learn more about the land and water the Service manages. The Service's cadastral data, maintained by the Service's Cadastral Working Group, is used to reflect the external boundaries of all fee title and land where the Service has less than fee title inholdings within Service-managed units, such as National Wildlife Refuges, as well as the water within those boundaries. Cadastral data is maintained in the National Cadastral Geodatabase and updated twice yearly with an average of 600-700 new tracts of land. Additional tabular data specific to the fee title tracts of land and water is contained in the Land Records System (LRS). Benefits of the Lands Mapper for Realty staff and other Service programs and DOI bureaus include:

- Display aerial photography, topographic maps, and street data for anywhere in the country.
- Search and zoom capability of Service-managed lands.
- Ability to overlay shapefiles or other web services in the mapper.
- Locate acreage information, links to station websites, and data for Service lands and the associated tracts of land or water (including the Wetland Management Districts).
- Compute measurements of distance and area.
- Print and export custom-made maps.

Land Acquisition Success Stories

Each year, the Service acquires land in fee title or conservation easement through the Land and Water Conservation Fund. The acquired lands provide strengthened continuity of Service operations and improved habitat corridors for wildlife. Also, fee title acquisitions increase recreation on public lands, provide economic opportunities for local businesses, and provide opportunities for visitors to enjoy the outdoors without traveling long distances.

Below are highlights of lands added to the National Wildlife Refuge System during FY 2012.

Dakota Grasslands Conservation Area

During FY 2012, the Service placed 3,676 acres in grassland conservation easements. Located along the border of North and South Dakota on the eastern side of the states, the Dakota Grasslands Conservation Area is a landscape-scale, strategic habitat conservation effort to preserve a unique and highly diverse endangered ecosystem. Large-scale land use changes, including wetland drainage and conversion of grassland to cropland, are expanding rapidly on formerly secure grassland-wetland complexes, and threatening the ecosystem.



Grazing cattle on new Dakota Grasslands acquisition.

The Dakota Grassland conservation easements restrict the landowner from converting the grassland to cropland and delay haying until after July 15. Livestock grazing is not restricted, and farming and haying are allowed, providing landowners the opportunity to protect their livelihoods and to protect their lands for future generations.

The wetland easement restricts the landowner from draining, filling, leveling, or burning the wetland basin. The easement not only protects ranching and livestock operations, but it also conserves the ecological integrity of the wetlands and grasslands thereby maintaining and enhancing the historical native plants, migratory birds, and other wildlife species.

Rachel Carson NWR, Maine

Timber Point and Timber Island, within Rachel Carson NWR, is one of the largest open space properties along the southern Maine coast. The



The photograph shows coastal development to the north and south of Timber Point in Rachel Carson NWR. Timber Island, in the lower right, is accessible by foot at low tide.

157-acre parcel added to the National Wildlife Refuge Service is critical for the role it plays in providing habitat for migrating waterfowl, offering ice-free wintering habitat for common eider and American black duck, plus other species during the spring and fall migrations. Timber Point is ecologically significant due to its rare plant and animal species. The diversity of habitat meets the life cycle stages of key species such as bobolink, willow flycatcher, wood thrush, American woodcock, prairie warbler, alewife, Blanding's turtle, and New England Cottontail. The New England Cottontail is a candidate for federal listing as a threatened or endangered species.

The appraised value of Timber Point and Timber Island was \$5,125,000. In FY 2010, the Service was appropriated \$3,000,000 in LWCF funds. The acquisition was made possible as a joint effort by the Service, the Trust for Public Lands (TPL), Friends of Rachel Carson, and local residents with a passion for conservation of Timber Point. A multitude of fundraising activities were held locally and online, and over the course of two years, the financial goal of raising the additional \$2,125,000 needed to complete the acquisition was achieved to eliminate the threat of development of multi-family condo units

Umbagog NWR, New Hampshire



The Mollidgewock Brook traverses the Umbagog NWR for approximately 11.48 miles. The brook is a low gradient stream with a forested bank. Beaver influences have created a series of open water impoundments, scrub wetlands, and forested wetlands that provide excellent habitat for waterfowl.

Within the Umbagog NWR boundary, 4,532 acres were permanently protected, with the help of The Trust for Public Land. The purchase was the second-half phase of land acquisition from Plum Creek Timber Company. The land protected will provide critical wildlife habitat for moose, deer, bear, and a variety of waterfowl species. The 11.5 miles of trout streams, all of which flow into the Androscoggin River, form one of the best recreational fisheries in New Hampshire. Under Service ownership, the property will remain open to recreational use, including hiking, hunting, and fishing. The property also contains more than 13 miles of snowmobile trails that are maintained by the Umbagog Snowmobile Association and the NH Trails Bureau and are a vital link in the statewide snowmobile system and an economic driver of the North Country's winter tourism economy.

Still to be acquired are 23,000 acres of working forest conservation easements held by the State of New Hampshire and a State fee acquisition of 934 acres around the Greenough Pond. The easements will prohibit future development and guarantee recreational access, while allowing Plum Creek Timber Company to continue commercial forestry. Approximately 11,500 acres of this land that is slated for state-held conservation easements are within the Umbagog National Wildlife Refuge boundary but will not become part of the Refuge. This is a compromise that the project partners agreed to in order to strike a balance between commercial forestry, wildlife conservation, and recreational access. The entire project is anticipated to be completed in 2013.

James Campbell NWR, Hawaii

The Service acquired 310 acres at James Campbell National Wildlife Refuge, located on the north shore of O'ahu, Hawaii. This acquisition is the third phase of a four-phase acquisition that began in 2008. The property connects the existing refuge to approximately 1.4 miles of dune and strand vegetation along the coast, providing resting habitat for the endangered Hawaiian monk seal ('ilio holo i ka uaua) and nesting habitat for threatened green turtles (honu) and important seabirds.



James Campbell NWR, Phase 3; North Shore, Oahu, Hawaii. Photo: Charlie Parrott, USFWS

Grasslands Wildlife Management Area, California

The Grasslands Wildlife Management Area is located in western Merced County, California, within the San Joaquin River basin. The basin supports the largest remaining block of contiguous wetlands in the Central Valley. These wetlands constitute 30% of the remaining wetlands in California's Central Valley and are extremely important to Pacific Flyway waterfowl populations. The acquisition of 520 acres of conservation easements on private property provide long term viability of the grassland and wetland ecosystem, as well as provide a safe haven for migratory birds and other wildlife species.

San Joaquin River National Wildlife Refuge, California

Established in 1987, the San Joaquin River NWR, the newest unit of the San Luis NWR Complex, has an endangered species focus to protect the wintering grounds of Aleutian Canada (cackling) geese. The population of the cackling geese has significantly increased since the establishment of the refuge, resulting in its delisting and becoming a game species for sportsmen. The other major endangered species focus for the Refuge is the riparian brush rabbit, perhaps the most endangered mammal in California. As very little of the species' dense riparian habitat remains, the Recovery Plan requires three new self-sustaining populations; acquisition of needed habitat is a key element for this species' recovery. Recently the Service acquired a 66-acre conservation easement on predominantly native, irrigated pasture that provides habitat for both the riparian brush rabbit and the cackling geese.

Willow Creek-Lurline Wildlife Management Area, California

The Service acquired a conservation easement on 63 acres within the Willow Creek/Lurline Wildlife Management Area (WMA), located in Colusa County, California. Established in 1985 to preserve wetland habitat for wintering waterfowl and other wetland



Looking west over a seasonal wetland at the Willow Creek-Lurline WMA. USFWS photo

dependent wildlife, the WMA is a component of the Sacramento National Wildlife Refuge complex. The acquisition provides protection of private wetlands for the benefit of waterfowl, shorebirds, waterbirds, raptors, and other wetland dependent wildlife, and provides a corridor of natural habitat between Sacramento and Delevan National Wildlife Refuges.

Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge, Nevada

The Service acquired 410 acres of land at Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge in southern Nevada. The Refuge was established in 1984 for the conservation and recovery of threatened and endangered plant and animal species. The acquired land includes rare desert springs and surface flows, providing protection of eleven specially-designated species, including the endangered Ash Meadows Amargosa pupfish and the threatened Ash Meadows sunray.



Ashmeadows NWR, Nevada. USFWS photo

Turnbull NWR, Washington

The Service acquired more than 450 acres from three owners within the designated Stewardship Area of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge near Spokane, Washington. The land was acquired in the approved expansion area and includes unique remnant wetlands, shrub-steppe habitat, and mixed forest lands left by



Turnbull NWR, Stewardship Area, Photo: Lisa Langelier, USFWS

the Great Ice Age Floods. Species found on these lands include elk, white-tailed deer, black bear, bobcat, coyote, bats, voles, and numerous smaller mammals. Cranes, swans, and pelicans occur along with common wetland and passerine migratory species. The acquisition enhances the recovery of federally listed plant *species including water howellia (Howellia aquatilis) and Spalding's silene (Silene spaldingii)*. With the acquisition of the land, the original refuge boundary has been expanded and provides a springboard for further acquisitions in the Stewardship Area.

Update on Land Exchanges for FY 2014

The following pages list refuges, waterfowl production areas, wetland management districts, and Native Corporations' properties that may be part of ongoing projects in the negotiation or acquisition phases of possible land exchanges. Other exchanges may be undertaken throughout FY 2014 as opportunities arise. The Service projects an estimated \$1,962,000 in acquisition costs for over 250,363 acres. Exchanges may involve on-going expenditures over a period of years.

Exchange projects have provided unique experiences to work with partners from Federal, state, and local governments, in addition to private landowners, organizations, and local and national conservation groups. Taking advantage of the expertise of the collective groups, exchange projects have decreased habitat fragmentation, have provided significant biologically valuable lands providing critical habitat for a variety of wildlife within the National Wildlife Refuge System, and have provided access to resources for the public to enjoy.

Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge, California

The Service completed a land exchange at Bitter Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Kern County, California, to correct a land encroachment issue between the Service and a landowner. The Service received 3.69 acres of private land in exchange for 3.69 acres of Service land. During a land survey in 2008 to set refuge property boundaries, a land encroachment by an adjacent landowner on approximately

3.69 acres of Service land was discovered. To correct this issue, a land exchange was initiated, whereby the landowner would convey 3.69 acres of other land he owned, in exchange for the 3.69 acres of Service land that he was encroaching on. The land valuation concluded that the fair market value of each tract of land was identical. This exchange was completed in June 2012.

Yukon Delta National Wildlife Refuge

The Service acquired from the Nunakuiak Yupik Corporation (NYC), an Alaska Native village corporation, 36,852 acres of lowland and coastal wetland habitats bordering the Bering Sea. The land exchange protects an area used by two federally-listed species, the threatened spectacled eider and Steller’s eider. Of the acres acquired, 3,840 acres is designated critical nesting habitat for the spectacled eider, and is an important coastal corridor for a variety of species that include black turnstones, bristle-thighed curlews, swans, emperor geese, white-fronted and Canada geese, black brant, and other shore and migratory birds. The critical habitat contributes to the recovery goals of the threatened spectacled eider.

Before the exchange, NYC owned the surface, but not the subsurface estate. The Service, by exchanging to NYC the subsurface estate adjacent to the City of Toksook Bay and fee title to uplands, has provided NYC opportunities for development of its lands and the ability to provide sand and gravel for community projects.

Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge

The Service acquired land on five islands containing quality wildlife habitat within the Aleutian Islands through an exchange from the Akutan Corporation (Akutan). This acquisition consolidated land ownerships which improves refuge management, reduces habitat fragmentation, and furthers the purposes for which the Refuge was established. Sensitive Steller sea lion rookery habitat, sensitive sea otter haul out, loafing, and pupping habitat, and substantial seabird colonies, exist on the islands acquired in the exchange. Many of the islands contain non-native mammals (such as fox, cattle, and rabbits) that damage the habitat and significantly decrease bird populations. The Service now has complete ownership of Unalga, Rootok, Avatanak, and Poa islands and can plan for and implement eradication of non-native species. Benefits to Akutan from the exchange include acquisitions that provide for potential geothermal development and potential hard rock mining.

STATE	POTENTIAL EXCHANGES	ACRES TO BE ACQUIRED	MANAGEMENT COSTS
ALASKA	Arctic NWR - Kaktovik Inupiat Corporation	2,000.0	\$10,000
	Izembek NWR - King Cove	52,000.0	\$250,000
	Kenai NWR - CIRI	3,000.0	\$10,000
	Selawik NWR - NANA Corp	Undetermined	\$10,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Alakanuk	Undetermined	\$10,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Cherfornak	40,000.0	\$30,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - NIMA Corp	5,000.0	\$65,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Napakiak	55,000.0	\$65,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Kotlik	Undetermined	\$25,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Bethel Native Corporation	1,000.0	\$15,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Napaskiak	45,000.0	\$80,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Eek	Undetermined	\$25,000
	Yukon Delta NWR - Aniak	Undetermined	\$10,000

STATE	POTENTIAL EXCHANGES	ACRES TO BE ACQUIRED	MANAGEMENT COSTS
	Yukon Delta NWR - Chevak	30,000.0	\$65,000
CALIFORNIA	Bitter Creek NWR	297.0	\$10,000
	Bitter Creek NWR	0.1	\$10,000
	Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR	3.0	\$75,000
COLORADO	Arapaho NWR	1,700.0	\$40,000
	Rocky Flats NWR	640.0	\$45,000
FLORIDA	ARM Loxahatchee NWR	2,723.0	\$20,000
	Pelican Island NWR	47.0	\$10,000
	St. Marks	3.0	\$15,000
ILLINOIS	Meredoisia NWR - IL DOT	10.0	\$20,000
	IL River NWR	5.0	\$10,000
	Cypress Creek NWR	10.0	\$10,000
INDIANA	Patoka NWR	Undetermined	\$20,000
IOWA	Union Slough NWR	40.0	\$10,000
LOUISIANA	Upper Ouachita NWR	80.0	\$10,000
MAINE	Rachel Carson NWR	150.0	\$50,000
	Moosehorn NWR	115.0	\$45,000
MASSACHUSETTS	Assabet River NWR	350.0	\$50,000
	Great Meadows NWR	5.0	\$15,000
	Oxbow NWR	20.0	\$10,000
MICHIGAN	Shiawassee NWR	337.0	\$50,000
	Jackson County FmHA	5.0	\$10,000
	Jackson County WPA	2.0	\$25,000
MINNESOTA	Minnesota Valley NWR - MN DNR	279.6	\$25,000
	Kandiyohi County FmHA	20.0	\$10,000
	Pope County WPA	40.0	\$10,000
	Tamarac NWR	10.0	\$10,000
	Upper Mississippi River NW&FR	2.0	\$10,000
MISSISSIPPI	St. Catherine Creek NWR	510.0	\$45,000
	Tallahatchie NWR	4.7	\$5,000
MONTANA	Pablo NWR	2.0	\$10,000
NEBRASKA	North Platte NWR	5.0	\$5,000
	Rainwater Basin WMD	160.0	\$25,000
NORTH DAKOTA	Various North Dakota WPA's & WMA's	100.0	\$80,000
NEW JERSEY	E. B. Forsythe NWR	100.0	\$25,000
NEW YORK	Missisquoi NWR	262.3	\$20,000
SOUTH CAROLINA	Carolina Sandhills NWR	269.0	\$10,000
	Santee NWR	32.8	\$5,000

STATE	POTENTIAL EXCHANGES	ACRES TO BE ACQUIRED	MANAGEMENT COSTS
SOUTH DAKOTA	Various South Dakota WPA's & WMD's	160.0	\$55,000
	South Dakota WMD State Land	4,022.0	\$15,000
TENNESSEE	Lower Hatchie NWR	1.7	\$10,000
TEXAS	Lower Rio Grande Valley - Hildalgo , Co Irrigation District #3	5.0	\$5,000
	Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR FM 800	5.6	\$2,000
	Lower Rio Grande Valley Cameron County CCRMA	73.0	\$10,000
	Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR - Agriculture Investment Associates	2,700.0	\$45,000
	Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR - Fred Shuster	80.0	\$20,000
	Neches River NWR-Tetlin-through Exxon Exchange in Alaska	516.0	\$10,000
VERMONT	Silvio O. Conte NFWR	100.0	\$25,000
WASHINGTON	Conboy Lake NWR	8.0	\$15,000
	Willapa NWR Complex	227.0	\$60,000
WISCONSIN	Neceda WMA	5.0	\$20,000
	Fondu Lac County WPA	113.4	\$15,000
	Upper MS River NW&FR - WI DOT	Undetermined	\$25,000
	Upper MS River NWFR	280.0	\$10,000
WYOMING	Cokeville Meadows NWR	657.0	\$70,000
	Cokeville Meadows NWR	70.0	\$25,000
	Total Exchange Acres and Management Costs	250,363.1	\$1,962,000

Land Acquisition Projects for FY 2014

The 2014 request includes 17 proposed land acquisition projects totaling 76,024 acres that are funded from discretionary and mandatory sources. This is the current set of land acquisition priorities that has been vetted and approved by bureau and Department leadership to meet the high priority programmatic needs of the Service.

Collaborative Landscape Planning (CLP)

The 2014 Federal Land Acquisition program builds on collaborative conservation efforts started in 2011 and 2012, and included in the President's budget request for the first time in FY 2013. The collaborative conservation program was developed to support strategic interagency landscape-scale conservation projects while continuing to meet agency-specific programmatic needs. The collaborative conservation program was initiated partially in response to Congressional direction to the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture, Forest Service (FS), to use LWCF land acquisition funds to strategically protect contiguous landscapes and meet shared conservation goals. Interior bureaus collaborated extensively with the FS to develop a process to coordinate land acquisition planning with government and local community partners, to achieve the highest priority shared conservation goals more effectively.

To facilitate the request from Congress, the CLP process is designed to collaboratively plan for measurable outcomes at the landscape scale; invest LWCF resources in some of the most ecologically important landscapes; and invest in projects that have a clear strategy to reach shared goals grounded in science-based planning, are driven by and in response to local community initiatives, and will make the most efficient use of federal funds.

For the FY 2014 budget request, the Department of the Interior and the Department of Agriculture have a combined request of \$169.215 million of discretionary and mandatory funding for this effort. This includes a request of \$ 112.2 million for the three Interior bureaus (FWS, BLM, and NPS) and the remaining \$57.015 million for the Forest Service. The Service has four projects totaling over \$ 45 million as part of the Collaborative effort. The 2014 CLP projects were evaluated by a Technical Advisory Committee (TAC) made up of FWS, BLM, NPS, and Forest Service staff, and were rated according to merit-based criteria in the following categories:

- Process – ensure proposals are built through Federal agency and local stakeholder collaboration and make efficient use of Federal funding. Stakeholder commitment to proposals, including broad-based community support, resources, or funding, were considered.
- Outcomes – ensure Federal resources are targeted to achieve important biological, recreational, cultural, and socio-economic outcomes, including improving access to public lands.
- Urgency – ensure funding is focused on outcomes that may be lost today if no action is taken, or that are particularly achievable today.
- Contribution to national and regional priorities – ensure contributions are to the highest priority conservation goals.

The joint Interior-Agriculture National Selection Committee identified a number of ecosystems throughout the Nation where high priority shared conservation goals can be achieved based on existing locally-driven conservation efforts. Through the rigorous merit based evaluation process, the four ecosystems selected for inclusion in the 2014 budget include: Crown of the Continent, Longleaf Initiative, California Desert, and the National Trails System Collaborative.

Investing now in these ecologically important but threatened landscapes will ensure that they remain resilient in the face of development pressures and global change. Smart investment in strategic conservation of these landscapes will prevent further ecosystem decline or collapse, which will preclude the need for future investments in restoration. The proposed federal investments in these landscapes will additionally leverage significant private commitments to land and water conservation in the four ecosystems.

In the **Crown of the Continent** landscape, FWS, BLM, NPS, and the Forest Service aim to build resiliency in ecological systems and communities, so that as climate conditions change, this collaborative area will continue to support a full range of native biodiversity. Building ecological resiliency includes maintaining intact, interconnected landscapes and restoring fragmented or degraded habitats. The agencies have engaged in longstanding collaborations with Non-Government Organization (NGO) partners, local community groups, and State and county government officials, to tailor a Federal conservation strategy and acquisition program that achieves a synergy among private rights, open space, traditional land uses, and conservation. This shared vision, includes maintaining working ranches and forests by acquiring conservation easements, as well as acquiring lands in fee that will provide public access and enjoyment.

The planned acquisitions will contribute to species conservation for an array of sensitive, threatened, and endangered species. The landscape, which serves as the southern “bookend” for the Yellowstone to Yukon Conservation Initiative, is home to a number of large game species, including antelope, elk, deer,

and moose, which can be hunted within some fee ownership acquisitions. Hunting provides recreational opportunities and vital revenue to local communities. The Federal acquisition projects will complement the conservation goals of State wildlife action plans as well as other conservation and strategic plans.

Tracts identified in the **Longleaf Pine Initiative** are crucial to the ecological well-being and recovery of the diminishing longleaf pine ecosystem across the southeastern United States. Longleaf pines once covered up to 98 million acres of the Southeast, but have been reduced to three million acres, much of it in poor condition. Collaborative regional efforts to address this decline have been underway for over 15 years. Strong public-private partnerships, like the Longleaf Pines Alliance, bring together private landowners, forest industries, state and federal agencies, conservation groups, and researchers to work on collaborative solutions.

Federal agencies drew from Florida wildlife habitat gap analyses, recovery plans, and other Florida and Federal natural resource assessments and initiatives, along with local government and general public input, to develop a plan for land acquisition that targets the most critical conservation needs. Based on this plan, State and local governments and conservation non-profit groups, such as The Nature Conservancy, worked closely with Federal agencies to secure these tracts to allow sufficient time for the Departments to acquire them.

In South Carolina, opportunities to leverage funds are also time sensitive. The Charleston County Greenbelt Program, funded by a local sales tax approved by county referendum in 2004, will match LWCF investments for a limited time period. A \$10 million match from the Greenbelt Program was approved to protect 6,500 acres adjacent to the Cape Romain National Wildlife Refuge.

The Longleaf pine initiative also protects significant cultural lands, including the Gullah Geechee Corridor, an area intrinsically linked to cultural heritage of African Americans in NC, SC, GA, and FL.

Although many threatened and endangered species require a longleaf pine ecosystem to survive, the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker (RCW) is the keystone species for the ecosystem. The FWS, BLM, Forest Service, and our local partners have collaborated for over 20 years to dramatically grow the RCW populations and promote the recovery of the longleaf pine ecosystem through the RCW Southern Range Translocation Cooperative, and to protect and expand critical wildlife areas.

The acquisitions proposed to be funded in this request address the most critical needs of each agency in support of our shared priority of longleaf pine ecosystem conservation, restoration, and Endangered and Threatened species recovery. The lands selected for this proposal are the highest priority for each unit to protect critical habitat, improve management, protect private lands from wildfire, and leverage the efforts of conservation partners to secure these tracts for Federal protection.



Canoeing through Okefenokee NWR. Photo by Joy Campbell

The **California Deserts** proposal exemplifies a commitment to the important role collaboration plays between federal agencies and non-federal partners in achieving a common landscape conservation vision.

To further conservation and community goals in this area, a partnership comprised of state, local and NGO entities, has leveraged federal funding impressively, including NGOs that have donated all or a portion of the market value of real property or defrayed acquisition costs in order to allow the agencies to maximize use of available dollars.

The California Desert focal area is comprised of Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego, and the west half of Imperial Counties. Less than a day's drive for 40 million people, the area is characterized by extensive wildlife corridors, miles of national scenic and historic trails and 72 federally protected species. Rich in biodiversity and recreational opportunity, the landscape is under pressure from increasing demands such as energy development and urban growth that impact these unique resources.

Propelled by Congressional designation, **National Scenic and Historic Trails** the country's national scenic and historic trails are significant both in their entirety and individually. Each is a collaborative venture in the conservation, interpretation, and responsible public use of important elements of our Nation's natural and cultural heritage. As established by law, the administration and management of these trails requires interagency collaboration. Significant LWCF investment is essential to protect national scenic and historic trails for public appreciation.

The collaborative nature of the National Scenic and Historic Trails means that a financial investment by any of the partners has the potential to be greatly leveraged by contributions from other partners (state agencies, local governments, and land trusts), as so often is the case with the National Trails System. Federal financial investment not only buys land to protect critical resources, it also sets the stage for citizen and community involvement in national trail stewardship. For example, the Federal investment in these trails – well illustrated by the Appalachian Trail – clearly stimulates citizen engagement in public resource stewardship and volunteerism, connects citizens with the Nation's natural and cultural heritage, and strengthens communities across the country.

The National Trails System Collaborative seeks to fund critical missing pieces along various trail routes. Many of the trails in this proposal were authorized by Congress more than 30 years ago, yet less than one-third have received funds to assist in acquiring and protecting critical parts of their corridors.

CROWN OF THE CONTINENT DISCRETIONARY

Montana

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956

FY 2014 Priority: No. 1 of 18

Location: 65 miles northwest of Great Falls, MT

Congressional Districts: Montana At Large **FWS Region 6**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$43,944,480

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$11,940,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Ownerships</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	14	10,869	\$12,695,193	\$1,168
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	37	85,173	\$30,734,650	\$361
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	2	3	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	16	19,590	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other Means through FY 2012	35	55,892	\$514,637	\$9
Total Acquired through FY 2012	104	171,527	\$43,944,480	\$256
Planned FY 2013	8	30,685	\$18,295,750	\$596
Proposed FY 2014	7	21,874	\$11,940,000	\$546
Remaining	119	259,191	\$155,762,994	\$601
Totals	238	483,277	\$229,943,224	\$476

*Includes numerous funding sources including LWCF, NAWCA, MBCF, and FLTFA.

Purpose of Acquisition: Acquisition would support long-term viability of fish and wildlife habitat on a large, landscape-scale basis in the Crown of the Continent. Acquisition of perpetual conservation easements preserves habitat where existing biological communities are functioning well and maintains the traditional rural economies for present and future generations of Americans.

Project Cooperators: The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund/Mellon Foundation, Blackfoot Challenge, Montana Fish, Wildlife and Parks, Swan Ecosystem Center, Clark Fork Coalition, The Confederated Salish and Kootenai Tribes, Missoula, Lake, Beaverhead, Lewis & Clark County Commissioners, Montana DNRC, Montana Wilderness Association, and Montana Audubon Society.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire perpetual conservation easements on approximately 21,874 acres for the Rocky Mountain Front and Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area portions of the Crown of the Continent in Montana. These lands border existing protected land (owned by the Service, other federal agencies, or The Nature Conservancy) and include important habitat for grizzly bear, wolverine, lynx, goshawk, willow flycatcher, sage grouse, sharp-tailed grouse, burrowing owl, Lewis woodpecker, trumpeter swan, yellow-billed cuckoo, cutthroat trout, arctic grayling, and Columbia spotted frog. The Rocky Mountain Front is considered one of the best remaining intact ecosystems left in the lower 48 states, and supports nearly every wildlife species described by Lewis and Clark in 1806, with the exception of free-ranging bison. The Blackfoot Valley is one of the last, undeveloped river valley systems in Western Montana. Red Rock Lakes NWR lies in the heart of the Centennial Valley and

includes one of the largest wetland complexes in the Northern Rockies. There is increasing pressure to subdivide and develop these landscapes for second home development and commercial uses. Protecting these tracts would prevent fragmentation and preserve trust species habitat in some of the nation's best remaining intact ecosystems.

O&M: The Service estimates that annual monitoring and inspection of the 21,874 acres of easements would require approximately 0.5 FTE of total staff time (approximately \$40,000 per year).

DAKOTA GRASSLAND CONSERVATION AREA
North Dakota and South Dakota

DISCRETIONARY

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956
FY 2014 Priority: No. 2 of 18
Location: North Dakota and South Dakota east of Missouri River
Congressional Districts: At Large **FWS Region 6**
Total LWCF Appropriations: \$1,000,000
FY 2014 Budget Request: \$8,650,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost*</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Easement through FY 2012*	17	6,470	\$2,301,350	\$356
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	1	1,071	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	18	7,541	\$2,301,350	\$305
Planned FY 2013	19	7,145	\$2,500,000	\$350
Proposed FY 2014 (easements)	Multi	23,053	\$8,650,000	\$375
Remaining	Multi	1,902,261	\$574,548,650	\$302
Totals	Multi	1,940,000	\$588,000,000	\$303

* Includes MBCF funding

Purpose of Acquisition: Purchase perpetual wetland and grassland easements to protect wildlife habitats of native grassland and associated wetlands located in the Prairie Pothole Region (PPR).

Project Cooperators: North Dakota Game and Fish Department, North Dakota Natural Resources Trust, Ducks Unlimited, Inc., The Nature Conservancy, South Dakota Grassland Coalition, and private landowners.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire perpetual conservation easements on approximately 23,053 acres from multiple owners. The PPR ecosystem consists of native mixed-grass prairie intermingled with high densities of temporary, seasonal, semi-permanent, and permanent wetlands that support breeding habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds, grassland birds, and the endangered piping plover. Habitat fragmentation and loss due to conversion of wetlands and grasslands to cropland is the primary threat to wildlife species in the PPR. With the protection afforded by perpetual easements, this highly productive yet fragile ecosystem will remain intact, preserving habitat where biological communities will flourish. Acquisition of these easements would help to maintain traditional farming and ranching operations while fostering landscape-level conservation.

O&M: The Service anticipates spending a minimal amount for annual compliance over-flights, estimated at less than \$3,600 per year, which the Service would fund out of NWRS base funding.

**EVERGLADES HEADWATERS NWR AND CONSERVATION AREA
Florida**

DISCRETIONARY

Acquisition Authority: Land and Water Conservation Fund of 1965
Endangered Species Act of 1973

FY 2014 Priority: No. 3 of 18

Location: Approximately 50 miles south of Orlando and 75 miles east of Tampa in Polk, Osceola, Okeechobee, and Highlands Counties

Congressional Districts: Florida, Districts 12, 15, and 16 **FWS Region 4**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$1,500,000

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$5,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	1	10	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	1	10	\$0	\$0
Planned FY 2013	7	2,877	\$4,500,000	\$1,564
Proposed FY 2014	1	1,250	\$5,000,000	\$4,000
Remaining (easement)	Multi	96,506	\$241,271,000	\$2,500
Remaining (fee)	7	49,357	\$196,828,000	\$4,049
Totals	Multi	150,000	\$447,599,000	\$2,984

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect, restore, and conserve habitat for 278 federal and state listed species, including Florida panther, Florida black bear, Audubon’s crested caracara, Florida scrub jay, red-cockaded woodpecker, whooping crane, Everglades snail kite, and, most significantly, protect habitat for the Florida grasshopper sparrow, a federally endangered endemic species. Acquisitions would protect, restore, and conserve the headwaters, groundwater recharge and watershed of the Kissimmee Chain of Lakes, Kissimmee River, and Lake Okeechobee region. This acquisition would also directly improve water quantity and quality in the Everglades watershed, complementing the Comprehensive Everglades Restoration Plan goals, and protect the water supply for millions of people.

Project Cooperators: Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, South Florida Water Management District, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Division of State Lands, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, U. S. Air Force, Avon Park Air Force Range, The Nature Conservancy, National Wildlife Refuge Association, Florida Cattlemen’s Association, and Florida Farm Bureau.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire fee title to approximately 1,250 acres. This is an opportunity for the Service to protect a large landscape of diverse and high-quality habitats, and to conserve and restore large numbers of threatened and endangered species, while supporting Central Florida’s rich ranching heritage. The America’s Great Outdoors (AGO) Initiative is a Presidential initiative and one of the Secretary of the Interior’s top three national priorities, designed to create and

conserve large functional landscapes for wildlife and ecosystem services protection, historic and cultural protection, and to provide the American public with outstanding wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities.

O&M: The Service estimates annual costs of up to \$25,000 for habitat management and restoration, prescribed burning, and hunting and public use management.

LONGLEAF INITIATIVE
South Carolina, Florida, and Georgia

DISCRETIONARY

Acquisition Authority: Migratory Bird Conservation Act, Endangered Species Act of 1973

FY 2014 Priority: No. 4 of 18

Location: Florida, Georgia, and South Carolina coastal areas

Congressional Districts: Florida, Districts 2 and 4
 Georgia, District 1
 South Carolina, District 1 **FWS Region 4**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$25,408,006

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$ 9,481,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Ownerships</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	171	476,737	\$25,092,820	\$1,339
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	9	538	\$1	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	17	42,919	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	15	40,133	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other Means through FY 2012	7	2,217	\$315,185	\$1,414
Total Acquired through FY 2012	219	562,544	\$25,408,006	\$45
Planned FY 2013	8	20,215	\$39,877,044	\$1,973
Proposed FY 2014	2	3,900	\$9,481,000	\$2,250
Remaining	323	109,408	\$719,005,916	\$6,572
Totals	552	696,067	\$793,771,966	\$1,140

Purpose of Acquisition: To conserve populations of threatened, endangered, rare, and imperiled plants and animals and their native longleaf pine habitats; to restore former slash pine plantations to native longleaf pine; to provide suitable black bear habitat, including corridors to link to critical habitat for major population centers; to provide high-quality habitat for migratory birds, shorebirds, waterbirds, and marshbirds; and to provide public opportunities for hunting, fishing, and other wildlife-dependent recreation.

Project Cooperators: Charleston County Greenbelt, The Nature Conservancy, Conservation Fund, Georgia Department of Natural Resources, Pee Dee Land Trust, American Rivers, Sam Shine Foundation

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire a combination of 3,900 fee and conservation easement acres at Cape Romain (SC), Okefenokee (GA/FL), St. Marks (FL) and Waccamaw (SC) NWRs. Acquisition would support longleaf pine ecosystem conservation and restoration. Acquisition would also help to preserve a tapestry of federal, state, and private forest lands that provide more than a million acres of unfragmented habitat for a variety of federally-listed endangered and threatened species, including red-cockaded woodpecker, wood stork, flatwoods salamander, Eastern indigo snake, and whooping crane. Residential, commercial, and industrial, fragmentation, extraction industries, loss of public access, and loss of paleontological resources are some the greatest threats facing this landscape. Acquisition funding would significantly contribute to a multi-partner, multi-state effort to ensure resiliency and connectivity of

this ecosystem, support working lands, enhance recreational access and opportunities, and protect historic and cultural resources.

O&M: The Service estimates annual costs of up to \$100,000 for habitat management and restoration, prescribed burning, and hunting and public use management. Acquisition may produce efficiency improvements in Service law enforcement and boundary posting, which would reduce these costs. Costs associated with restoration work could be offset by hunting fees or outside funding.

**FLINT HILLS LEGACY CONSERVATION AREA
Kansas**

DISCRETIONARY

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956

FY 2014 Priority: No. 5 of 18

Location: In the Flint Hills Ecoregion, a long narrow band running north-south in eastern Kansas

Congressional Districts: Kansas, Districts 1, 2, and 4 **FWS Region 6**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$1,000,000

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$2,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	1	5	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	1	5	\$0	\$0
Planned FY 2013	2	7,450	\$2,901,000	\$389
Proposed FY 2014 (easement)	3	5,000	\$2,000,000	\$400
Remaining	307	1,087,545	\$435,099,000	\$400
Totals	313	1,100,000	\$440,000,000	\$400

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect the Flint Hills tallgrass prairie ecosystem and associated grassland-dependent wildlife species.

Project Cooperators: The Nature Conservancy, the Kansas Land Trust, the Ranchland Trust of Kansas, the Tallgrass Legacy Alliance, and the local community.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire perpetual conservation easements on approximately 5,000 acres of tallgrass prairie. Tallgrass prairie is one of the most endangered ecosystems in the United States, with less than four percent of the original acreage remaining. The Service will use conservation easements to ultimately protect 1,100,000 acres of the remaining tallgrass prairie in the Flint Hills ecoregion in eastern Kansas from the threat of fragmentation. This fragmentation occurs as the result of residential, commercial, and industrial development, as well as encroachment of woody vegetation. Acquisition of perpetual conservation easements from willing sellers provides permanent protection for tallgrass prairie ecosystems and fosters landscape level conservation, while helping to maintain traditional ranching operations. Landowner interest is high, and the Service is currently identifying lands for acquisition that contain high quality tallgrass habitat with minimal fragmentation and woody vegetation encroachment. In addition to preserving some of the last remaining tallgrass prairie, conservation easements would protect habitat that is important for the threatened Topeka shiner, as well as a wide variety of grassland-dependent birds and other species.

O&M: The Service estimates annual costs of \$1,000 for maintenance of new acquisitions, mainly for easement enforcement, which the Service would fund out of NWRS base funding.

**NECHES RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Texas**

DISCRETIONARY

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956
Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986

FY 2014 Priority: No. 6 of 18

Location: Approximately 35 miles south-southeast of Tyler, TX

Congressional District: Texas, District 5 **FWS Region 2**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$2,000,000

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$3,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	4	1,598	\$1,873,922	\$1,173
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	1	30	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	5	1,628	\$1,873,922	\$1,151
Planned FY 2013	1	640	\$1,000,000	\$1,563
Proposed FY 2014	1	1,913	\$3,000,000	\$1,568
Remaining	57	21,100	\$31,051,500	\$1,472
Totals	64	25,281	\$36,925,422	\$1,461

* The easement acquired was donated

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect important remnant bottomland habitat and associated habitats for migrating, wintering, and breeding waterfowl; to protect the forest’s diverse biological values and wetland functions of water quality improvement and flood control; and to provide compatible wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities.

Project Cooperators: The Conservation Fund, The Trust for Public Land, and The Nature Conservancy.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire fee title to approximately 1,913 acres. Acquisition would provide much-needed resting habitat for neo-tropical birds migrating north in the spring after crossing the Gulf of Mexico. The Refuge is located along the Neches River, which runs for 420 miles and is one of Texas’s largest rivers. Bottomland habitats in east Texas, like those along the Neches River, are used by nearly three million dabbling ducks. These same areas provide habitat for 273 bird species, 45 mammal species, 54 reptile species, 31 amphibian species, and 116 fish species, including the federally endangered red-cockaded woodpecker, the federally threatened American alligator, and several State species of special concern. The diversity provided by the bottomlands is greater than the upland habitat types due to the diversity of floral species and the abundance of food sources.

O&M: The Service estimates initial costs of \$25,000 for posting and fencing.

DAKOTA TALLGRASS PRAIRIE WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA DISCRETIONARY
North Dakota and South Dakota

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956
FY 2014 Priority: No. 7 of 18
Location: Northeastern South Dakota and southeastern North Dakota
Congressional Districts: At Large **FWS Region 6**
Total LWCF Appropriations: \$9,673,750 (Includes Title V funds)
FY 2014 Budget Request: \$3,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost**</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	201	60,997	\$9,590,414	\$157
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	1	160	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	12	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	202	61,169	\$9,590,414	\$156
Planned FY 2013	4	1,020	\$500,000	\$490
Proposed FY 2014 (easement)	24	6,122	\$3,000,000	\$490
Remaining	Multi	121,689	\$53,388,426	\$439
Totals	Multi	190,000	\$66,478,840	\$350

** Includes incidental costs.

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect the northern tallgrass prairie ecosystem and associated wildlife.

Project Cooperators: The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, and the local community.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire perpetual conservation easements on approximately 6,122 acres of tallgrass prairie. Tallgrass prairie once covered 90 percent of the Dakotas, but less than three percent remains. Habitat fragmentation and conversion to crop production are the primary threats to this ecosystem. The Service plans to use grassland easements to ultimately protect 190,000 acres of the remaining tallgrass prairie in the eastern Dakotas, including 25,000 acres in North Dakota and 165,000 acres in South Dakota. These easement acquisitions will help maintain traditional ranching operations while fostering landscape-level conservation.

The project area has a rich variety of plant, animal, and insect species including more than 147 species of breeding birds ranging from neotropical migrants to waterfowl. Several candidate endangered species are found within the tallgrass prairie ecosystem, including Baird’s sparrow, loggerhead shrike, ferruginous hawk, and rare butterflies such as the Dakota skipper. These large blocks of grasslands help to buffer prairie ecosystems from agricultural chemicals and invasive species, and provide the natural habitat mosaic required by prairie-dependent species. Existing prairie is a well-documented store of terrestrial carbon. Preventing conversion of tallgrass prairie with grassland easements ensures continued sequestration of this carbon.

O&M: A minimal amount of resources would be needed for annual compliance over flights, estimated at less than \$1,500, which the Service would fund out of NWRS base funding.

CACHE RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

DISCRETIONARY

Arkansas

Acquisition Authority: Emergency Wetlands Resources Act of 1986

FY 2014 Priority: No. 8 of 18

Location: Adjacent to the White River, Cache River, and Bayou De View tributaries, from State Highway 79 near Clarendon to Grubbs

Congressional Districts: Arkansas, District 1 **FWS Region 4**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$11,883,213

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$ 5,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Ownerships</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	108	66,927	\$57,406,338	\$858
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	7	2,155	\$134,000	\$62
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	2	945	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	1	0	\$115,000	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	118	70,027	\$57,655,338	\$823
Planned FY 2013	2	1,355	\$3,523,982	\$2,601
Proposed FY 2014	3	1,920	\$5,000,000	\$2,604
Remaining	347	111,675	\$230,919,638	\$2,068
Totals	470	184,977	\$297,098,958	\$1,606

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect fisheries and wildlife resources and provide public access to refuge lands.

Project Cooperators: The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, National Wildlife Refuge Association, Ducks Limited, and Arkansas Game and Fish Commission.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire fee title to approximately 1,920 acres from three owners. These tracts contain row crop agriculture, bottomland hardwood forest, moist soils units, and bald cypress-tupelo swamps. Acquisition of these tracts would contribute greatly to the Service’s habitat conservation efforts in the Cache River project area, which encompasses some of the largest remaining expanses of forested wetlands on any tributary within the Mississippi Alluvial Valley. The Refuge project area is considered the most important wintering area for mallards in North America, and one of the most important for pintail and teal ducks, Canada geese, and other migratory waterfowl. Forest and wetland restoration on these tracts would facilitate carbon sequestration, provide surrogate species habitat, and fulfill national and state conservation plan goals.

O&M: The Service estimates initial costs of \$7,500 for posting and fencing, which the Service would fund from Refuge System base funding. Annual costs would be less than \$500 for maintenance.

JOHN H. CHAFEE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Rhode Island

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: Land and Water Conservation Act of 1965

FY 2014 Priority: No. 9 of 18

Location: On the Narrow River in the Towns of Narragansett and South Kingstown, Washington County, Rhode Island

Congressional Districts: Rhode Island, District 2 **FWS Region 5**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$9,596,702

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$900,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	46	509	\$9,596,702	\$18,854
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	0	0	0	0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	1	15	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	5	24	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	52	548	\$9,596,702	\$17,512
Planned FY 2013	0	0	\$0	\$0
Proposed FY 2014	1	13	\$900,000	\$69,230
Remaining	319	803	\$13,838,258	\$17,233
Totals	372	1,364	\$24,334,960	\$17,840

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect and safeguard the Whale Rock property, a diversity of coastal habitats important to trust resources, and to complement existing refuge lands along the estuary.

Project Cooperators: The Nature Conservancy, the State of Rhode Island Department of Environmental Management and the Champlin Foundation.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire fee title to 13 acres of the Whale Rock property at Pettaquamscutt Cove. The land proposed to be acquired plays a critical role in protecting the water quality and integrity of the Cove, its tidal wetland complex, and associated fish and wildlife populations. The property is being acquired in five phases, of which the first two phases are complete. The Nature Conservancy is assisting with this acquisition.

The total acreage is 112 acres, including seven acres of salt marsh, more than 5,500 feet of shoreline, 22 acres of maritime forest, and 29 acres of coastal shrubland. The estuary's marshes and tidal flats provide important habitat for priority waterfowl species such as the American black duck, wading birds and shorebirds, terns, osprey, and other high priority species such as the salt marsh sharp-tailed sparrow and seaside sparrow.

O&M: The Service anticipates an initial cost of \$500 to install refuge signs and no additional workload.

**SOUTHWEST DESERTS
California**

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: Endangered Species Act of 1973
Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956

FY 2014 Priority: No. 10 of 18

Location: Approximately 15 miles east of the City of San Diego

Congressional Districts: California, Districts 50, 51, and 52 **FWS Region 8**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$31,793,320

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$ 11,770,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Ownerships</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	54	4,993	\$31,793,320	\$6,367
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	4	1	\$0	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	14	4,253	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other Means through FY 2012	1	1,905	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	73	11,152	\$31,793,320	\$2,851
Planned FY 2013	1	10	\$235,000	\$23,500
Proposed FY 2014	13	1,405	\$11,770,000	\$8,377
Remaining	426	25,326	\$46,201,680	\$1,842
Totals	513	37,893	\$90,000,000	\$2,375

Purpose of Acquisition: The California Desert SW focal area is comprised of Riverside, San Bernardino, San Diego and the west half of Imperial counties in California. Less than a day’s drive from 40 million people, the area is characterized by extensive wildlife corridors, miles of national scenic and historic trails and 72 federally protected species. Rich in biodiversity and recreational opportunity, the landscape is also responding to increasing demands (e.g., energy development and urban growth), which impact these unique resources. The community’s conservation goals are rooted in years of partnership between government agencies and NGOs, and are informed by multiple conservation and recreation plans.

Project Cooperators: The Nature Conservancy, Friends of SDNWR, Conservation biology Institute, Public and private partners that participate in the State of California’s Natural Communities Conservation Planning program and the San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan (MSCP).

Project Description: Funds would acquire fee title to approximately 1,405 acres of mostly undisturbed coastal sage and chaparral, across several ownerships adjacent to existing Service lands. Acquisition of these tracts would extend the Service’s successful efforts with more than a dozen local jurisdictions, the California Department of Fish and Game, and many private landowners to protect over 172,000 acres of natural habitat within a 582,000-acre planning area. Acquisition of these mountainous upland tracts would assist in recovery efforts by providing opportunities to protect and restore habitat by creating a buffer from surrounding high-density development and limiting off-road access. Refuge land acquisitions not only help meet natural resource goals, but may also reduce the need to list additional species under

federal and state laws. These include species such as the coastal California gnatcatcher, Otay tarplant, and Quino checkerspot butterfly.

O&M: The Service anticipates no additional operations or maintenance costs associated with this acquisition as the tracts are located within the refuge boundaries and would add no additional workload.

SILVIO O. CONTE NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE REFUGE
Massachusetts, Connecticut, New Hampshire, and Vermont

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: The Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge Act (P.L.102-212)

FY 2014 Priority: No. 11 of 18

Location: Within the Connecticut River Watershed located in CT, MA, NH, and VT

Congressional Districts: Connecticut, Districts 1, 2, and 3
 Massachusetts, Districts 1 and 2
 New Hampshire, District 2
 Vermont, At Large
FWS Region 5

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$28,482,268

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$ 4,600,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	69	35,236	\$27,344,806	\$776
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	2	169	\$126,000	\$746
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	5	125	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012 *	76	35,530	\$27,470,806	\$773
Planned FY 2013	12	381	\$1,500,000	\$3,937
Proposed FY 2014	9	3,726	\$4,600,000	\$1,476
Remaining	1,913	39,270	\$36,029,194	\$917
Totals	2,010	78,907	\$69,600,000	\$893

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect fisheries and wildlife resources and provide public access to refuge lands.

Project Cooperators: The Trust for Public Land, The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, the Kestrel Land Trust, the Middlesex Land Trust and the National Wildlife Refuge Association.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire fee title to 3,034 acres and 692 acres in conservation easement. Acquisition of tracts within the Refuge’s Fort River Division (MA) would contribute toward the protection of a large grassland project for grassland species, the endangered dwarf wedge mussel, and anadromous fish. In addition, acquisition of northern boreal forest tracts in the Nulhegan Basin Division (VT), and acquisition of wetland tracts in the Pondicherry and Mohawk River Divisions (NH), would protect nesting songbirds and provide wildlife-dependent recreational and educational opportunities. Both the Whalebone Cove and Salmon River Divisions in CT contain extensive freshwater tidal marshes used by migrating and wintering waterfowl. The forested mountainous habitat of the Mascoma Division in NH will contribute towards breeding habitat for interior migrant land birds and rare plants.

O&M: The Service anticipates no additional costs associated with this acquisition because the parcel is located within the refuge boundary and would create no additional workload.

SAN JOAQUIN RIVER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
California

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: Endangered Species Act 1973
FY 2014 Priority: No. 12 of 18
Location: Approximately 10 miles west of Modesto, CA
Congressional Districts: California, District 18 **FWS Region 8**
Total LWCF Appropriations: \$18,843,600
FY 2014 Budget Request: \$1,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	8	7,148	\$25,725,448	\$3,599
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	4	3,553	\$18,184,556	\$5,118
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	12	10,701	\$43,910,004	\$4,103
Planned FY 2013	1	167	\$1,000,000	\$5,988
Proposed FY 2014	1	91	\$1,000,000	\$10,989
Remaining	3	2,956	\$24,089,996	\$8,150
Totals	17	13,915	\$70,000,000	\$5,031

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect native grasslands and wetlands that are essential for long-term survival of the Aleutian Canada goose, and to protect a large piece of riparian habitat valuable to a variety of wildlife species.

Project Cooperators: State of California CALFED Bay-Delta Program.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire a perpetual conservation easement on approximately 91 acres of predominantly native, irrigated pasture. The biggest threat to the Refuge is residential development and the conversion of grasslands and wetlands to croplands and orchards that provide little or no benefit for wildlife. Acquisition of the tract would support long-term viability of the grassland and wetland ecosystems as well as provide a safe haven for migratory birds and other wildlife species.

O&M: The interest to be acquired in the 91 acres is a perpetual conservation easement. For this reason, there will be little to no long-term management costs associated with this acquisition.

LOWER RIO GRANDE VALLEY NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Texas

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, Refuge Recreation Act of 1962
FY 2014 Priority: No. 13 of 18
Location: South Texas coast approximately one hour southeast of McAllen, TX
Congressional Districts: Texas, Districts 15, 27, and 28 **FWS Region 2**
Total LWCF Appropriations: \$32,777,516
FY 2014 Budget Request: \$ 1,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Ownerships</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	299	79,168	\$75,073,310	\$948
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	*6	**5,616	\$1,412,751	\$252
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	12	9,142	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	4	953	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	321	94,879	\$76,486,061	\$806
Planned FY 2013	1	1,940	\$1,985,204	\$1,023
Proposed FY 2014	1	800	\$1,000,000	\$1,250
Remaining	792	34,881	\$45,225,300	\$1,297
Totals	1,115	132,500	\$124,696,565	\$941

* Out of six conservation easements acquired, two were donated, raising the amount of easement ownerships from four to six.
 ** Four of the six conservation easements were acquired with LWCF funds (2,566 acres), and two were donated (3,050 acres), for a total of 5,616 acres.

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect native subtropical brush lands within the diverse biotic communities of the area.

Project Cooperators: The Nature Conservancy, The Conservation Fund, National Audubon Society, Ducks Unlimited, North American Butterfly Association, and The Trust for Public Land.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire 800 acres of the Refuge’s best remaining brush land habitat from willing sellers. The Refuge has 11 distinct biotic communities, which provide habitat for resident and migrating plants and animals. Nearly 400 species of birds, 300 species of butterflies, and 1,100 species of plants have been noted in the four-county project area. The area not only provides an important migration corridor for neotropical migratory birds, but also provides sanctuary for a number of endangered species, including the piping plover, northern aplomado falcon, ocelot, and jaguarandi.

O&M: The Service anticipates minimal expenses beyond an initial \$10,000 for signage and posting of boundaries, which the Service would fund from Refuge System base funding.

**GRASSLANDS WILDLIFE MANAGEMENT AREA
California**

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: Emergency Wetlands Resource Act of 1986

FY 2014 Priority: No. 14 of 18

Location: In the Pacific Flyway between the cities of Los Banos and Gustine, California

Congressional Districts: California, District 18 **FWS Region 8**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$12,276,332

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$1,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	8	14,970	\$18,066,228	\$1,207
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	168	78,157	\$43,547,190	\$557
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	176	93,127	\$61,613,418	\$662
Planned FY 2013	2	475	\$1,000,000	\$2,105
Proposed FY 2014	2	475	\$1,000,000	\$2,105
Remaining	235	39,223	\$182,255,769	\$4,647
Totals	416	133,300	\$245,869,187	\$1,844

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect an important wintering area for the Pacific Flyway waterfowl populations.

Project Cooperators: State of California.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire perpetual conservation easements on approximately 475 acres of predominantly native, irrigated pasture. The biggest threat to the Refuge is residential development and the conversion of grasslands, wetlands, and riparian habitat to croplands and orchards that provide little or no benefit for wildlife. The acquisition of this property will provide long-term viability to the grassland ecosystem as well as provide a safe haven for migratory birds and other wildlife species.

O&M: The interest to be acquired in the 475 acres is a perpetual conservation easement. For this reason there will be little long-term management costs associated with this acquisition.

WI. The tracts are located within the flood plain of the Mississippi River and all are within or contiguous to the refuge acquisition boundary. These acquisitions would preserve critical feeding and resting habitat for waterfowl and other birds in the Mississippi Flyway. They would protect the extensive wetland complexes that function as flood control and nutrient recycling.

O&M: The Service estimates an initial cost of \$10,000 for restoration and enhancement work (spraying, mowing, burning, and fencing supplies and signage), which the Service would fund from Refuge base funding.

BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
Maryland

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: Endangered Species Act of 1973

FY 2014 Priority: No. 16 of 18

Location: Sixty-five miles southeast of Baltimore, in the south central portion of Dorchester County on Maryland’s Eastern Shore

Congressional Districts: Maryland, District 1 **FWS Region 5**

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$15,604,345

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$1,000,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Ownerships</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	35	25,764	\$17,516,187	\$680
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	1	50	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	11	1,402	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	1	856	1,080,000	\$1,262
Total Acquired through FY 2012	48	28,072	\$18,596,187	\$662
Planned FY 2013	0	0	0	\$0
Proposed FY 2014	1	247	\$1,000,000	\$4,049
Remaining	52	31,606	\$34,750,000	\$1,099
Totals	99	59,925	\$54,346,187	\$907

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect high quality habitat for the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel and other endangered species, along with nesting and wintering habitat for the American bald eagle, migratory waterfowl, colonial waterbirds, shorebirds, and forest interior dwelling bird species.

Project Cooperators: The Conservation Fund.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire fee title to 247 acres along the northern border of the Refuge boundary. This parcel has been a high priority for the Refuge for over a decade. The tract consists of forested wetlands interspersed with tidal waters, ponds, and marsh. These areas provide excellent habitat for migratory birds such as osprey, black and wood ducks, Canada geese, marsh and water birds, the bald eagle, as well as foraging opportunities for the peregrine falcon. This area of the Refuge is also important to federal and state listed endangered and threatened species. Acquisition would expand public opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation.

O&M: The Service anticipates no additional operations or maintenance costs associated with this acquisition as the parcel is located within refuge boundaries and would add no additional workload.

NORTHERN TALLGRASS PRAIRIE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE **MANDATORY**
Portions of Minnesota and Iowa

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956
FY 2014 Priority: No. 17 of 18
Location: Eighty-five counties in western MN and northwestern IA

Congressional District: Minnesota, Districts 1, 2 and 7 **FWS Region 3**
 Iowa, Districts 2, 3, 4, and 5

Total Appropriations: \$5,806,657

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$567,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Owners</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	11	2,803	\$4,319,393	\$1,541
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	44	2,452	\$1,672,903	\$683
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	55	5,255	\$5,992,296	\$1,141
Planned FY 2013	0	0	\$0	\$0
Proposed FY 2014	1	80	\$567,000	\$7,088
Remaining	794	71,665	\$18,440,704	\$257
Totals	850	77,000	\$25,000,000	\$325

Purpose of Acquisition: To protect, restore, and enhance the remaining northern tallgrass prairie habitats and associated wildlife species.

Project Cooperators: Minnesota Department of Natural Resources (DNR), Iowa Department of Natural Resources, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants Forever, The Nature Conservancy, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, several county conservation boards, and several local Chambers of Commerce.

Project Description: Funds would be used to acquire 80 acres from the Iowa Natural Heritage Foundation in south central Iowa. The project will include prairie preservation and restoration, which will protect the prairie ecosystem and benefit grassland birds such as dickcissel, bobolink, grasshopper sparrow, and sedge wren. This project has strong support from the Iowa congressional delegation.

Rather than acquiring a contiguous boundary with the aim of eventual ownership of all lands, the Service has set a goal of acquiring 77,000 acres, spreading land acquisition across all or portions of 85 counties. The Service will acquire fee and easement lands to reach this goal. The Service will work with private landowners to develop stewardship agreements, and provide incentives and management assistance in the interest of preserving the prairie landscape regardless of ownership.

O&M: The Service anticipates annual operation and maintenance costs of approximately \$10,000 for initial restoration and enhancement work (spraying, mowing, burning, and signage).

**NATIONAL TRAILS
New Mexico, Pennsylvania, and Washington**

MANDATORY

Acquisition Authority: Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, Refuge Recreation Act of 1962

FY 2014 Priority: No. 18 of 18

Location: New Mexico, Pennsylvania ,and Washington

Congressional Districts: New Mexico District 1, **FWS Regions 1, 2, 5**
 Pennsylvania District 10, and
 Washington District 3

Total LWCF Appropriations: \$7,843,880

FY 2014 Budget Request: \$12,660,000

Acquisition Status:

	<u>Ownerships</u>	<u>Acres</u>	<u>Cost*</u>	<u>\$/Acre</u>
Acquired Fee through FY 2012	14	5,514	\$9,568,160	\$1,735
Acquired Easement through FY 2012	1	2	\$0	\$0
Acquired Exchange through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Acquired Donation through FY 2012	3	725	\$0	\$0
Acquired Other Means through FY 2012	0	0	\$0	\$0
Total Acquired through FY 2012	17	6,241	\$9,568,160	\$1,533
Planned FY 2013	2	75	\$3,000,000	\$40,000
Proposed FY 2014	7	3,868	\$12,660,000	\$3,273
Remaining	4	0	\$7,011,663	\$26,769
Totals	30	10,184	\$32,239,823	\$3,166

* Price per acre includes the cost of acre/feet of water.

Purpose of Acquisition: The National Scenic and Historic Trails are physical and cultural corridors traversing 49 states and every ecological biome in the U.S. These long distance trails, stretching for hundreds or thousands of miles each, connect with 70 NWRs, 80 national parks, 90 national forests, and 100 major metropolitan areas. As they pass through or alongside NWRs, they protect crucial conservation areas, provide wildlife migration corridors, and offer tremendous recreational opportunities and viewsheds. This request would be directed to three Refuge/trail acquisitions: Valle de Oro (NM), Cherry Valley (PA), and Steigerwald Lake (WA) NWRs.

Project Cooperators: The Trust for Public Land, Walmart Corporation, City of Albuquerque, Bernalillo County, New Mexico State Parks Department, The Nature Conservancy, and The Conservation Fund.

Project Description: Funds would be used at Valle de Oro NWR to acquire fee title to the final portion of this 570-acre refuge located along the El Camino Real de Tierra Adentro National Historic Trail, just a few miles from downtown Albuquerque. Located along the Rio Grande, within a 30-minute drive of 40 percent of the state’s population, this acquisition would create an important buffer from urban development. This includes the trail portion of the property along the river, which also provides cover for terrestrial species that move along the river corridor.

Funds for Cherry Valley NWR would be used to acquire fee acres, protecting both the Trail itself and its viewshed. This acquisition would also protect threatened and endangered plants, fish, and wildlife, and ensure the resiliency and connectivity of terrestrial and watershed ecosystems. The Refuge is a hotspot for the threatened bog turtle, and is located along an important migration corridor for raptors.

Funds for Steigerwald Lake NWR would be used to acquire four parcels along the Lewis & Clark NHT, a 50-state AGO project. Lands along the lower Columbia River portion of the Lewis and Clark Trail would be acquired to protect wildlife habitat and lands similar to what the Corps of Discovery explorers encountered more than 200 years ago. These lands are within 15 miles of Portland, Oregon, and Vancouver, Washington. Acquisition would protect trail resources and access, and would also improve water quality and protect vital winter habitat for dusky Canada geese and other species. Threats to this iconic landscape include residential and agricultural development.

O&M: The Service estimates total initial costs of \$35,000 for posting and fencing for the trails.

Standard Form 300

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
LAND ACQUISITION

Program and Financing (in millions of dollars) Identification code 14-5020-X	2012 Actual	2013 Estimate	2014 Estimate
<u>Obligations by program activity:</u>			
Direct program:			
0001 Acquisition management	11	11	13
0002 Emergencies and hardships	3	3	3
0003 Exchanges	2	2	1
0004 Inholdings	2	2	2
0005 User Pay Cost Share	2	2	2
0006 Federal refuges (refuge land payments)	25	36	70
0100 Total, direct program	45	56	91
0801 Reimbursable program activity Border Fence Mitigation	8	0	0
0900 Total new obligations	53	56	91
<u>Budgetary Resources:</u>			
1000 Unobligated balance brought forward, Oct 1	21	35	35
1021 Recoveries of prior year unpaid obligations	1	1	1
1050 Unobligated balance (total)	22	36	36
<u>Budget Authority:</u>			
Appropriations, Discretionary:			
1101 Appropriation (special fund)	55	55	71
Spending authority from offsetting collections:			
Appropriations, mandatory:			
1221 Appropriations transferred from the LWCF	0	0	36
Spending authority from offsetting collections, discretionary:			
1700 Offsetting collections (cash)	11	0	0
1750 Spending authority from offsetting collections (total)	11	0	0
1900 Total new budget authority (gross)	66	55	71
1930 Total budgetary resources available	88	91	143
Memorandum (non-add) entries:			
1941 Unexpired unobligated balance, end of year	35	35	52
<u>Change in obligated balances:</u>			
3000 Unpaid obligations brought forward, Oct 1 (gross)	33	25	18
3010 Obligations incurred, unexpired accounts	53	56	91
3020 Total outlays, gross (-)	-60	-62	-78
3040 Recoveries of prior year unpaid obligations	-1	-1	-1
3050 Unpaid Obligations, end of year	25	18	30
Memorandum (non-add) entries:			
3100 Obligated balance, start of year	33	25	18
3200 Obligated balance, end of year	25	18	30

Standard Form 300

**DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
LAND ACQUISITION**

Program and Financing (in millions of dollars) Identification code 14-5020-X	2012 Actual	2013 Estimate	2014 Estimate
<u>Budget authority and outlays, net:</u>			
Discretionary:			
4000 Budget authority, gross	66	55	71
4010 Outlays from new discretionary authority	22	22	42
4011 Outlays from discretionary balances	38	40	36
4020 Outlays, Gross (total)	60	62	78
<u>Offsets against gross budget authority and outlays:</u>			
Offsetting collections (collected) from:			
4030 (01) Federal Sources	-11	0	0
4070 Budget authority, net (discretionary)	55	55	71
4080 Outlays, net (discretionary)	49	62	64
<u>Mandatory:</u>			
4090 Budget authority, gross	0	0	36
Outlays, gross:			
Outlays from onew mandatory authority	0	0	14
4160 Budget authority, net (mandatory)	0	0	36
4170 Outlays, net (mandatory)	0	0	14
4180 Budget authority, net (total)	55	55	107
4190 Outlays (net)	49	62	78

Object Classification			
Direct obligations:			
Personnel compensation:			
11.1 Full-time permanent	7	7	9
12.1 Civilian personnel benefits	2	2	2
23.1 Rental payments to GSA	1	1	1
25.2 Other services from non-Federal sources	4	6	6
25.3 Purchases of goods and services from Federal sources	1	1	1
32.0 Land and structures	29	39	72
99.0 Subtotal, obligations, Direct obligations	44	56	91
Reimbursable obligations:			
32.0 Land and structures	8	0	0
99.5 Below reporting threshold	1	0	0
99.9 Total new obligations	53	56	91

Personnel Summary			
1001 Direct civilian full-time equivalent employment	89	86	106