

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration and Associated Grant Programs

Program Update March 2006

Including a Special Highlight Section of Region 2

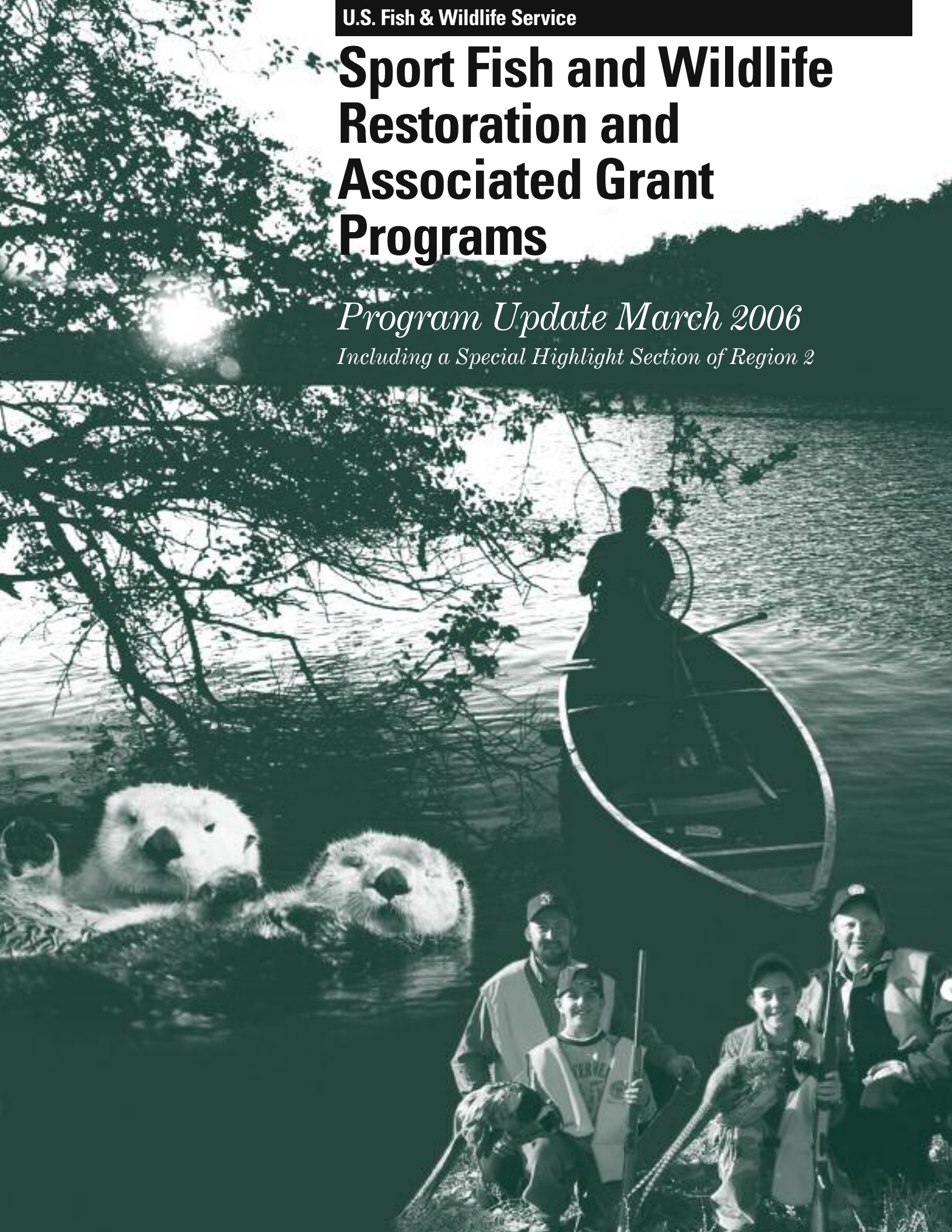




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Comments from Former Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs



Mitch King

I would like to spend my space in this Program Update saying a couple of “good-byes” and emphasizing a couple of very important activities in Federal Assistance.

The Retirement of a Great Man

Most of you know that Kris LaMontagne is about to retire from a long and productive career with the Service. For the past 5+ years, Kris has offered his talents to the Federal Assistance program, and we owe him a great debt for the time he has spent with us. Kris stepped in as Chief of Federal Assistance when the program was undergoing a very high level of scrutiny. His high ethical standards, his fantastic management talents, his straightforward way of communicating; and his diligence were what kept the program on course through those very rough times. His shoes will be tough to fill.

Kris – The Federal Assistance Program will miss you (personally and professionally) when you leave us. On behalf of all of us in Federal Assistance – THANK YOU AND BEST WISHES in your retirement.



Kris LaMontagne

A Change in the Assistant Director Position

As you have probably heard, Director Hall has asked me to take the position of Regional Director for the Mountain-Prairie Region (Denver) and I have accepted. In the short 16 months that I have had the pleasure of being in this position, we have done some great things. We have turned the corner in our relationships with the Hill, the States and our industry partners. We have kicked off a new conservation initiative (State Wildlife Grants) that will one day equal the importance of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration programs. We have seen a marked increase in available fuel tax funding for the Sport Fish Restoration program. We have taken on one of the most significant problems facing the program (excise tax issues) with some great success. We are just getting started with a coordinated effort to make sure that hunters and anglers know about the excise tax program and manufacturers know how their contributions are being spent and appreciate the tax. The rest of the Service is now beginning to better understand what we in Federal Assistance do and the contributions we are making to the Service’s conservation goals. This has been an amazing 16 months and I have really appreciated the opportunity to come along for the ride. THANK YOU.

State Wildlife Grants

You’ve heard me refer to the State Wildlife Grant program as a “New Era in Fish and Wildlife Conservation.” Indeed it is just that. We are setting the stage for a significant funding source that is specifically earmarked for our State partners to use for the conservation and management of fish and wildlife species of special concern.

By last October, all 56 States, Commonwealths, territories, and the District of Columbia had submitted their proposed strategies. I was absolutely amazed at the hard work and innovative thinking that these entities put into this effort. Each took a different approach, some were similar, some were very

interesting, but all represented a strong commitment by our partners to see this program succeed.

I want to take just a minute to say thank you to the National Advisory Acceptance Team (NAAT) and their support staff. As you may know, the Director identified this State/FWS partnership to help him review these strategies and make recommendations to him on whether to approve, conditionally approve or reject them. The NAAT includes the ARDs for Migratory Birds and State Programs from each of the seven Service Regions (Chris McKay, Nancy Gloman, John Christian, EJ Williams, Sherry Morgan, Paul Gertler and Doug Alcorn), and a State Director representing each of the four Regional Associations of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (Ed Parker - CT, Noel Holcomb - GA, Mike McKenna - ND and Jeff Koenings - WA). Until very recently, I had the opportunity to co-chair the team, along with Ron Regan (from Vermont) who represented the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. Over the past six months, this team (along with a long list of support staff) have taken the time to carefully read each of these strategies and come together at five week long meeting (with several more to go) to compare notes and make recommendations on each of the strategies. They are taking their responsibilities seriously and are doing a great service to their State partners, the FWS and anyone interested in natural resource conservation. Hats off to them for a job well done!

Excise Taxes

During my first few days on this job, I was told that we had some very significant problems relative to collecting and accounting for excise taxes. Consequently, Glen Salmon (Chair of the Trust Funds Committee of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies) and I placed a high priority on reinvigorating the working group that focused on excise tax collections. We brought Internal Revenue Service (IRS)

leadership to the table and heard a strong message from industry that the inconsistent application of excise tax laws, regulations and guidance was creating a situation where some in the industry were able to exploit varying IRS interpretations into a competitive market advantage. We, along with IRS, immediately began to focus on this issue with the ultimate goal of eliminating any competitive advantage attributable to the excise tax.

IRS hired and trained several new auditors that focus exclusively on the fishing and archery excise taxes. They also initiated a very comprehensive review of the laws, the regulations and their guidance to eliminate any inconsistencies in industry interpretation and auditor application of the excise tax program. We helped by coordinating a forum between IRS, industry and the States for the exchange of ideas and issues.

It has taken nearly 16 months, but we are finally to the point where IRS is ready to officially release their new guidance. Just a few weeks back, we saw the results of their hard work. While I can't say everyone was happy with the outcome, I can say that they have successfully eliminated any avenue for innovative industry accountants to use the excise tax to gain a competitive advantage over their competitors. In that respect, this effort has been a great success. I want to thank IRS for their commitment to this task. I also want to personally thank Pam Matthes. Without a doubt, much of the success of this effort was directly attributable to her diligence.

This working group has made a lot of progress over the last 16 months, but there is plenty more work to do. We will now begin to focus on working with IRS and TTB to verify and more closely track excise tax collections. It is important that we fully understand the tax cycle—from the manufacturer's payment to the distribution to the States. Pam—your diligence is still needed!

Signing Off

Let me close by saying once again, THANK YOU for the opportunity to work with each and every one of you on this very important piece of natural resource conservation. It has been an informative and rewarding time and it is with mixed emotions that I pass the baton to the next Assistant Director.



Comments from Dr. Benjamin Tuggle, Acting Regional Director, Southwest Region



Dr. Benjamin Tuggle

This edition of the Federal Assistance Program Update highlights the Fish and Wildlife Service's Southwest Region, the States of Texas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, and Arizona. This Region is made up of some of the most varied ecosystems in North America. Vast expanses of the Sonoran desert and the Chihuahuan desert occur through the southern portions of Arizona and New Mexico. The High Plains short grass prairies of western Oklahoma, the Texas panhandle, and eastern New Mexico are part of a vast prairie ecosystem drained by rivers flowing eastward toward big rivers that drain into the Gulf of Mexico. The central Texas Edwards Plateau or "hill country" is unique in its canyons, woodlands and spring-fed rivers. These rivers run through the Texas coastal plains into the seven bays and estuaries of the Texas gulf coast and the Laguna Madre barrier islands, a stopover and home to millions of migratory birds every winter and spring. East Texas and southeast Oklahoma include the western limits of the eastern deciduous and southern pine forests, drained by rivers with ancient big river species such as the paddlefish and the alligator snapping turtle.

From the call of spring peepers in its eastern forests to the wing beats of migratory birds, to the rush of hoof of the Sonoran pronghorn in Arizona, the Southwest Region has a complex and sometimes unique array of wildlife and sport fish management and recreational opportunities. The Southwest is an outdoor enthusiast's cornucopia from bass fishing in Texas lakes, fly fishing for trout in the mountain streams, elk hunting in the forests, to birding in the lower Rio Grande and the Sky Islands of Arizona. A large percentage of Southwesterners are involved with hunting and fishing and they have a great interest in the opportunities provided by the Federal Assistance programs. In New Mexico alone there are 289,000 resident fishing license holders and New Mexico's population is only 1.7 million.

To place the scope of the Region's fish and wildlife management needs in perspective, according to the Service's 2001 national survey, almost 8 million of the Southwest Region's residents (33 percent of the population 16 years and older) participate in wildlife recreation activities. In addition to anglers and hunters, wildlife watchers comprise about 50 percent of each number. These wildlife enthusiasts annually spend approximately \$8 billion on fishing, hunting, and wildlife watching activities. These 8 million people are directly affected by the grant programs administered by the Southwest Region's Federal Assistance Division.

The Southwest Region is committed to fulfilling its responsibilities to its trust resources and the American people through partnerships. The Federal Assistance Division works closely with the four States, tribes, and others to make resources available through 12 grant programs. These grants provide target ranges, boating access, hunting and fishing opportunities, habitat protection, and enhancement and recovery of endangered and threatened species. The Service's grant programs help each State or tribe achieve its own objectives while contributing to national conservation goals.

Some of the best conservation and environmental protection results when States, landowners, hunters, anglers, Native Americans, boaters, and others work together. This is a great strength of these programs. In the last fiscal year, Federal Assistance in this Region provided approximately \$80 million in grants to the four states.

In the Southwest Region, about 75 percent of all land ownership is private. In Texas and Oklahoma, 98 percent of land ownership is private. If we are going to meet our obligation to the American people to protect our rich natural resources legacy, it is imperative that Federal and State governments work with landowners to conserve habitat and

endangered, threatened, and candidate species. The Landowner Incentive program, the State Wildlife Grants, and the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund have provided the Service with the opportunity to work with the States, local governments and landowners to benefit a diverse array of at-risk species including the ocelot, aplomado falcon, and Chihuahua chub. In the Southwest Region, plants, mollusks, insects, fish, amphibians, reptiles, and mammals have benefited from these grant programs.

There are 83 tribes and pueblos in the Southwest Region. Some of the very best

habitat is found on reservations and pueblo lands because of the legacy of stewardship of the lands practiced by Native American peoples. The Federal Assistance Division works closely with the Region's Tribal Liaison to fund projects proposed by the tribes and pueblos. In FY05, eight tribes and pueblos received grants totaling \$1.7 million.

In this publication, you can read about some of the activities funded through the Federal Assistance Division. I am proud of the partnerships that we have forged in this Region among the Service and the States and tribes. Together we are doing good work and making a difference.



Ocelot/USFWS

New Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration



Rowan Gould

Rowan Gould, previously the Regional Director in Alaska, has moved to Washington, D.C., to fill the position of Assistant Director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration. This position works closely with State fish and wildlife agencies and oversees the Service's Federal Assistance program which annually provides millions of dollars in grants to states and other partners.

Rowan holds a PhD. in fish pathology and fish biology from Oregon State University. Before going to Alaska as Regional

Director in 2003, he served as Deputy Regional Director for the Pacific Region in Portland, Oregon. He has served as Deputy Assistant Director of Fisheries in Washington, D.C., in Alaska as Assistant Regional Director for Refuges and Wildlife from 1991-1995, and as Assistant Regional Director for Ecological Services and Fisheries from 1987-1991, and held several research positions with the Service.

Welcome Rowan, we are happy you are on board!

Federal Assistance Personnel and Projects Recognized by the States Organization for Boating Access

The States Organization for Boating Access (SOBA) recognized two individuals from the Division of Federal Assistance for their efforts with promoting boating access opportunities and dedication to the States with their boating programs at their national meeting in the fall of 2005. Jerry Novotny, a long-time Federal Assistance employee from the Portland Regional Office, received SOBA's Special Recognition Award for his many years and efforts with partnering with States and SOBA to improve boating programs. SOBA also recognized retired Region 5 Federal Assistance Chief Dr. Bob Sousa with the Outstanding Service Award. Bob was instrumentally involved in the

development of the Wallop-Breaux Amendments, and participated in the organizational meeting that gave birth to SOBA in the 1980s.

SOBA also recognized several projects funded through Service grant programs and the Sport Fishing and Boating Safety Fund at their national meeting. Award winners include:

State Clean Vessel Act Program Excellence Award- The Oregon State Marine Board was recognized for their dedication and excellence in implementing the Clean Vessel Act program in the State's inland and coastal waters.





Dr. Bob Sousa

Small Boating Access Project of the Year-

The Oregon Marine Board was recognized for their renovation of the Lincoln County, Oregon, boating access site. This site provides access to the Siletz River at river mile 16.3. Project activities included replacement of the boat ramp and enhancing the existing parking area. The enhanced parking area was designed to maximize the number of vehicle spaces and also to improve traffic circulation. Cooperators in the project also included the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife and also Lincoln County. The project was completed using Sport Fish Restoration funds (Oregon project F-111-D-218).

Midsize Boating Access Project of the Year-

The Maryland Department of Natural Resources was recognized by the States Organization for Boating Access for renovation of the Franklin Street Boat Ramp in 2005. Improvements to the Franklin Street Boat Ramp site consisted of removal of the existing concrete boat ramps and support bulkhead and replacement of the support bulkhead and construction of two new launching lanes with two accessible floating boarding piers. The renovations at the Franklin Street launching facility will provide necessary upgrades and safety improvements to allow the growing numbers of boating and fishing public to have continued opportunities for safe access to the recreational fisheries existing in the surrounding waters. The project was funded using Sport Fish Restoration program funds.



Jerry Novotny

Large Boating Access Project of the Year-

The Alaska Department of Game and Fish was recognized for their efforts with the Amalga Harbor Ramp Rehabilitation project (Alaska Sport Fish Restoration Project F-13-D-80) which provides anglers and boaters access to the marine waters of Stephens Passage and Lynn Canal north of Juneau. A single lane launch ramp had been constructed in Amalga Harbor in 1971 and in 1987 a second ramp was added. Since 1987 recreational boat use in the Juneau area has increased over 50 percent. This project rehabilitated and extended the existing launch ramps to accommodate larger boats, improved the boarding float, and expanded the parking lot. The improvements reduced congestion, shortened launch and retrieval times, and provide a safe and efficient facility.

Marinas and Harbors Project of the Year-

The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission and the city of Tampa, Florida, were recognized for their Boating Infrastructure Grant program project completed at the Marjorie Park Marina. The marina at this facility has undergone an extensive renovation. Using a combination of both Tier 1 and Tier 2 awards from the Boating Infrastructure Grant program, the city has added almost 1,000 feet of additional docking space with electricity and water services for transient boaters.

Announcing a New Federal Assistance Office

The California/Nevada Operations (CNO) Office of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is pleased to announce the formation of a branch office of the Division of Federal Assistance within the CNO. This new office has assumed the Federal Assistance program in California and Nevada from the Region 1 Office in Portland Oregon. The effective date for the new office was June 13, 2005. The CNO Office wishes to thank the Region 1 Federal Assistance folks for all their help and assistance during the transition period—we could not have done it without you!

Laura Valoppi is the new Chief of Federal Assistance for CNO. Laura has worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for over 8 years. She has served in the Sacramento Fish and Wildlife Office for 4 years in the Endangered Species Program, working on Habitat Conservation Plans, Safe Harbor Agreements, and Section 6 non-traditional grants. For the previous 4 years she was in the Environmental Contaminants program in the Sacramento office, where she worked on natural resource damage assessments and wildlife toxicology issues.

Prior to working for the Service, she worked for several years as a human health and wildlife toxicologist for the State of California. Laura holds a Bachelor of Science degree in natural resources management from University of Michigan, Ann Arbor, and a Master of Science degree in Water Science from the University of California, Davis.

Tracey Vriens is the new Grants Fiscal Officer for CNO. Tracey has worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 10 years. She worked from May 2002-July 2005 as the Program Analyst for Federal Assistance in the Washington, D.C., Office. She also worked as the Fiscal Specialist for Federal Assistance in the Region 1 Office in Portland, Oregon, from July 1995-May 2002. Prior to working for the Service, she worked for 6 years for the National Marine Fisheries Service.

Phil Morrison, Rachel Miller and Becky Miller are grants management specialists for the CNO. Philip Morrison has worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for 15 years. He served in the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program in Sacramento for the last 2 1/2 years. Prior to coming to

Members of the Service's Division of Federal Assistance's newly opened California/Nevada Operations (CNO) office include from L to R, starting in back: Laura Valoppi (Chief of Federal Assistance- CNO), Tracey Vriens (Grants Fiscal Officer), Becky Miller (Grants Management Specialist), Phil Morrison (Grants Management Specialist). Rachel Miller was not available for the photo.



California, he served as a Federal Permits and Projects biologist at the New England Field Office in Concord, New Hampshire. There he reviewed development proposals and State and Federal projects for compliance with wetland and other environmental regulations. Philip holds a Bachelor of Science degree in forestry from Louisiana State University and a Master of Science degree in Wildlife Ecology from Mississippi State University.

Rachel Miller arrived at CNO in October 2005, fresh from Region 1 Federal Assistance and is happy to continue working with California and Nevada partners on many of the same grants and issues she did in Portland. Prior to coming to Federal Assistance in 2002, Rachel worked for the Service since 1993 in several positions, all with Ecological Services in R1 and R3. She worked at R1 Endangered Species, the Oregon State Snake River Basin, and East Lansing Fish and Wildlife Offices. Prior to that, Rachel worked for the U.S. Forest Service and earned her Master of Science at Oregon State University and Bachelor of Science at Michigan State University.

Becky Miller is new to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Federal government. She joined the CNO in October 2005 after working 18 years for the State of California. Most of her 18 years working for State government were with the California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG). Her last position was as the Section 6 and State Wildlife Grant Coordinator for the CDFG, where Becky coordinated and/or managed more than 70 Federal Assistance grants. Prior to that Becky worked for a variety of CDFG programs including the coordination of conservation planning and restoration for wetlands and riparian habitat, and the conservation and recovery of nongame fish and invertebrate species. She spent 3 years working for the CDFG Project WILD environmental education program and 3 years as staff biologist for the California Fish and Game Commission. Becky also spent 2 years working for the California State Water Resources Control Board managing U.S. EPA Clean Water Act grants. Becky, a Sacramento-area native, has a Bachelor of Arts degree in Environmental Biology from California State University, Sacramento.

Staff Directory Federal Assistance

Washington DC Office

Federal Assistance Main Phone Number
703/358 2156

Web Address
<http://federalaid.fws.gov>

Rowan Gould, Assistant Director for
Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration
Programs

Vacant, Division Chief

Jim Greer, Deputy Division Chief -
Operations

Doug Gentile, Civil Rights Coordinator
for Public Access

Jimmye Kane, Lead Secretary

Pam Matthes, Multistate Conservation
Grants Coordinator

Vacant, Secretary

Branch of Budget and Administration

Tom Jeffrey, Branch Chief - Budget
Development and Execution - Program
Management

Mary Grieco, Administrative Officer

Vacant, Program Support Assistant

Vacant, Program Analyst

Branch of Information Management

Lori Bennett, Branch Chief

Vacant, Fiscal Management - Audit
Liaison

Ed Duda, System Developer

Michele Storz, IT Specialist

Jeffrey Graves, Server Support - Web Site
Support

Pete Hitchcock, Network Engineer,
Security Officer, Acting FAIMS Lead

C. J. Huang, Database Administrator

Sandie Lehberger, Administrative
Technician

David Washington, ADP Systems Support -
ADP Acquisition Support

Debbie Wircenske, Help Desk and Fiscal
Administration Training

Luther Zachary, FAIMS Branch Chief

Branch of Grants Operations and Policy

Tom Barnes, Branch Chief

Brian Bohnsack, Sport Fish Restoration
Coastal Wetlands - Clean Vessel Act -
Boating Infrastructure Grants

Kim Galvan, Regulations - Support staff for
Joint Federal/State Task Force for Federal
Assistance

Genevieve Pullis-LaRouche, State Wildlife
Grants - Landowner Incentive Program

Vacant, Regulations - Education Liaison

Chris Burkett, IPA - State Wildlife Grants

Branch of Audits

Pat McHugh, Branch Chief - Audits

Ord Bargerstock, Systems Accountant -
Audit Resolution

Branch of Surveys

Sylvia Cabrera, Branch Chief - National
Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-
Associated Recreation

Richard Aiken, Economist - National
Survey

Jerry Leonard, Economist - National
Survey

Branch of Training

Steve Leggans, Branch Chief

Julie Schroyer, Administrative Analyst

Debbie Unbehagen, Grants Management
Specialist (Instructor)

Scott McKnight, Grants Management
Specialist (Instructor)

Federal Assistance Program Overview

The goal of the Federal Assistance program is to work with States to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, their habitats, and the hunting, sport fishing, and recreational boating opportunities they provide. The Federal Assistance Program is responsible for administering the following Programs:

- Wildlife Restoration
- Sport Fish Restoration
- Clean Vessel Act
- Boating Infrastructure Grants
- National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants
- Multistate Conservation Grants
- State Wildlife Grants
- Landowner Incentive
- Hunter Education and Safety Program

In addition, Federal Assistance provides grant management support for endangered species traditional section 6, Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Land Acquisition, HCP Planning, and Recovery Land Acquisition grant programs. The following is an update on the accomplishments of the Federal Assistance program and its partners with these grant programs.



Texas coastal estuary/USFWS

Focus on Specific Programs and Activities



Major Milestones Met for State Wildlife Grants

On October 1, 2005, the State Wildlife Grants program reached an important milestone: all 56 Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies (Strategies) were submitted to the Service. These Strategies were required for States, Commonwealths, territories, and the District of Columbia to continue to receive State Wildlife Grants. These documents represent an ambitious undertaking and identify the species of greatest conservation need and critical habitats found within each State. Likewise, the Strategies identify conservation concerns affecting species and habitats, detail necessary conservation actions to conserve these resources, and outline how species, habitats, and conservation efforts will be monitored, evaluated, and adaptively managed over time. Finally, the Strategies describe how conservation partners and the public will be involved in the implementation and revision of each Strategy over the next decade.

Beginning in July 2005, the National Advisory Acceptance Team (NAAT) began working to review the Strategies to determine if they satisfactorily addressed the eight required elements. At their February 2006 meeting, the NAAT completed its initial review of all 56 Strategies. Overall, 38 have either been approved by the Service Director or have been recommended for approval by the NAAT. The remaining Strategies have either been conditionally approved or recommended for conditional approval by the NAAT. Of the strategies that were conditionally approved by the Director, three have been resubmitted to the NAAT and have been subsequently recommended for approval.

At the national level, a number of efforts are underway to support the Strategies and the State Wildlife Grants program. Service personnel continue to meet with Congressional staffers to help elected officials understand the value of the Strategies and the conservation

opportunities they represent. Likewise, Service personnel are promoting the strategies within the Service, the Department of the Interior, and other Federal agencies to make resources managers aware of the Strategies and explain how these documents could facilitate their efforts. Finally, a number of Service personnel are involved in drafting new administrative guideline documents to assist States as they move from planning and writing to implementing their Strategies.



Landowner Incentive Program

On September 16, 2005, the Service published a Notice in the Federal Register (70 FR 54765) requesting comments on the proposed revisions to the National Review Team Ranking Criteria Guidance for Tier 2 Landowner Incentive (LIP) program Grant Proposals. The Service received 28 written responses by the close of the comment period on October 31, 2005. The responses came from 25 State fish and wildlife agencies, one nongovernmental organization, and two private citizens. The Service received a total of 21 substantive comments regarding the ranking criteria guidance. Based on these substantive comments, a few additional revisions to the ranking criteria were made. Overall, the Service believes these changes to the ranking criteria guidance will allow reviewers to more fairly assess the merit of Tier 2 LIP grant proposals. The Service has provided via the Federal Register the final National Review Team Ranking Criteria Guidance for Tier 2 LIP Grant Proposals, and responses to the substantive comments that were received.

Also by way of the Federal Register, the Service has requested proposals for fiscal year 2006 funding under the LIP Program for conservation grants to States, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, Guam, the United States Virgin Islands, the Northern Mariana Islands, and American Samoa. The approximate level of funding for Tier 1 and Tier 2 grants is \$18.9 million. Each State may apply for up to \$180,000 in Tier 1 funds and up to \$945,000 in combined Tier 1 and Tier 2 funding.

State Apportionment from Sport Fish Restoration Program Reaches All-Time High

State fish and wildlife agencies and America's anglers benefited in fiscal year 2005 from the all time highest single year apportionment from the Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) program. The total apportionment from the SFR program in fiscal year 2005 was \$294,691,282, which included a carryover of \$20.4 million of program funds from fiscal year 2004 funds. The carryover of funds was the first ever for the program. The Service had to withhold program funds during 2004 to ensure that adequate funds were available for the various program reauthorization proposals (e.g., Clean Vessel Act, Boating Infrastructure Grant, and the U.S. Coast Guard's Recreational Boating Safety Program) that were being considered by Congress and which are funded from the Sport Fishing and Boating Trust Fund (previously known as the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund).

The Sport Fish Restoration program has now apportioned more than \$4.75 billion to State agencies for the fisheries conservation programs since its inception. The Program's stable funding continues to allow States to develop successful fisheries and boating opportunities. The Service and State cooperators achieved many significant accomplishments in FY 2005. Some of these include:

- Training more than 390,000 students about aquatic education and conservation;
- Stocking more than 180,000,000 fish;
- Managing more than 760 boating access sites;
- Maintaining more than 1,800 fishing areas and access sites; and
- Developing/renovating 10 fish hatchery facilities.

In addition to these accomplishments, four specific projects were recognized by the American Fisheries Society's Fisheries

Administrator's Section as their "Outstanding Federal Aid in Sport Fish Awards of the Year." These projects include the following:

Sport Fishery Development and Management Category: Laurel Bed Lake Restoration - The Virginia Department of Game and Inland Fisheries used Sport Fish Restoration Funds to restore this 330-acre lake in Russell County. The lake's pH was restored to suitable levels by an extensive liming project completed by the Virginia

department. The lake is now restored and efforts are underway to restore its brook trout fishery. In addition, smallmouth bass have been stocked to provide anglers a different species to pursue. Laurel Lake is located in the scenic Clinch Mountain Wildlife Management area.

Aquatic Education Category: Kid's Fishing Clinics - The Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission was recognized for their aquatic education program efforts in providing kids' fishing clinics throughout the State. Florida has



one of the premier kids' fishing clinic programs in the country and thousands of children experience their first fishing opportunity annually through this program. Florida has developed a comprehensive program that combines an aggressive fish stocking program in coordination with the aquatic education clinics to ensure that the young anglers have a quality fishing experience that hopefully leads to lifelong participation in angling.

Research and Survey Category: Lake Michigan Technical Committee, Salmonid Working Group - This multiagency collaboration of State and Federal fishery management agencies has led the management of the salmonid species in Lake Michigan. This group's efforts are essential in maintaining and improving the economically important salmonid species in Lake Michigan.

Wildlife Restoration Apportionment Reaches New Levels

The apportionment from the Wildlife Restoration program reached an all time high in fiscal year 2005. The total apportionment was \$235,455,853 and the program has now awarded almost \$4.8 billion since 1939 for wildlife conservation efforts in the United States, benefiting countless species of animals, as well as hunters and wildlife enthusiasts. The funding increase is largely the result of increased excise tax collections from firearms.

Since the beginning of the program, States and territories have used over half of the Wildlife Restoration program funds to buy, develop, maintain, and operate wildlife management areas. Over 4 million acres have been purchased outright since the program began—enough to cover all of Connecticut and Rhode Island—and some 40 million acres—an area larger than the State of Wisconsin—are managed for wildlife under agreements with landowners. Along with habitat acquisition, better management methods have yielded remarkable results. Over the last 65+ years, the Wildlife Restoration

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Final Apportionment of Dingell-Johnson Sport Fish Restoration Funds for Fiscal Year 2005 Sport Fish

State	Restoration
ALABAMA	\$4,422,820
ALASKA	14,734,564
ARIZONA	5,922,343
ARKANSAS	5,642,674
CALIFORNIA	14,734,564
COLORADO	7,008,028
CONNECTICUT	2,946,913
DELAWARE	2,946,913
DISTRICT OF COLUMBIA	982,304
FLORIDA	7,914,307
GEORGIA	5,633,286
HAWAII	2,946,913
IDAHO	5,001,608
ILLINOIS	5,892,633
INDIANA	4,043,934
IOWA	4,232,551
KANSAS	4,262,230
KENTUCKY	4,629,054
LOUISIANA	5,200,984
MAINE	2,946,913
MARYLAND	2,946,913
MASSACHUSETTS	2,946,913
MICHIGAN	9,945,909
MINNESOTA	11,165,735
MISSISSIPPI	3,650,051
MISSOURI	7,134,020
MONTANA	7,019,722
NEBRASKA	3,630,946
NEVADA	4,414,267
NEW HAMPSHIRE	2,946,913
NEW JERSEY	2,946,913
NEW MEXICO	5,132,285
NEW YORK	7,396,138
NORTH CAROLINA	5,494,411
NORTH DAKOTA	3,278,612
OHIO	6,878,971
OKLAHOMA	5,623,487
OREGON	7,087,755
PENNSYLVANIA	7,489,335
RHODE ISLAND	2,946,913
SOUTH CAROLINA	3,702,853
SOUTH DAKOTA	3,699,812
TENNESSEE	7,029,132
TEXAS	14,734,564
UTAH	4,899,623
VERMONT	2,946,913
VIRGINIA	4,731,149
WASHINGTON	6,124,056
WEST VIRGINIA	2,946,913
WISCONSIN	10,191,022
WYOMING	4,687,372
AMERICAN SAMOA	982,304
GUAM	982,304
N. MARIANA ISLANDS	982,304
PUERTO RICO	2,946,912
VIRGIN ISLANDS	982,304
TOTAL	\$294,691,282

program has played a major role in restoring many species to abundance, including the North American elk, wild turkey, wood duck, white-tailed deer, and pronghorn antelope. Some of the more notable 2005 accomplishments with Wildlife Restoration program funds in fiscal year 2005:

- operations and maintenance for State facilities and areas encompassing more than 10 million acres;
- 907,392 acres of habitat improved for game and non-game species;
- 2,368 scientific research projects—including propagation, biology, utilization, and habitat needs—of species;
- 29,361 private landowners received technical assistance on wildlife management on their property nationwide; and
- 7,781 animals (e.g., pronghorn, wild turkey, etc.) were stocked as part of species restoration efforts.

State Audits

The Division of Federal Assistance is coming to the end of the current cycle of State audits being conducted by the Department of Interior Office of Inspector General. There are currently 16 audits in process. To date the Division has received 36 final reports for the current cycle of audits. All remaining audits will be started by September 2006. Our experiences and the feedback from the audits continue to be very positive. The Division strives to maintain open lines of communication between the auditors, grantees, and Federal Assistance offices, and all comments and suggestions on our audit program are welcome.

The next 5-year cycle of state audits will begin October 2006. The Division will continue our relationship with the Department of the Interior Office of Inspector General for audit services. In addition to the mandatory examinations of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration program grants, the next cycle will include awards from the Landowner Incentive

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Final Apportionment of Pittman-Robertson Wildlife Restoration Funds for Fiscal Year 2005

STATE	Wildlife* FY '04 Sec. 10		TOTAL	Hunter Education		TOTAL Wildlife + Hunter Ed
	Restoration	Reverted Funds		FY 2005 Section 4	FY 2005 Section 10	
ALABAMA	\$3,185,681	\$0	\$3,185,681	\$863,851	\$180,544	\$4,230,076
ALASKA	9,423,210	37,383	9,460,593	382,777	80,000	9,923,370
ARIZONA	4,478,083	0	4,478,083	996,627	208,294	5,683,004
ARKANSAS	3,944,958	37,383	3,982,341	382,777	80,000	4,445,118
CALIFORNIA	6,618,008	0	6,618,008	1,148,328	240,000	8,006,336
COLORADO	4,974,212	0	4,974,212	835,521	174,624	5,984,357
CONNECTICUT	942,322	0	942,322	661,532	138,260	1,742,114
DELAWARE	942,322	3,739	946,061	382,777	80,000	1,408,838
FLORIDA	2,812,063	37,383	2,849,446	1,148,328	240,000	4,237,774
GEORGIA	3,776,908	0	3,776,908	1,148,328	240,000	5,165,236
HAWAII	942,322	0	942,322	382,777	80,000	1,405,099
IDAHO	3,972,723	37,383	4,010,106	382,777	80,000	4,472,883
ILLINOIS	3,468,951	0	3,468,951	1,148,328	240,000	4,857,279
INDIANA	2,501,762	0	2,501,762	1,148,328	240,000	3,890,090
IOWA	3,312,473	37,383	3,349,856	568,439	118,804	4,037,099
KANSAS	3,630,786	37,383	3,668,169	382,777	80,000	4,130,946
KENTUCKY	3,325,605	37,383	3,362,988	785,115	164,089	4,312,192
LOUISIANA	3,059,393	0	3,059,393	868,100	181,432	4,108,925
MAINE	2,213,097	0	2,213,097	382,777	80,000	2,675,874
MARYLAND	1,069,146	0	1,069,146	1,028,844	215,028	2,313,018
MASSACHUSETTS	942,322	0	942,322	1,148,328	240,000	2,330,650
MICHIGAN	7,033,923	37,383	7,071,306	1,148,328	240,000	8,459,634
MINNESOTA	6,012,917	0	6,012,917	955,610	199,722	7,168,249
MISSISSIPPI	2,854,470	37,383	2,891,853	552,576	115,488	3,559,917
MISSOURI	5,387,714	37,383	5,425,097	1,086,872	227,156	6,739,125
MONTANA	5,766,550	37,383	5,803,933	382,777	80,000	6,266,710
NEBRASKA	3,366,336	0	3,366,336	382,777	80,000	3,829,113
NEVADA	3,634,464	0	3,634,464	382,777	80,000	4,097,241
NEW HAMPSHIRE	942,322	37,383	979,705	382,777	80,000	1,442,482
NEW JERSEY	942,322	0	942,322	1,148,328	240,000	2,330,650
NEW MEXICO	4,261,695	37,383	4,299,078	382,777	80,000	4,761,855
NEW YORK	5,394,676	0	5,394,676	1,148,328	240,000	6,783,004
NORTH CAROLINA	4,216,470	37,383	4,253,853	1,148,328	240,000	5,642,181
NORTH DAKOTA	2,981,275	0	2,981,275	382,777	80,000	3,444,052
OHIO	3,838,454	37,383	3,875,837	1,148,328	240,000	5,264,165
OKLAHOMA	4,098,639	0	4,098,639	670,291	140,090	4,909,020
OREGON	4,678,449	0	4,678,449	664,608	138,903	5,481,960
PENNSYLVANIA	7,592,665	0	7,592,665	1,148,328	240,000	8,980,993
RHODE ISLAND	942,322	0	942,322	382,777	80,000	1,405,099
SOUTH CAROLINA	1,303,704	37,383	1,341,087	779,335	162,881	2,283,303
SOUTH DAKOTA	3,553,023	0	3,553,023	382,777	80,000	4,015,800
TENNESSEE	5,708,427	37,383	5,745,810	1,105,145	230,974	7,081,929
TEXAS	9,423,210	0	9,423,210	1,148,328	240,000	10,811,538
UTAH	3,456,882	0	3,456,882	382,777	80,000	3,919,659
VERMONT	942,322	0	942,322	382,777	80,000	1,405,099
VIRGINIA	3,070,037	0	3,070,037	1,148,328	240,000	4,458,365
WASHINGTON	3,204,707	0	3,204,707	1,144,934	239,290	4,588,931
WEST VIRGINIA	2,331,008	37,383	2,368,391	382,777	80,000	2,831,168
WISCONSIN	6,059,066	37,383	6,096,449	1,041,896	217,756	7,356,101
WYOMING	3,731,061	0	3,731,061	382,777	80,000	4,193,838
AMERICAN SAMOA	314,107	0	314,107	63,796	13,333	391,236
GUAM	314,107	0	314,107	63,796	13,333	391,236
N. MARIANA ISLANDS	314,107	0	314,107	63,796	13,333	391,236
PUERTO RICO	942,321	0	942,321	63,796	13,333	1,019,450
VIRGIN ISLANDS	314,107	0	314,107	63,796	13,333	391,236
TOTAL	\$188,464,206	\$714,016	\$189,178,222	\$38,277,631	\$8,000,000	\$235,455,853

*The Wildlife apportionment includes adjustments for revised South Carolina license certifications.

program and the State Wildlife Grants to the scope of audits. This expands our audit coverage and provides a new level of effective and efficient monitoring of new programs.

The State audits that are currently in the fieldwork stage are:

Arizona
Delaware
Georgia
Hawaii
Maryland
Oklahoma
South Carolina

For additional information on this issue, please contact Patrick McHugh.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Announces Fiscal Year 2005 Boating Infrastructure Grant Program Awards

Congress approved additional funding for Federal fiscal year 2005 for the Boating Infrastructure Grant program in late September 2005 as part of a technical corrections bill to the then recently passed Safe, Accountable, Flexible and Efficient Transportation Equity Act (a.k.a., Highway Bill). As a result, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announced additional Tier 2 Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) program awards for Federal fiscal year 2005 this past October. Specifically, the Service awarded more than \$4 million in Tier 2 BIG grants to eight States for their efforts in providing additional facilities for recreational boaters. The States were Kentucky, Maryland, Ohio, New Jersey, Tennessee, Texas, Virginia and Washington.

Because Congress made more money available this fiscal year, this round of grants builds upon BIG grants awarded in spring 2005. At that time, the Service awarded three large competitive grants to Maine, South Carolina and Virginia and 33 Tier 1 grants to State agencies responsible for boating. With the additional funds approved by Congress, the combined total of Tier 2 awards for fiscal year 2005 exceeded \$5 million. Money for BIG comes from the Sport Fish



Restoration and Boating Trust Fund. This fund is supported by excise taxes paid on certain fishing and boating equipment.

“Boating can make an important contribution to local economies,” said Interior Secretary Gale Norton. “These grants empower State and local governments and other partners to improve recreational boating and fishing opportunities, strengthening community ties to the water’s edge by enhancing access to recreational, historic, cultural, natural and scenic resources for millions of boat owners.”

The BIG program has two levels of funding, Tier-1 and Tier-2. Under the Tier-1 portion, all States and territories can receive up to \$100,000 to construct or improve docking facilities for transient (short term, non-trailerable boats) without competing against other proposals. The Tier-2 portion of the BIG program enables larger projects to compete for available funding.

The BIG Tier-2 proposals are reviewed by a panel of Service representatives, as well as a committee from the Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council. The Council, a federally chartered body which advises the Secretary of the Interior and the Service on recreational fishing and boating issues, made an initial funding recommendation to the Service based on a review of project proposals by a Council-appointed committee.

The grant awards announced in October included:

Annapolis City Dock, Maryland —

In cooperation with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, the city of Annapolis was awarded \$500,000 to replace and upgrade an existing boardwalk, provide 20 transient boat slips and associated utilities connections, and replace an adjacent deteriorated bulkhead. The project will provide additional economic impact to the local community by providing additional docking space for transient boats.

Fulton Harbor (Aransas County Navigation District No. 1), Texas —

In cooperation with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, the Aransas County Navigation District was awarded \$422,685 to construct 15 new slips designated for use by transient boats at Fulton Harbor. Currently there are no dedicated transient docking facilities and the existing slips are at 100 percent occupancy. Fulton Harbor is located on the mid-Texas Gulf coast near the cities of Rockport and Fulton. These additional slips will significantly increase the opportunities for larger recreational boats to visit the area.

Cumberland Yacht Harbor, Nashville, Tennessee —

In cooperation with the Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency, the Cumberland Yacht Harbor was awarded \$376,172 to construct a 680 foot dock, 20 slips and restrooms for boaters, as well as dredging access to the marina. The Cumberland Yacht Harbor is a planned waterfront community near the central business district of Nashville. The facilities will provide boaters access to Nashville's many attractions, including the National Football League's Titan Stadium.

Glass City Municipal Marina, Toledo, Ohio —

In cooperation with the Ohio Department of Natural Resources Division of Watercraft, the city of Toledo was awarded \$226,500 to provide transient moorage for boaters visiting the new 125-acre Marina District being developed on the now closed First Energy/Toledo Edison Acme Power Plant Site. Within the Marina District will be residences, commercial retail stores, restaurants, a Hovercraft port, a marine passenger terminal, and the Glass City municipal marina. This marina will have 100 boat slips, 20 of which will be dedicated for transient use. The 20 slips will provide an opportunity for traveling boaters to visit the stores and restaurants planned.

Port of Everett, Washington —

In cooperation with the Washington Interagency Committee for Outdoor



Fulton Harbor/BoatUS

Recreation, the city of Everett was awarded \$995,000 to develop 42 slips with utilities for transient boats. The slips will provide access to the new waterfront redevelopment in Everett. The facility will also provide a safe moorage during winds and storms.

Kenlake Marina, Kentucky — This project was awarded \$198,000 to construct an 830- foot floating dock with connections for electrical, water, cable television, and wireless internet service. It will be able to accommodate more than 40 vessels.

Nauticus Marina, Norfolk, Virginia — In cooperation with the Virginia Department of Health, the city of Norfolk was awarded \$228,540 for the Nauticus Maritime Center Marina. The award will be used to increase transient boating access to this popular attraction, including floating docks with utilities and restroom facilities. Norfolk is an important stopping point for boaters along the Intracoastal Waterway. The new facilities will provide access to the Nauticus Maritime Center, which attracts over 400,000 visitors annually.

Town of Occoquan, Virginia —

In cooperation with the Virginia Department of Health, the town of Occoquan was awarded \$166,500 to

construct 24 slips with utility services and a restroom. The new facilities will provide boaters access to this quaint Virginia town known for its arts and craft festivals and other regional activities.

Tuckerton Seaport, New Jersey —

In cooperation with the New Jersey Office of Maritime Resources, the Tuckerton Seaport was awarded \$495,596 to construct 120 feet of new floating docks with utilities, new restrooms and showers, as well as conducting one-time access dredging to the facility. Tuckerton Seaport is about 15 miles west of Long Beach Island and 30 miles north of Atlantic City. The facilities will provide access to many local and regional attractions.

Port of Wahkiakum, Washington —

In cooperation with the Washington Interagency Committee for Outdoor Recreation, the Port District of Wahkiakum County was awarded \$202,712 to develop 24 new slips, increasing the current capacity by 24 percent for short term boaters in this popular boating area along the West Coast. The slips will provide boaters with access to the town of Cathlamet and its festivals and events.

For more information on this program, contact Brian Bohnsack at 703/358 2156.

States Increase eLicense Certifications Through iFAIMS

The Federal Assistance Information Management System internet interface known as iFAIMS located at <http://faims.fws.gov> allows States to electronically submit and certify annual hunting and fishing license data to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. License certification is an essential part of the apportionment process for the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration grant programs. Currently, about 64 percent of the States submitted license data electronically. This is a 20 percent increase from the previous year. In addition, about 52 percent of the States *certified* license holders electronically to the Service. To submit and certify electronically, contact your Regional Federal Assistance office for access requirements and to request the required professional version of Adobe Acrobat software.

Historical information on license sales and revenue is located on the Division's web site (<http://federalasst.fws.gov>). Additional information on license certification and income can be obtained by contacting Lori Bennett (703/358-2033; Lori_Bennett@fws.gov).

National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife-Associated Recreation

Preparations are underway to begin data collection for the 11th National Survey conducted since 1955. The Service sponsors the survey every 5 years at the request of State fish and wildlife agencies. It will be similar in content, scope, and methodology to those conducted in 1991, 1996, and 2001—so their estimates will be comparable.

The Census Bureau will collect the information using computer-assisted telephone and in-person interviewing. The US Fish and Wildlife Service manages the Survey, analyzes the data, prepares the reports, and provides assistance and information to users.

The Office of Management and Budget has approved the Service's request to

conduct the Survey and has given us the official OMB number, 1018-0088. Computerized interview instruments have been prepared and tested, and training manuals written for about 1,000 interviewers who will collect data using laptops.

The Census Bureau will begin collecting information in April 2006. It will contact 90,000 households to identify samples of 31,500 sportspersons and 24,300 wildlife watchers. Census will ask these individuals detailed questions about their fishing, hunting, and wildlife-watching activities and expenditures. This will be accomplished in three interview waves conducted in April and September 2006 and in January 2007.

The 2006 Survey will generate information identified as priority data needed by the States, Service, non-governmental organizations, and other major survey users. General categories of information collected include the number of participants in different types of fish and wildlife consumptive and nonconsumptive recreational activities, the extent of participation (days and trips), and related trip and equipment expenditures. The survey is one of the Nation's most important sources of information on fish and wildlife recreation.

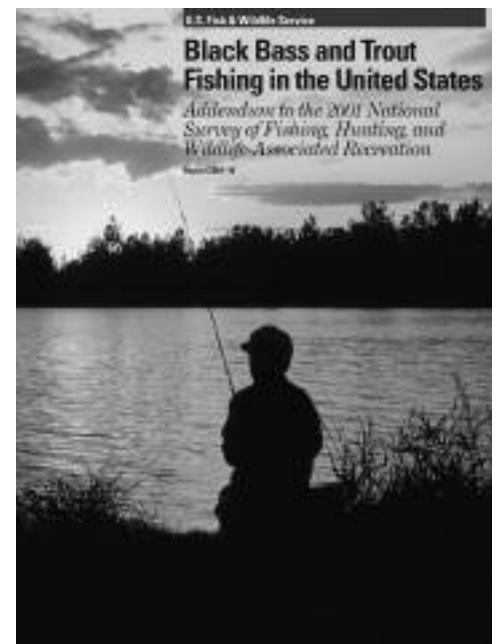
We continue to seek cost-effective methods for the survey. In 2006 the Census Bureau will conduct a side-by-side test to determine the viability of using State fishing and hunting license databases as a supplement to the traditional Census household databases. If viable, the use of State databases could reduce costs considerably for future surveys because Census would not have to sample as many households as it does now.

The 2006 Survey is funded by grants from the Multistate Conservation grant programs of the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Programs. Products will include preliminary reports, a final national and 50 State reports, CDs, and quick-facts brochures. All data and reports will be available on a website.

The Service also produces reports based on existing survey data. Addenda to the 2001 Survey include the following 10 reports: *Birding in the United States: A Demographic and Economic Analysis*; *2001 National and State Economic Impacts of Wildlife Watching*; *Net Economic Values for Wildlife-Related Recreation in 2001*; *Participation and Expenditure Patterns of African-American, Hispanic, and Female Hunters and Anglers*; *Fishing and Hunting 1991-2001: Avid, Casual, and Intermediate Participation Trends*; *Deer Hunting in the United States: An Analysis of Hunter Demographics and Behavior*; *The Relationship between Wildlife Watchers, Hunters, and Anglers*; *Private and Public Land Use by Hunters*; and *Economic Impact of Waterfowl Hunting in the United States*.

New Survey Report— *Black Bass and Trout Fishing in the United States*

Black bass and trout are two of the most prominent species of fish sought by anglers in the U.S. Of all anglers who fished in freshwater other than the Great Lakes in 2001, 38 percent sought black bass and 28 percent sought trout. Among the States, Virginia had the highest



percent of freshwater resident and nonresident anglers seeking bass with 54 percent. Alabama, New Jersey, and Tennessee also ranked high with over 50 percent. As for trout fishing, more than 80 percent of freshwater anglers fishing in Wyoming, Montana, and Colorado sought trout.

The report provides estimates of total participants and days of participation at national and State levels. In 2001, at the national level there were 10.7 million anglers who fished for bass nearly 160 million days, and there were 7.8 million trout anglers who fished 83 million days.

Additionally, the report provides information on the socioeconomic characteristics, expenditures, and boating usage of bass and trout anglers. The socioeconomic characteristics section compares the characteristics of all freshwater, bass, and trout anglers. They have a similar distribution of participants by age, with individuals who are 35 to 44 years old comprising the majority of participants for each. Bass anglers and all freshwater anglers have a similar educational distribution, but trout anglers have a slightly higher proportion with 4 years of college or more. Both bass and trout anglers have higher incomes on average than do all freshwater anglers.

Expenditures by bass and trout anglers reveal the economic importance of both species. Bass anglers spent \$10.2 billion on trips and equipment in pursuit of freshwater fishing, and trout anglers spent \$6.4 billion.

A boating usage section examines the extent of boating usage among anglers and uses a regression model to examine the impact that a variety of variables have on the probability that an angler will participate in boating. Overall, 65% of bass anglers and 48% of trout anglers fished from a boat at least one day.

Copies of survey reports are available on request or are accessible through the following website:

<http://federalaid.fws.gov>. For more information you also may contact the Service's survey staff.

More Than \$15 Million In National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants Awarded To 12 States

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service awarded more than \$15 million in grants to 12 states to help conserve, restore and protect coastal wetlands, Interior Secretary Gale Norton announced in late December 2005. National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants are awarded to States through a competitive process. The program is funded under provisions of the 1990 Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act,

with funding provided by the Sport Fishing and Boating Trust Fund.

States awarded funding in FY2006 under the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program include Alabama, Alaska, California, Georgia, Hawaii, Illinois, Maine, Massachusetts, Michigan, New Jersey, Texas and Washington.

The grants provide funding for 19 projects and will be supplemented with more than \$12 million from State and private partners. The grants are used to acquire, restore or enhance coastal wetlands for long-term conservation benefits to wildlife and habitat. Partners in this year's



projects include State and local governments, private landowners and conservation groups such as The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Scenic Galveston, Inc., Wildlife Forever Foundation, and many others.

“When people at so many different levels come together in these kinds of projects, everybody wins,” Norton said. “This is the kind of effort that makes it possible for us to leave a real legacy for our children and grandchildren.”

“These are win-win projects,” said Service Director Dale Hall. “I’m very excited when we’re able to leverage the taxpayer dollar with our partners and get a lot more value for the money.”

Including the 2006 grants, the Service has awarded more than \$165 million in grants to States and insular areas since the program began; when the 2006 projects are complete, they will have protected, restored or enhanced about 14,000 acres. A total of more than 200,000 acres will have been protected or restored since the grant program began.

For more information, contact the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, or Division of Federal Assistance, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 North Fairfax Drive, Arlington, VA 22203, or visit the program’s home page at <http://www.fws.gov/coastal/CoastalGrants/>

The following is a summary of the fiscal year 2006 awards.

Fiscal Year 2006 National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Projects

Alabama
Point Caddy Wetlands. The Alabama Department of Conservation and Natural Resources will purchase 1730 acres on Grand Bay in the Mississippi Sound. Another 239 acres are being provided as match. The Grand Bay wetlands provide habitat to recreationally important fish species like spotted sea trout, red snapper and red drum and coastal-dependent and migratory birds.

Partners: The Nature Conservancy of Alabama and the Mobile Bay National Estuary Program.

Coastal grant request:\$ 928,000
State share:\$ 745,150
Partners’ share:\$ 197,700
Total cost:\$1,870,850

Alaska
Eagle River South Estuary. Alaska’s Department of Natural Resources will protect 236 acres near Juneau through a combination of conservation easements and acquisitions. This project will help protect the water quality of Dowitcher Slough and the mouth of the Eagle River which is important for marine mammals, including the threatened Steller sea lion, and for a number of fish species, including pink, chum and sockeye salmon.

Partners: The City and Borough of Juneau, Southeast Alaska Council of Boy Scouts of America, Simpson, Tillinghast, Sorenson & Logenbaugh, Horan and Company, and an anonymous donor working through the Southeast Alaska Land Trust.

Coastal grant request: \$606,065
State share:\$ 250
Partners’ share:\$293,250
Total cost:\$899,565

Long Lagoon Coastal Habitat Protection. The Department of Natural Resources in Alaska plans to acquire 1,002

acres on north Afognak Island’s coastline. The coastline of Afognak Island provides feeding, pupping, and calving habitats for 14 species of marine mammals including sea otters, seals and several varieties of whales. Anglers, hunters, kayakers and campers will also benefit from this acquisition.

Coastal grant request:\$ 888,300
Partners’ share:\$ 454,750
Total cost:\$1,343,050



Nushagak Bay/Wood-Tikchik State Park: Final Phase. Alaska’s Department of Natural Resources will acquire a perpetual conservation easement on 2,788 acres within the Nushagak Bay Watershed. This includes 4 miles along the Agulowak River, a major anadromous fish system that provides spawning habitat for nearly 2 million adult salmon.

Partners: The Conservation Fund and the Nushagak-Mulchatna Wood-Tikchik Land Trust.

Coastal grant share:\$ 928,000
Partners’ share:\$ 455,000
Total cost:\$1,383,000

California

Arcata Baylands Restoration/Enhancement Project. The California State Coastal Conservancy, with assistance from the State Wildlife Conservation Board and the California Department of Game, as part of a larger 560+ acre project, will purchase 77 acres of land and restore 85 acres of wetland habitats adjacent to Humboldt Bay. This restoration will help to improve tidal flow and reestablish native vegetation along Jacoby Creek and Gannon Slough. Humboldt Bay is one of California's most important stopovers for migrating birds.

Partners: The City of Arcata and the Pacific States Marine Fisheries Commission.

Coastal grant request:\$ 928,000
State share:\$1,082,400
Partners' share:\$ 37,000
Total cost:\$2,047,400

Georgia

Sansavilla Wetlands Acquisition. The Department of Natural Resources in the State of Georgia will acquire 1,250 acres and 4.5 miles along the Altamaha River. The Altamaha River Basin is recognized as a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network site and an Important Birding Area by both the Audubon Society and the American Bird Conservancy.

Partner: The Nature Conservancy.

Coastal grant request:\$ 928,000
Partner's share:\$1,000,000
Total cost:\$1,928,000



Hawaii

Kawainui Marsh Wetland Restoration and Enhancement. Hawaii's Department of Land and Natural Resources plans to restore 20 acres and enhance 60 acres of coastal wetlands and associated uplands at Kawainui Marsh in Honolulu County. The project area is part of a wetland complex that was recently added to the Convention of Wetlands of International Importance, recognizing it as a significant wetland on an international scale.

Partners: Castle Foundation, The Wildlife Society, Le Jardin Academy, Kailua Urban Design Task Force, City and County of Honolulu.

Coastal grant request: \$646,250
State share:\$ 50,000
Partners' share:\$262,500
Total cost:\$958,750

Illinois

Hegewisch Marsh Restoration. The Office of the Lieutenant Governor, in cooperation with the Illinois Department of Natural Resources and Environmental Protection Agency, will restore 55 acres of a 100-acre coastal wetland of Lake Michigan within the 4,800 acre Calumet Open Space Reserve in south Chicago. Restoration will include the removal of non-natives, planting native plants and excavations to provide more emergent wetlands areas.

Partners: City of Chicago, the Conservation Fund and the Field Museum of Natural History.

Coastal grant request: \$ 750,000
State share:\$ 218,501
Partners' share:\$ 292,038
Total cost:\$1,260,539

Maine

Thomas Island Habitat Protection. Maine's Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife will acquire 122 acres, including the 62-acre Thomas Island in Hancock County. Thomas Island provides high-quality foraging, migration, breeding, and wintering habitat for a long

list of bird species. Long-term protection of this habitat will also help buffer and contribute to the biological integrity of the Maine Coastal Island National Wildlife Refuge.

Partners: Maine Coast Heritage Trust, Ducks Unlimited and an individual landowner.

Coastal grant request: \$453,000
Partner's share:\$305,000
Total cost:\$758,000

Massachusetts

Great Neck and Moody Island.

The Department of Conservation and Recreation in Massachusetts plans to acquire 254 acres of wetlands and buffering uplands at the mouth of the Ipswich and Eagle Rivers, which drain directly into Plum Island Sound. The proposed acquisition is immediately adjacent to and/or in the vicinity of 7,000 acres of permanently protected public and private conservation areas, including the Parker River National Wildlife Refuge.

Partners: Town of Ipswich and Fields Pond Foundation.



Coastal grant request:..... \$ 846,000
 State share:\$ 100,000
 Partners' share:\$ 919,840
 Total cost:\$1,865,840

Salisbury Marsh Land Acquisition.

The Department of Fish and Game in Massachusetts will acquire about 256 acres of salt marsh and estuary habitat in the Salisbury Marsh in Essex County. The Salisbury marsh has been designated as an important habitat for the American black duck, a species that has been identified as a high priority in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

Partners: Essex County Greenbelt Association and Essex County Sportsmen's Association.

Coastal grant request:..... \$525,400
 State share:\$228,063
 Partners' share:\$ 26,000
 Total cost:\$779,463



Black duck/USFWS

Michigan

Detroit River Wetland Restoration and Enhancement. Michigan's Department of Natural Resources will restore or enhance 65 acres in and adjacent to the Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The Canada-United States North American Waterfowl Management Plan has identified the Detroit River and western Lake Erie as one of the 34 waterfowl areas of major concern.

Partners: Wayne County, Friends of the Detroit River and Integrated Vegetation Management Partners, Inc.

Coastal grant request: \$ 746,000
 Partners' share:\$ 535,000
 Total cost:\$1,281,000

Keweenaw County Land Acquisition.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will acquire 1,475 acres along the coast of Lake Superior on the Keweenaw Peninsula in Keweenaw County. Three federally-listed species that would benefit include the gray wolf, Canada lynx and bald eagle.

Partners: North Woods Conservancy, The Nature Conservancy and Eagle Harbor Township.

Coastal grant request:\$ 928,000
 State share:\$ 200,200
 Partners' share:\$ 797,875
 Total cost:\$1,926,075

New Jersey

De Soi-Stinger Property Acquisition.

The New Jersey Department of Environmental Protection will acquire 164 acres of important migratory bird stopover habitat on the lower Cape May peninsula. This area is recognized as one of the most significant concentration areas for migratory birds in the world.

Coastal grant request:\$ 928,000
 State share:\$2,197,400
 Partners' share:\$ 297,000
 Total cost:\$3,422,400



Brown pelican/USFWS

Texas

North Deer Island, Protection and Restoration, Phase II.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, in cooperation with the Texas General Land Office, will protect 82 acres of habitat from erosion and to restore 8 acres of estuarine marsh on North Deer Island in Galveston County. Phase II is the final part of a plan to protect and restore over 135 acres of habitats associated with the island. North Deer Island is the largest rookery island in the Galveston Bay system and is used each year by up to 30,000 breeding pairs of 19 species of coastal-dependent birds including over 1,000 nesting pairs of federally listed brown pelican.

Partners: Galveston Bay Estuary Program, Gulf of Mexico Program, the Service's Coastal Program in Texas, Texas Genco EcoCenter, and Audubon Houston.

Coastal grant request:\$ 653,300
 State share:\$ 350,000
 Partners' share:\$ 167,000
 Total cost:\$1,170,300

Washington

Crockett Lake Coastal Wetlands

Acquisition and Protection. Washington State Parks and Recreation will acquire and permanently protect 355 acres at Crockett Lake in Island County. With the addition of this acreage, almost the entire Crockett Lake wetland system (approximately 700 acres) will be protected. Crockett Lake is a shallow, brackish lake and complex of salt and freshwater marshes, is an important habitat for resident and migratory birds, and provides estuarine rearing and foraging habitat for salmonids and other fish species.

Partners: Whidbey Camano Land Trust, Washington Trout, Ebey's Landing National Historical Reserve Trust Board, National Park Service, Whidbey Chapter of the Audubon Society, and an individual landowner.

Coastal grant request: \$ 850,700
Partners' share:\$ 345,000
Total cost:\$1,195,700

Eld Inlet Tidelands and Freshwater Wetlands.

The Washington Department of Ecology, in conjunction with the Washington State Coastal Protection Fund, will purchase a conservation easement to permanently protect 2.5 miles of marine shoreline and restrict development on 203 acres in Eld Inlet, which is in the southern portion of Puget Sound. The project would benefit a variety of species including anadromous fish and migratory and resident waterfowl.

Partners: The Trust for Public Lands, Capitol Land Trust, and Entrix.

Coastal grant request:\$ 799,000
State share:\$ 50,000
Partners' share:\$ 339,000
Total cost:\$1,188,000

Port Susan Phase 2: Acquisition and Protection.

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, in conjunction with Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board, will purchase 3,318 acres



and conservation easements on another 63 acres in Port Susan Bay in Puget Sound. When combined with existing reserves in Port Susan Bay, this proposal will contribute to a contiguous tidelands system totaling more than 7,000 acres. Over 30 shorebird species regularly use Port Susan Bay and it provides important habitats for several species of fish, including federally listed chinook salmon and bull trout.

Partners: Whidbey Camano Land Trust, The Nature Conservancy, Washington Trout, Pacific Coast Joint Venture, Stillaguamish Tribe, Ducks Unlimited, and individual community volunteers.

Coastal grant request:\$ 928,000
State share:\$ 385,000
Partners' share:\$ 15,000
Total cost:\$1,328,000

Qwuloolt Project, Phase IV—Estuarine Restoration.

The Washington Department of Ecology plans to remove segments of a dike along Ebey Slough in the lower Snohomish River watershed to restore about 390 acres of intertidal estuarine wetlands. This project will restore important intertidal transitional salmon habitat benefiting the threatened Puget Sound chinook salmon and many other species, including resident and migratory birds.

Partners: Tulalip Tribes, the Natural Resources Damage Assessment Trustees for the Tulalip Landfill Superfund Site, and the City of Maryville.

Coastal grant request: \$ 902,400
Partners' share:\$ 440,000
Total cost:\$1,342,000

Fiscal Year 2005 Clean Vessel Act Pumpout Grant Program Awards Announced

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Clean Vessel Act grant program received its normal annual funding authorization for fiscal year 2005 from Congress during the last week of the Federal fiscal year this past fall. As a result, the Service awarded \$10.2 million to 27 States under the Clean Vessel Act grant program in October, 2005. The grant awards will fund construction of sewage dump stations and pumpout stations for recreational boaters and educational programs that inform boaters about the importance of proper waste disposal. The awards will fund approximately \$8.2 million of coastal projects and \$2.0 million of inland projects.

"The Fish and Wildlife Service is working with the U.S. Coast Guard, the Environmental Protection Agency, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, marine industry organizations, and others at the local level to educate the public in ways that will protect fish and marine habitat," said Interior Secretary Gale Norton. "Since its inception, 49 states have participated in this program that improves the quality of our Nation's water and conserves fish and wildlife resources."

Congress passed the Clean Vessel Act in 1992, which established a Federal grant program administered by the Service, to help reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges. Funding comes from the Sport Fishing and Boating Trust Fund, made up of revenues from excise taxes on fishing equipment, boats, and motorboat fuels.

The Clean Vessel Act requires that pumpout stations in coastal environments receive funding preference, although proposals for inland facilities are also eligible for funding from the program. Federal funds can constitute up to 75 percent of all approved projects, with the remaining funds provided by the States or marinas. The Service has awarded more

than \$90 million to States for their Clean Vessel Act programs and efforts.

Raw or poorly treated sewage can spread disease; contaminate shellfish beds and lower oxygen levels in water. Waterborne diseases including hepatitis, typhoid and cholera can be transmitted by shellfish. Organic matter in sewage is decomposed in the water by bacteria. During this

process, the bacteria use oxygen. As a result, sewage in the water may deplete the water's oxygen level, causing stress to fish and other aquatic animals.

For more information on the Clean Vessel Act grant program, please contact Brian Bohnsack at 703/358-2156.

The award amounts are as follows:

FY 2005 Clean Vessel Act Awards

State	Project Type	Proposed Final Award
Alabama	Coastal	\$41,250
Alabama	Inland	\$56,140
Arkansas	Inland	\$89,850
California	Coastal	\$1,024,897
California	Inland	\$516,879
Colorado	Inland	\$17,738
Connecticut.....	Coastal	\$713,495
Connecticut.....	Inland.....	\$38,682
Florida.....	Coastal	\$1,024,897
Florida.....	Inland.....	\$349,229
Idaho	Inland.....	\$14,000
Indiana	Coastal	\$55,797
Indiana	Inland.....	\$55,796
Kentucky.....	Inland.....	\$89,250
Maine.....	Coastal	\$326,420
Maryland.....	Coastal	\$641,000
Massachusetts	Coastal	\$854,669
Michigan	Coastal	\$60,000
Missouri.....	Inland.....	\$36,000
Nevada	Inland.....	\$18,750
New Hampshire.....	Coastal	\$165,672
New Hampshire.....	Inland.....	\$41,561
New Jersey.....	Coastal	\$505,638
New York.....	Coastal	\$552,648
New York.....	Inland.....	\$150,399
North Carolina.....	Coastal	\$51,000
North Carolina.....	Inland.....	\$50,000
Oklahoma	Inland.....	\$11,897
Oregon.....	Coastal	\$343,683
Oregon.....	Inland.....	\$186,782
Pennsylvania.....	Coastal	\$57,125
Pennsylvania.....	Inland.....	\$34,875
South Carolina	Coastal	\$1,024,897
Tennessee	Inland.....	\$135,523
Texas	Inland.....	\$132,371
Washington	Coastal	\$725,000
Washington	Inland.....	\$55,155
Total		\$10,248,965

Public Access Civil Rights Program

The Division of Federal Assistance enforces Federal civil rights laws and regulations, on behalf of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, to ensure that recipients of Federal assistance do not discriminate on the basis of race, color, national origin, sex, disability or age in the administration of their programs to the public. The public access civil rights program, funded separately from Federal assistance grant programs, is responsible for key civil rights laws such as Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, the Americans with Disabilities Act of 1990, Title IX of the Education Amendments of 1972, and a host of other laws, regulations and Presidential Executive Orders.

The Division of Federal Assistance works in close partnership with its State fish and wildlife agency recipients to assist them in a pro-active way in their understanding of the civil rights requirements, encourage voluntary compliance, and promote early resolution of civil rights conflicts. Civil rights monitoring of recipients is handled via processing of civil rights complaints; conducting periodic system reviews of State agencies; and providing technical guidance and information on civil rights trends to our State partners.

Inclusion of all demographic groups in State agency programs and activities, especially traditionally underserved minority groups and persons with disabilities, is enhanced through active liaisons and partnerships between multicultural groups and the State fish and wildlife agencies. Minority and disability group liaisons also can help facilitate the early resolution of complaints and other disputes; provide experiential advice from persons with disabilities on barrier removal; assist the State agencies in providing services to clients who have limited English proficiency (LEP); provide input on avoiding adverse impacts of environmental decisions on minority and low income communities; and assist State agencies in increasing the racial/ethnic and gender diversity of their workforces.

Most importantly, multicultural partnerships help promote the conservation mission of the State agencies, and participation in recreational programs, by involving larger numbers of communities and demographic groups in these efforts.

Fiscal year 2005 was a particularly active and successful year for the civil rights program. Thirty-nine complaints were resolved, adjudicated or closed. Nine systemic reviews of State agencies were completed. Various training sessions, technical assistance contacts and updates on public civil rights were accomplished. Active liaisons are being pursued with several national minority and disability groups. Key aspects of new Presidential Executive Order 13347 regarding the inclusion of persons with disabilities in emergency preparedness plans of federally funded buildings, was communicated to State agencies. A public access civil rights Web site was developed, linked to the Fish and Wildlife Home page under the "PACR" heading. The Service's Division of Federal Assistance was instrumental in the formation of a new



interagency external civil rights association, to promote the visibility and best practices of external civil rights government-wide.

Fiscal year 2005 also marked the resumption of the very successful Federally Assisted Civil Rights Award program. State agencies are invited to submit nominations for the Award, which recognizes excellence and national benchmarks in promoting equal access to State agency programs for various racial/ethnic groups, genders and persons with disabilities. Awards are selected based upon criteria linked to the Federal civil rights requirements. Nominations for the Award are received in the Division of Federal Assistance until July 31. After that, an independent panel selects the winner, and that State agency is honored at a special ceremony.

Multistate Conservation Grant Program

Multistate Conservation Grants are awarded cooperatively with the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (IAFWA). These grants support products and solve high priority problems affecting States on a regional or national basis and allow for efficient use of limited resources to address the national conservation needs of States established through the IAFWA. Examples below highlight the broad array of projects supported by Multistate Conservation grants. To learn more about all projects funded and the benefits derived from the Multistate Conservation Grant Program, please visit <http://faims.fws.gov>.

American Woodcock Conservation Initiative: Atlantic Northern Forest Bird Conservation Region

The American Woodcock Conservation Initiative is a Federal-State-Private Partnership envisioned to benefit woodcock habitat on a landscape scale through coordinated research, further development of wildlife/forest best management practices, implementation guidelines, and technical education assistance directed toward private

landowners. This grant funds on-the-ground private land management practices, provide outreach to private landowners, and monitor the woodcock population in response to management practices. This grant will help recover a declining upland game bird species.

Data-Driven Strategies to Recruit and Retain Anglers

Many States have spent millions to implement electronic licensing systems and more are considering such investments. These systems have generated a wealth of under-used data that States could employ to better understand sportsmen. Increasing their knowledge of customers will help boost angler numbers and participation rates while improving communications between States and the license holder. This grant will allow the IAFWA and American Sportfishing Association (ASA) to complete their efforts to mine state license databases to increase our collective knowledge of license buyers and trends.

This grant entails analyzing multiple years of detailed license records. For each State, 3 to 5 years of license sales records will be combined into one file, allowing ASA to track how frequently different type of sportsmen (categorized by age, neighborhood, ethnicity, etc. obtain licenses and the type of licenses preferred. Then, trends can be identified regarding the type of person who is likely to fish, where to find those people, and characteristics of all types of licensed anglers (frequent, infrequent, urban, education, etc.). Software will be employed to do this process. The results of this grant will be to boost angler numbers and participation levels, maximize the value of license databases, and improve communications with license buyers and the public.



American woodcock/USFWS





Explore Archery: A Process for Strategic Placement of Archery Ranges

This project is to establish a process for strategically developing archery ranges in cooperation with State agency partners. Starting with an inventory of archery ranges, this process would use Geographic Information Systems (GIS) techniques to determine the areas of greatest need for archery shooting opportunities. The process would use census data, electronic hunting license data and location information for school archery programs, clubs, private and public archery ranges, and retail shops. Information on the location of lands owned by schools and public agencies (local, State, and Federal) will be added as layers. The completed maps will be used to identify potential locations and partners for developing public archery ranges in areas of greatest need for beginner archers and bowhunters.

An Aquatic Habitat Plan for the Southeastern United States

This grant will develop an aquatic habitat plan for the Southeast. The Southeast Aquatic Habitat Plan (SAHP) will include quantified and geographically referenced targets for protection, restoration, or enhancement of specific habitat types at a landscape level. A key strategy in the approach for developing the SAHP will be to build on data, experience and efforts of the Southeast Aquatic Resources Partnership (SARP) in preparing watershed management plans in four key watersheds and integrating aquatic planning outputs of the State Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategies (CWCS). The SARP will also begin the formation of aquatic joint ventures to implement the SAHP and sponsor Hazard Analysis Critical Control Point (HACCP) training for State fish hatchery and private aquaculture personnel to help reduce problems caused by aquatic nuisance species, a major aquatic habitat issue in the Southeast. The project addresses the development of a regional aquatic habitat plan that directly supports the National Fish Habitat Initiative and that can be used as a model for similar regional plans; initiation of



joint ventures to begin implementing the regional plan; and facilitating the use of best management practices for reducing habitat impacts of aquatic nuisance species. The project will be evaluated through feedback from stakeholders, monitoring to evaluate habitat targets and criteria, numbers of aquatic joint ventures initiated and their success in implementing on-the-ground habitat projects and through a follow-up questionnaire to evaluate the HACCP) training.

List of Projects Recommended by IAFWA for Funding Under the Multistate Conservation Grant Program in Fiscal Year 2006

Priority List	ID	Project Title	Submitter	2006 Wildlife Restoration	2006 Sport Fish Restoration	2007 Wildlife Restoration	2007 Sport Fish Restoration	2008 Wildlife Restoration	2008 Sport Fish Restoration	Total Grant Request
Yes	06-003	Complete the Approval Requirements for AQUIS®, Zero Withdrawal Anesthetic	IAFWA		\$25,157.00		\$104,477.00		\$106,321.00	\$235,955.00
Yes	06-004	Data-Driven Strategies to Recruit and Retain Anglers	IAFWA		\$160,452.00					\$160,452.00
Yes	06-005	Multistate Conservation Grant Program Coordination	IAFWA	\$48,484.00	\$48,484.00	\$50,344.00	\$50,344.00	\$52,204.00	\$52,204.00	\$302,064.00
Yes	06-006	Development and coordination, IAFWA N.A. Conservation Education Strategy	IAFWA	\$41,800.00	\$41,800.00	\$72,325.00	\$72,325.00	\$72,325.00	\$72,325.00	\$372,900.00
Yes	06-007	Clarifying Population Objectives for Waterfowl Habitat and Harvest Management	IAFWA	\$66,000.00		\$27,500.00				\$93,500.00
Yes	06-008	Training Opportunities for New Trapper Education Program Materials	IAFWA	\$60,500.00						\$60,500.00
Yes	06-009	Review of Conservation Practices Used on Conservation Reserve Program Land	IAFWA	\$39,700.00	\$39,700.00					\$79,400.00
Yes	06-010	(Conservation Security Program) Evaluating the Integration of Fish & Wildlife	IAFWA	\$37,500.00	\$37,500.00	Not Approved	Not Approved			\$75,000.00
Yes	06-011	Coordination of Farm Bill Conservation Initiative: Atlantic Northern Forest Bird Conservation	IAFWA	\$28,287.50	\$28,287.50	\$28,287.50	\$28,287.50			\$113,150.00
Yes	06-020	American Woodcock Conservation Wildlife Management Initiative: Atlantic Northern Forest Bird Institute Conservation	Wildlife Management Institute	\$22,000.00		\$22,000.00		\$22,000.00		\$66,000.00
Yes	06-024	Regional model for development and implementation of a comprehensive bird	American Bird Conservancy	\$187,360.00		\$159,483.00		\$170,983.00		\$517,826.00
Yes	06-029	Explore Archery: A process for strategic placement of archery ranges	Bowhunting Preservation Alliance	\$38,000.00		\$43,000.00				\$81,000.00
Yes	06-032	Production of a "Guide to Fishing and Boating with Children"	Future Fisherman Foundation		\$109,000.00					\$109,000.00
Yes	06-034	An Aquatic Habitat Plan for the southeastern United States	Georgia Department of Natural Resources		\$132,500.00		\$124,500.00			\$257,000.00\$
Yes	06-039	Implementation of the National CP33 Monitoring Program	Mississippi State University	\$235,950.00		\$235,950.00		\$235,950.00		707,850.00
Yes	06-040	Building the Interstate Capacity of the Northern Bobwhite Conservation Initiative	Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency	\$62,500.00		\$87,500.00		\$89,500.00		\$239,500.00
Yes	06-052	Project Manager and Coordinator for the 2006 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting	USFWS	\$173,608.00	\$173,608.00	\$200,080.50	\$200,080.50	\$210,606.00	\$210,606.00	\$1,168,589.00
Yes	06-055	Sage-Grouse Interstate Working Group Coordinator	Western Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies	\$101,475.00						\$101,475.00
Yes	06-056	Advancing Human Dimensions Expertise among Fish and Wildlife Agencies	Western Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies	\$49,059.00	\$49,059.00	\$94,564.50	\$94,564.50			\$287,247.00
Contingent	06-022	International Instream Flow Program Initiative	Instream Flow Council (IFC)		\$24,000.00		\$156,000.00		\$82,000.00	\$262,000.00
Contingent	06-025	Fisheries Database Summit II, Data to Support the National Fish Habitat Initiative	American Fisheries Society - Computer User Section		\$95,700.00					\$95,700.00
Contingent	06-050	Midwest Driftless Area Fish Habitat Restoration Effort	Trout Unlimited - Midwest Office		\$94,600.00		\$97,900.00			\$192,500.00
Contingent	06-057	Western Native Trout Initiative	Western Assoc. of Fish & Wildlife Agencies		\$188,365.00		\$188,365.00		\$188,365.00	\$565,095.00

Federal Assistance National Training Program

The National Federal Assistance Training Program, located at the National Conservation Training Center in Shepherdstown, WV, is part of the Washington Office of Federal Assistance. The training program develops and delivers grants management training for Federal Assistance staff and State fish and wildlife agency grantees. These training courses increase the knowledge, skills and abilities of State and Federal personnel who manage Federal assistance grants. This training helps to ensure that Federal assistance grant managers consistently apply the laws, rules, and policies that govern Federal assistance program administration.

Since 1996, almost 1,500 State and Federal assistance grant managers and grantees have received training through courses and workshops developed by, or offered in cooperation with, the Federal Assistance Training Program.

Training offered includes: Basic Grants Management Course, Project Leaders Course, Federal Assistance Audit Training, Grant Writing Workshop, Compliance Issues Workshop, and GroupSystems Leader Training. Online training modules covering an introduction to Federal assistance grant programs and processes and a familiarization to the

Federal Assistance Toolkit were also made available in 2005. An advanced grant management course covering fiscal, programmatic, and compliance issues is scheduled as a pilot course for October 2006.

Course descriptions, an on-line application, training materials, and other grant manager's resources are available on the Federal Assistance Training Program web site at: <http://training.fws.gov/fedaid/>.

For additional information contact Steve Leggans at the National Conservation Training Center at 304/876-7927.

FAIMS/FBMS

The Department of Interior's planned deployment of its new Financial and Business Management System (FBMS), which is being implemented to manage all aspects of business operations, has been delayed. Implementation in the Fish and Wildlife Service is now scheduled for October 2007. This also delays deployment of the FBMS eGrants Plus grants management module which will replace the Federal Assistance Information Management System (FAIMS).

FAIMS is used by the Service to manage the complete life cycle of over half a billion dollars in grants annually. In January 2006 FAIMS entered its eighth year of

operation. Since inception, FAIMS has processed 12,315 Grant Agreements and managed \$5.6 billion in obligations and \$4.5 billion in payments.

Upgrades required to modernize the FAIMS infrastructure are underway. The server hardware, operating system software, database software and application software are being updated to facilitate continued vendor support and enhance system security. These upgrades will require that the entire FAIMS system be thoroughly retested before deployment into production. The updated system will also have to undergo a lengthy multistep process which includes a thorough security analysis in order to re-attain Certification and Accreditation.

In 2006 emphasis will also be placed on:

1. Refinement of internal controls for FAIMS maintenance, testing, and operations.
2. Refinements to the FAIMS Land module required to meet user needs for easier entry of legacy data and enhanced reporting capabilities.
3. Enhancements to various aspects of system security.
4. Working with departmental staff toward implementation of the FBMS eGrants Plus and Real Property modules.



Special Highlight Section of Region 2

Southwest Region - Administration

The Southwest Region, Federal Assistance Division annually administers about \$80 million authorized under 12 grant programs for eligible State fish and wildlife agencies and tribes in Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas. Currently there are nine people working in the Division located in Albuquerque, New Mexico. Historically, the Division's focus has been the very successful Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration programs. However, over the past several years new grant programs have been authorized by Congress that expand conservation and management possibilities to nongame, species-at-risk and endangered species, boating access, private and tribal lands and wetland protection. A web site describing the grant programs and highlighting individual programs and projects of the Southwest Region partners is at: <http://www.fws.gov/southwest/fedaid/>

Contact for more information:
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Boating Access, Clean Vessel Act, Boating Infrastructure Grants:
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Nancy Gloman

Oklahoma Anglers Benefiting From Streams Management Program

The Oklahoma streams management program is charged with enhancing angling, water quality and fish habitat in streams using applied management practices. The rapidly evolving program was created in 1998 with minimal resources and the hiring of one biologist. Today, a crew of two biologists, two supporting technicians and a program coordinator stationed at three Regional Offices work together on improving Oklahoma's streams.

This new program is accomplished cooperatively with funding from the Sport Fish Restoration Program funds, anglers' license dollars and lots of donations and volunteers from the businesses and stream anglers in local communities.

A key element of the program is improving advocacy and stewardship of stream ecosystems on a State and local scale. Other goals include assessing condition of in-stream habitat, sport fish populations, and watershed health in key Oklahoma streams. Tailrace fisheries also receive significant attention from the program.

Almost all successful endeavors start with a solid foundation of knowledge. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation's streams program personnel have to understand a broad range of disciplines and stay abreast of current stream research. Extensive formal training in applied streams management is ongoing for all stream management staff so program goals can be effectively accomplished.

One ongoing successful project activity is the Lower Mountain Fork River instream habitat enhancement project. This reach of stream is a cold water tailwater race now supporting a year-round trout fishery.

A variety of structures were used to improve habitat quality and availability. Each habitat enhancement method added a unique set of habitat and hydraulic characteristics to the river. Check dams deepened shallow reaches upstream by impounding water and by created plunge pools downstream. Useable area increased longitudinally while fish movement potential was maintained. Weirs increased habitat quality, diversity and availability across the channel cross-section. Log and rock vanes stabilized



laterally eroding banks, restored natural channel geometry and increased trout habitat.

Decreased sediment and creation of small scour holes associated with the end of vanes provided thermal and predatory refuges for trout. Cross vanes reduced stream bank erosion and retained proper channel width-to-depth ratios regardless of discharge by continuously placing the thalweg in the channel center. Deepened stream reaches created by these structures significantly increased fish carrying capacity and migration potential. Boulder clusters offer hydraulic relief from water current and strategic feeding zones for fish.



Eroded bank before restoration

Restored reach



River restoration above. Rock vanes below.



Oklahoma's Hackberry Flat Wetlands Restored Through Partnerships and Wildlife Restoration Funds

Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area, located in Southwest Oklahoma, is the State's largest depressional wetland. Throughout most of the 20th century, the area was not an oasis for migrating birds. The area was drained in the early part of the century when a massive, four-mile long drainage ditch was created. However, the low spots still held water when it rained, which made farming very difficult on Hackberry Flat.

A massive restoration effort, which began in 1993, involved various corporations, businesses, and the City of Frederick in a partnership that also included State and Federal agencies and nonprofit conservation organizations. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation constructed nearly 40 miles of levees and ditches to form a honeycomb of large ponds, which allows managed flooding of the wetlands.

Hackberry Flat now encompasses more than 7,000 acres of prime migratory bird habitat. The area was featured in a recent issue of *Field and Stream* magazine as one of the top 25 public land hot spots in the U.S. and called the area a "magnet for waterfowl."

Hackberry Flat – Return of the Wetlands

It was once just a headache for local farmers - an obstacle that stood in the way of spring planting and fall harvesting. Local lore says the flood-prone soils of Hackberry Flat could swallow up a tractor in just a heavy fog.

How times change. Today the Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area provides an important feeding and resting point for thousands of prairie birds and diverse recreation opportunities for people craving outdoor experiences. Located in southwest Oklahoma near Frederick, the legendary wetland has been restored through the generous help of many partners, including the Wildlife



Hackberry Flat wetlands aerial view.



Hackberry Flat wetlands provide an important resting and feeding area.

Restoration Program and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation.

Yesterday

The history of the area shows how things often come full circle. When pioneers arrived on the plains of southwest Oklahoma a century ago, they encountered clouds of waterfowl so thick that they reportedly darkened the skies over Frederick. The area's abundant wildlife even earned the attention of President Theodore Roosevelt, who visited and hunted near Hackberry Flat. Along with wildlife, pioneers also found very fertile soils in the area that became known as Hackberry Flat. However, farming the flood-prone landscape proved exceedingly difficult.

In the early 1900s, locals drained the area by constructing a massive ditch, some 4 miles long, using hand shovels, mule teams and later a steam shovel. For the next two generations area residents maintained the area as farmland instead of the wetland it had been for so many years.

Over the past century, biologists have learned that wetlands are not only extremely beneficial to wildlife, they also serve as natural environmental purifiers. Unfortunately, Oklahoma has lost two-thirds of its wetlands to agricultural, industrial and residential development. The restoration of Hackberry Flat represents a significant effort to reclaim lost ground, while reclaiming an important part of our natural heritage.

It took a Herculean effort to drain the massive wetland and its restoration wouldn't happen overnight. The restoration took three components: the vision to see a wetland that had not functioned in nearly 90 years; the cooperation of a wide and varied spectrum of partners; and lastly, many years of hard work.

In 1993, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation began purchasing the property, totaling 7,120 acres, from 30



willing sellers. With the help of its many partners, the Department built nearly 40 miles of levees and ditches to form a honeycomb of wetland units that allow managers to flood any part of the area according to the needs of migrating birds. A 17-mile aqueduct connecting Hackberry Flat to Tom Steed Reservoir was a critical component in the process. The pipeline assures a dependable water supply even during dry years. More than 9 miles of water distribution canals and 92 different water control structures give managers a wide variety of management options.

It did not take long for the restoration project to bear fruit either. Within the first year shorebirds that had not nested in southwest Oklahoma in decades were nesting on the restored wetland.

Today

At any time of the year, whether during the muggy heat of summer or the bitter

cold of winter one can find visitors at Hackberry Flat, both avian and human. It is a cyclical ebb and flow. In the fall and winter months hunters chase their winged quarry across the Flat. In the spring and summer months birdwatchers travel from miles around to see an incredible diversity of birds.

It is no longer a secret that the area can offer fantastic waterfowl hunting. Hundreds of thousands of mallards, teal, Canada geese, sandhill cranes and other waterfowl descend on Hackberry every fall. The area also offers some of the best dove hunting in Oklahoma. On a good day, you will see thousands of doves. In less than a decade, Hackberry Flat has become a premier destination for birders. More than 175 species have been identified during surveys, with such rare and uncommon species as the black-necked stilt, long-billed curlew and white-faced ibis being seen, including many that

stay to nest and raise their young. The sheer numbers of birds and the relatively easy access make this area stand out as one of the best birdwatching locations in the state.

Tomorrow

Ducks Unlimited described Hackberry Flat as one of the most significant wetland restoration projects in North America. However, Oklahoma is not finished with the area's transformation. In the coming years the area will face many more challenges, many of which will be addressed using Wildlife Restoration Program funds.

In a matter of months construction will begin on a one-of-kind **Hackberry Flat Visitor Center**. The 4,600 square foot facility will serve as a jumping-off point for visitors to the area. Included in the interpretive displays will be information on the area's history, species of special interest and maps to help newcomers navigate the area. The center will also provide meeting spaces for students and a workspace for on-site research. An existing boardwalk will be connected via a trail to the visitor center that will usher visitors into the heart of the wetland. Along with the new center, additional observation towers and viewing platforms are in the development stages. These facilities, to be funded in part with Wildlife Restoration Program funds, will provide even more access for visitors to enjoy the area's fantastic bird life.

Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area is also becoming a major factor in the in a new and innovative program—the **Great Plains Trail of Oklahoma**. The highway-based wildlife viewing trail will highlight the wide variety of natural beauty in western Oklahoma. Hackberry Flat will be a major destination for trail tourists, while both raising the awareness about the state's outdoor heritage and attracting visitors from across the nation to southwest Oklahoma communities.

Biologists are also keeping their eyes on the future. Managers are working to

increase the native plant food plots on the area, as well as improve hunter opportunity on the area. A large reservoir has been completed on the northwest corner of the area. The reservoir will serve a trio of purposes. First, it will provide flood control and help to protect the areas many dikes and water control structures. Second, it will provide a refuge and deep-water habitat for migrating waterfowl. And lastly, it will allow managers to distribute water more evenly and more precisely throughout the winter months to provide habitat for waterfowl.

Whatever the future holds for Hackberry Flat Wildlife Management Area, one thing is certain, future success will depend upon the cooperation of dedicated partners. The restoration effort of this wetland jewel was not carried solely on the back of one agency or organization and likewise its future will not rest on any one individual. The area will reach its fullest and brightest potential when committed conservationists join together to afford future generations a glimpse of the beauty of Oklahoma's outdoor heritage.

Oklahoma Brings Fishing Close to Home

The Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Program is providing Federal funding to provide Oklahoma metropolitan residents quality fishing within a neighborhood-based Close-to-Home Fishing Program by focusing on angler desires, use and benefits, and by implementing management techniques on urban ponds.

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and the Oklahoma City Parks & Recreation Department worked cooperatively for many years on fisheries management in the City's three water supply reservoirs. During the Wildlife Department Fisheries Division's strategic planning process "Fisheries Future 2000", urban fisheries were identified as a priority program. In 2002, the Close-to-Home Fishing Program formalized an agreement between the Wildlife Department and Oklahoma City to put greater emphasis on intensive

management of park ponds and homeowners' association lakes. Municipal fisheries staff time is documented and used as in-kind match for Sport Fish Restoration funds to expand management programs.

Using Sport Fish Restoration Program funds, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation and Oklahoma City have stocked fish into neighborhood ponds and lakes, improved fishing access and opportunities, as well as improved fish habitat through installation of pond aeration systems.

Under cooperative fisheries management agreements between Oklahoma municipalities and the Wildlife Department, the designated bodies of water have special fishing regulations designed to improve and expand "Close to Home" fishing opportunities in metropolitan areas.

Participating municipalities are Oklahoma City, Del City, Yukon, Harrah, Edmond, Lawton, Mustang and Norman.



Apache Trout Restoration and Recovery in Arizona Expedited with Sport Fish Restoration Funds

The Apache trout is one of two native trout in Arizona. Sport Fish Restoration financing has been used to enhance and improve the distribution and restoration of Apache trout within its native range in eastern Arizona.

Apache trout is a bit unusual in that it is both a sport fish and a federally listed threatened species. Sport fishing, under the management of the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the White Mountain Apache Tribe is possible under an Endangered Species 4d rule that allows for managed fishing and, where appropriate, regulated harvest.

A wide range of partners are currently involved in an effort to restore the Apache trout, and are striving to achieve what is necessary to remove the threats to the species and remove it from the list of threatened and endangered species. The partnership includes the US Fish and Wildlife Service, the US Forest Service, the White Mountain Apache Tribe, Trout Unlimited, the Federation of Flyfishers, and many others. Sport Fish Restoration funds are integrated into a broad financing approach that uses the strengths that many of partners bring to the table.

Much of the effort to restore Apache trout distribution focuses on headwater streams in the Salt River and Little Colorado River watersheds of eastern Arizona. These small streams present the opportunity to ameliorate threats to the species, and set it on course to recovery. A principle threat to the species is the potential for hybridization with other nonnative trout, or even competition and predation from nonnative trout.

Nonnative trout were introduced widely throughout northern Arizona over the last century as food fish and for recreation. Restoration efforts focus on the creation of isolating factors (barriers) that ensure that Apache trout populations can persist

without threats of hybridizing with rainbow trout or competition with brown trout or brook trout. The basic strategy includes the creation of barriers (or using natural ones) that prevents the mixing of native Apache trout populations with nonnative trouts. In some instances, fish must be removed from stream reaches above these barriers to ensure that pure Apache trout populations can be established or conserved. If fish must be removed, the identified course of action is renovation with antimycin.

Apache trout are restocked when necessary to establish new populations. Sport Fish Restoration has provided a keystone for financing these kinds of projects by providing the professional personnel needed to get the job done. The Department also uses Arizona Heritage Funds, Arizona Wildlife Conservation Funds, and partner funds (such as Embrace-a-Stream grants) administered through Trout Unlimited.

Restoration is a key component of Arizona's approach to Apache trout management, but it is not the only one. The National Fish Hatchery System is a key partner in the efforts to restore Apache trout, and to produce Apache trout for recreational fishery resources.

Both the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the White Mountain Apache tribe provide fishing opportunities for this very unusual fishing experience—

catching an Apache trout in the only place it can be found in the world. The Williams Creek-Alchasy National Fish Hatchery in Arizona maintains a brood stock of Apache trout to assist with providing this recreational resource. Williams Creek-Alchasy rears stockable Apache trout for the White Mountain Apache Tribe for stocking in lakes on the Fort Apache Indian Reservation. They also provide eggs and fry for rearing by the Arizona Game and Fish Department, and stocking at lakes and streams on the Apache-Sitgreaves National Forests.

Several Sport Fish Restoration financed hatcheries operated by the Arizona Game and Fish Department helped move Apache trout to places where anglers can pursue and enjoy them. Several AGFD facilities (Tonto Creek Hatchery and Canyon Creek Hatchery) can team up for hatching Apache trout eggs and rearing fry. Fingerlings are transferred to the Department's Silver Creek Hatchery where they are reared to a catchable size for stocking in higher elevation lakes and streams.

Sport Fish Restoration has long formed the foundation for Arizona's native trout restoration efforts. A multitude of financing sources are also brought to bear on the important work of preparing streams to receive pure Apache trout, and the ultimate beneficiary is the angler who may have a lifetime experience of catching one of Arizona's golden natives.



Stocking Apache trout in Bear Wallow Creek.

Mountains or Desert? Successful Trading and Wildlife Restoration Funding Support Bighorn Sheep Restoration in Arizona and New Mexico

Biologists from the Arizona Game and Fish Department and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish have teamed up to restore desert and Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep populations with funding assistance from the Wildlife Restoration Program. A cooperative agreement between the two agencies will result in the exchange of up to 60 New Mexico Rocky Mountain bighorn for up to 60 Arizona desert bighorn over a 5-year period.

During the summer of 2005 twenty-nine Rocky Mountain bighorn sheep found new homes in Arizona following a successful and speedy trapping and relocation project in the Pecos Wilderness. The 1-day trapping operation was accomplished in record time. Similar efforts had taken 3 days or even longer to net or dart sheep at altitudes around 12,000 feet and transport them by helicopter to staging areas below.

The operation involved about 40 workers from Game and Fish Departments in New Mexico and Arizona and the U. S. Forest Service. Because of the operation's record speed, the project cost was substantially less than the anticipated \$60,000.

In the fall of 2005 biologists captured 30 desert bighorn sheep on Kofa National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) near Yuma, Arizona and released them on the San Andres NWR which lies within the boundaries of the White Sands Missile Range. The supplemental transplant reintroduced a viable and self-perpetuating desert bighorn sheep population in the San Andres Mountains within the refuge. According to sheep experts, these mountains contain the best desert sheep habitat in New Mexico.

Previous trapping operations conducted in 2003, resulted in the release of 27 Rocky Mountain bighorns in Arizona. In the same year, 51 desert bighorns, 20 from Kofa NWR and 31 from the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish's desert bighorn sheep breeding facility at Red Rock, were released on San Andres NWR.



Wildlife Restoration Funds Provide for Over 60 Wildlife Management Areas

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has acquired lands for wildlife management areas, and operates and maintains 64 wildlife management areas, offering over 1.6 million acres statewide for wildlife habitat and wildlife recreation. These wildlife management areas are located across Oklahoma and provide public hunting, wildlife viewing and shooting opportunities.

Thirteen of the wildlife management areas also have public shooting ranges where hunters and target shooters may practice and improve their shooting skills.

Though the Department operates and manages these lands primarily for hunting, many activities compatible with hunting also take place on these lands. Activities include controlled grazing, agriculture leases and low-density recreation activities such as fishing, wildlife viewing, hiking, horseback riding, nature study, photography and environmental education.

The Wildlife Management Areas also afford the Department to offer controlled, quality hunting opportunities for youth hunts and hunting access for all hunters. Hunt development and administration is made available through the Wildlife Restoration Program.

Wildlife Restoration funds are used also in Oklahoma to manage wildlife species on both public and private land. Wildlife biologists frequently provide wildlife technical assistance to private landowners because land in Oklahoma is largely privately owned.



Improving shooting skills



Northern bobwhite

Oklahoma Involved in Variety of Wildlife Research Projects

Northern Bobwhite: The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation has focused on the restoration of quail habitat and quail populations using both Wildlife Restoration funds and matching funds from partnering with many other groups and organizations.

Northern bobwhites are hunted in over 30 states. In Oklahoma, about 95,000 hunters harvest about 2 million bobwhites annually. However, Oklahoma, like many States in the southeast, has not been immune from the steady decline in bobwhite populations since the early 1970s. Suspected reasons for the decreasing and fluctuating bobwhite populations in Oklahoma include habitat changes, changes in agricultural practices, weather, disease, predation, and overharvest.

The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation completed a 10-year bobwhite mortality study in an attempt to understand the reasons for declining bobwhite populations. The study evaluated causes and rates of mortality of both chicks and adults, the effects of supplemental feeding on bobwhite survival, examined reproductive success, and spring and fall movements of bobwhites.

One area of research studied was supplemental feeding, which is commonly used in Oklahoma and throughout the bobwhite's range in an attempt to enhance populations. Supplemental feeding as a management technique is debated by wildlife biologists and managers. Many wildlife professionals believe that feeding concentrates bobwhites, thereby increasing predation on the concentrated birds. Feeders may also increase opportunity for transmission of diseases and parasites. The study did not support the idea that quail feeders increase bobwhite survival or to concentrate localized populations of bobwhites on the supplementally fed areas.

Another aspect of this research that has received regional and national attention is the documentation of long distance movements by bobwhites. It has long been understood that bobwhites undergo two periods of increased activity; the “spring breakup” and the “fall shuffle”. During the fall shuffle almost half of the birds have been observed moving 2 miles or more from the research area. Ten to 15 mile movements were fairly common and Oklahoma wildlife researchers observed quail moving as far as 37 miles! Movements in the spring did not involve as many birds and the greatest distance traveled was 16 miles; movements of 4 to 5 miles were more common during the spring breakup.

Nesting cover and habitat overall was shown to be significant in the survival of bobwhites. Also, study data showed that avian predation was higher on supplementally fed areas.

In a new Wildlife Restoration funded project using Geographic Information System techniques, the Department initiated identifying high priority areas where habitat restoration will be the most effective. These areas will then be the focus for outreach to private landowners to conduct various habitat improvements such as prescribed burning or planting of native grasses.

Elk: Although elk have been long established in southwestern Oklahoma, particularly within the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge, the population has expanded onto private lands north and west of the refuge. This expanded population has not only provided an opportunity for the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to manage the herd for hunting, but also to reduce depredation and crop damage on these private lands.

Using Wildlife Restoration funds matched with Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation funds, the Oklahoma Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit has been gathering much needed management

information on this population, including herd size, calf production, age structure, movements, habitat use and feeding patterns. The Department will be allowed to manage the elk herd with much better information than it has had in the past. One interesting sidelight to this study is that while it was underway a large wind-power generation station was constructed and began operation. This event allowed the study of impacts, if any, of wind-powered turbines on an established elk herd.

River Otters: Following overharvest in the late 1800s and early 1900s and extirpation, or nearly so, from much of historic and large geographic distribution in North America, the northern river otter population has been restored to about 90 percent of its historic range. In southeastern Oklahoma, successful reintroductions of river otters were made in LeFlore and Atoka counties in the early 1980s with Wildlife Diversity and Wildlife Restoration funds. Those relocations, along with probable immigration of river otters from Arkansas into Oklahoma, appear to have resulted in significant increases in both numbers and

distribution of river otters in the State. Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation is now attempting to assess the status of the river otter in Oklahoma, again with Wildlife Restoration funds and in cooperation with the Oklahoma Cooperative Fish and Wildlife Research Unit.



Managing river otter and elk populations are important to habitat.



**City of Tucson HCP
(Pima County, Arizona)**

Grant awards made to the Arizona Game and Fish Department in 2003 and 2005 totaling \$585,730 will help the City of Tucson develop an HCP through a collaborative conservation planning effort for more than 45,000 acres within the city's jurisdiction in southeast Tucson, along the Santa Cruz River corridor and for extraterritorial holdings of the Tucson Water Department in the Avra Valley west of the city. The plan, critical to the conservation and recovery of the endangered cactus ferruginous pygmy owl and Pima pineapple cactus, will also provide connection of habitat for vulnerable species and improvement of conservation for riparian species associated with the Santa Cruz River. The planning area spans the boundary separating Pima County, Marana, and the Tohono O'odham Nation in southern Arizona and includes multiple landowners, both public and private.

**Balcones Canyonlands Preserve
(Travis County, Texas)**

Four grant awards made to the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department (TPWD) between 2002 and 2005 totaling \$25,258,794 are being used for the acquisition of tracts vital for the ecological viability of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. This preserve was designed to include high quality habitat characterized by steep canyons with bands of oak/juniper woodland that benefits the federally endangered golden-cheeked warbler; uplands that serve as potential habitat for the federally endangered black-capped vireo, and cave clusters for endangered karst species. Partners in this current habitat conservation effort include the City of Austin, Travis County, the Lower Colorado River Authority, The Nature Conservancy of Texas, and Travis Audubon Society, as well as private sector landowners.

**Hays County Regional HCP
(Hays County, TX)**

This \$753,750 grant awarded to TPWD will fund the development of a regional Habitat Conservation Plan in Hays County to protect endangered species. The HCP will be designed to permanently protect fully functional mature juniper-oak woodlands and oak savannas for endangered golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo and potentially other rare species. The RHCP will provide for conservation of the covered species in Hays County, and allow "one-stop shopping" for landowners and public entities to deal with complex endangered species issues, thereby providing more options and more certainty about future land uses.

**La Sal Vieja, Corbett Ranch
(Willacy County, TX)**

Through a \$438,969 grant award to TPWD, The Nature Conservancy will protect 500 acres of dense thornscrub on the 4,000-acre Corbett Ranch via a conservation easement. The ranch contains optimum habitat for the endangered ocelot (*Leopardus pardalis*), and provides the largest continuous patch of ocelot habitat remaining on private land in the Rio Grande Valley. This ranch also contains thousands of individuals of endangered Texas ayenia shrub (*Ayenia limitaris*), which may be the the largest known population in the United States. The easement will provide significant conservation benefit to the recovery of both species. Additionally, a portion of the northern shore of La Sal Vieja, one of only three hypersaline inland lakes in South Texas, will be preserved. This lake supports Western snowy plovers, long-billed curlews, and least terns.

**Cobb Preserve, Clark Lyda Tract
(Williamson County, TX)**

As a subgrantee of TPWD, the Williamson County Conservation Foundation will use a \$725,000 award to protect approximately 65 acres (Cobb Preserve) of the northern portion of the 1,670-acre Cobb Ranch via a conservation easement. A portion of Cobb cavern, one of the largest habitats known for endangered terrestrial karst invertebrates in Texas, will be permanently preserved by this easement. The cavern is home to at least six species of rare and endangered terrestrial karst invertebrates, two of which are on the Federal endangered species list (the Bone Cave harvestman and Coffin Cave mold beetle) and one, *Neoleptoneta anopica* (no common name), is known only from Cobb Cavern. Additionally, Cobb Ranch supports endangered black-capped vireos and golden-cheeked warblers and a candidate species, the Georgetown salamander.

**Adair County Tract
(Adair County, OK)**

Grant awards made in 2004 and 2005 totaling \$894,933 will allow the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation to purchase almost 2,100 acres in Adair County, Oklahoma to benefit the Ozark big-eared bat and the gray bat. These tracts of land contain at least three caves, one of which is a portion of the largest known cave in Oklahoma. The cave provides important maternity roost and hibernacula for the bats. Conservation of these essential karst features and surrounding forested habitat will greatly contribute toward recovery of this bat. The property is adjacent to the Ozark Plateau National Wildlife Refuge. The Arkansas Natural Resources Department is cooperating in the effort to conserve listed species within the Ozark Karst Ecosystem of the Ozark Highlands Ecoregion, which occurs in Arkansas, Missouri, and Oklahoma.

Texas Catfish Gear Selectivity Evaluation Targets Improved Fisheries Management

Popular sport fisheries exist throughout Texas for three species of catfish—channel catfish, blue catfish and flathead catfish. A recent survey indicated that catfish ranked second only to black bass in angler preference in Texas. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Inland Fisheries Division is focusing on providing state-of-the art management for these valuable sport fish.

Fisheries managers need reliable collection techniques to assess catfish abundance, size structure and mortality. Additionally, collecting gear must be effective in the streams, rivers and reservoirs where catfish live.

Many types of gear, such as gill nets, hoop nets, and electrofishing, have been used to collect data on catfish, but few have been thoroughly evaluated for effectiveness and selectivity.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department fisheries managers routinely use experimental gill nets to collect catfish. Further, the size-selectivity of these nets is unknown. However, recent work suggests the two most promising collection techniques for representative samples of catfish are tandem baited hoop nets and low-frequency pulsed DC electrofishing.

The Inland Fisheries Division is now evaluating the data on a variety of catfish sampling techniques and procedures to assess their effectiveness and efficiency while providing scientifically sound data for fisheries managers.

Lake Livingston and the Trinity River were selected as the study sites for this evaluation. Using Sport Fish Restoration funds, Texas fisheries biologists conducted intensive data collection over a 3-month period in 2005. Almost 50,000 catfish were handled during that period providing a very large data set on which to base conclusions. Data analysis is currently underway.

March 2006

"Go for the Gould's" – State Agency, Conservation Group, and Wildlife Restoration Program Funds Restoring Wild Turkeys

At one time they had all but vanished from Arizona, but thanks to a multipartner reintroduction effort and with funding assistance from the Wildlife Restoration Program, Gould's turkeys, one of the two wild turkey subspecies in the State, are making a comeback.

Twenty-five Gould's turkeys captured in Mexico were released into the wild in the Santa Catalina Mountains on January 12, 2006, as part of an ongoing collaborative effort among the Arizona Game and Fish Department, National Wild Turkey Federation, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the Mexican government to repopulate these birds where they existed or were thought to exist in Arizona.



Wild turkey

The January 12 release was the first done in the Santa Catalinas. Ten of the turkeys were fitted with radio transmitters to allow Game and Fish biologists to monitor the birds to determine movements, survival, and reproduction.

Since 2003, AGFD and the NWTF have transferred 82 Gould's wild turkeys from Mexico to the Chiricahua, Huachuca, and Pinaleno Mountains of southern Arizona as part of their "Go for the Gould's" project. Last year, 28 Gould's wild turkeys were relocated within the borders of Arizona. Seven of those birds released had radio telemetry units attached.

Current estimates show Gould's turkeys expanding their populations and range. A survey conducted in the Huachuca Mountains last year observed 321 Gould's turkeys. The highest previous number for that area was 90 in 2004.

Gould's turkeys were an important food source for people who settled and worked in the rugged lands of southeastern Arizona, but by 1920 the birds had disappeared from the State largely due to unregulated hunting and unregulated land use practices. A small population is still found in New Mexico, and a larger population exists in the Sierra Madre Mountains of Mexico.

Starting in the late 1930s, the AGFD began a wild turkey restocking program in the southeastern Arizona mountains utilizing the Merriam's subspecies. Over the long-term, Merriam's translocations in this habitat had mixed results, and the program now reintroduces the Gould's subspecies, which seems to be better adapted to the climatic and habitat conditions of the southern Arizona mountain ranges.

Cooperative Project to Restore the State Fish of New Mexico Assisted with Sport Fish Restoration Funds

The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, in collaboration with the Vermejo Park Ranch, the Rio Costilla Park (Rio Costilla Cooperative Livestock Association), and the Carson National Forest, is actively pursuing restoration of the Rio Grande cutthroat trout, the State fish of New Mexico, in its historic range in the Rio Grande drainage. The New Mexico Department of Game and Fish, using Sport Fish Restoration funds, is actively working to improve the populations of pure Rio Grande cutthroat trout in the streams and lakes of far northern New Mexico.

Rio Grande cutthroat trout was the only native trout in many of northern New Mexico waters. Unfortunately, a combination of overharvest and stocking of rainbow, brook and brown trout in lakes and streams at the turn of the 20th century decimated the populations of this species. Pure populations of Rio Grande cutthroat trout have been isolated and fragmented in upstream high-mountain headwater streams. Currently, Rio Grande cutthroats occupy only 5-7 percent of the stream habitat available in the Carson and Santa Fe National Forests in New Mexico.

Beginning in the 1980s, cooperators and the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish initiated programs to restore pure populations of Rio Grande cutthroat trout. The Department has been using various methods of removing nonnative trout and hybrid trout from the streams and replacing them with pure Rio Grande cutthroats from neighboring stocks or from pure hatchery stocks. Restoration activities have been accomplished in other stream drainages. Pure populations exist in the Rio Grande, Pecos, Canadian and Tularosa drainages but more restoration activities need to be completed.

Sport Fish Restoration funds have also been used by the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish to renovate, operate and maintain State fish hatcheries for spawning, rearing and stocking of pure Rio Grande cutthroat trout. The focus for Rio Grande cutthroats has been significant at Seven Springs, Parkview, and Lisboa Springs State fish hatcheries. The Department has implemented a broodstock management program to keep wild fish wild. Thus, crossing fish in the hatcheries with fish broodstock from various wild populations will provide fish for stocking with a strong mix of genes for restoration purposes.

The future looks bright for the New Mexico State fish largely due to the cooperative efforts of private, State and Federal agencies and groups working together, and in using Sport Fish Restoration funds to leverage other available funds to bring back the Rio Grande cutthroat trout to New Mexico.



Fly fishing for trout



Rio Grande cutthroat trout

Three Forks Harbor

The Muskogee City-County Port Authority is developing an inland recreational harbor complex on the McClellan-Kerr Arkansas River Navigation System utilizing funding from the Boating Infrastructure Grant (BIG) Program, the Sport Fish Restoration Program, and the Clean Vessel Act, along with significant partner involvement. This is an ambitious multi-year project to provide 12 slips plus a boaters lounge, restrooms and laundry facilities in the River Center for transient, non-trailerable recreational boats, 200 additional slips for recreational watercraft, a boat ramp, a travel-lift, fueling services, marine pump-out facilities, fishing platform, fish cleaning station, and other amenities for boaters and fishermen. In addition, using other funding sources, the complex will include a trail system linking Three Forks Harbor to nearby Fort Gibson, with interpretive stations highlighting the ecological, historical, and cultural significance of the area.

Three Forks Harbor represents a partnership of Oklahoma state agencies, the Muskogee Port Authority and the Service's Federal Assistance Program. The Oklahoma Department of Recreation and Tourism received \$600,000 in BIG funding to support the initial dredging of the harbor and entrance channel, placement of sheet piling, and construction of slips and other dockside amenities for transient boaters, and a portion of the River Center which will house the boaters lounge, restrooms and laundry facilities; the Oklahoma Office of the Secretary of the Environment administered the Clean Vessel Act grant for the marine pump-out facilities; and the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation administers the Sport Fish Restoration funds supporting the development of the recreational boat slips, the boat ramp, haul-out facility, fishing platforms and fish cleaning station, parking lot, lighting, restrooms, and a portion of the River Center, which will include aquatic education displays.

Corpus Christi Marina Boat Slips

The City of Corpus Christi has initiated a \$6 million major renewal of the Corpus Christi Municipal Marina, including renovation of the seawall that fronts the marina and downtown area. The City credits as the impetus for this major renovation, \$200,000 in grants awarded in 2000 and 2001 from the Boating Infrastructure Grant program to develop a restroom and laundry facility for transient boaters. The original BIG project was simply a floating restroom/laundry facility to provide basic amenities to transient boaters. The project has since evolved, with additional partners, into an 1800 square-foot shoreside facility located near the marina office. The expanded \$500,000 boater facility includes public restrooms with showers and a meeting room that can accommodate up to 60 people. The meeting room has a library, boating navigation equipment, internet access and a state-of-the art National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) weather station.

The Corpus Christi Municipal Marina was also awarded \$450,000 in BIG funding in 2004 to construct 34 new slips for non-trailerable transient boats. A \$438,000 facility, nearly identical to the BIG-funded facility on the Lawrence Street T-head, will be built adjacent to the new Peoples Street transient slips, using non-federal funds. This facility will provide restroom, shower, laundry, internet, and lounge facilities; it will also receive information from the neighboring NOAA weather station, making current weather information readily available to boaters docked on the Peoples Street T-head.

In addition to the BIG-funded improvements for transient vessels, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has submitted a \$500,000 Boating Access grant through the Sport Fish Restoration Program to construct a new three-lane boat ramp at the Corpus Christi Municipal Marina, replacing a 60-year old, two-lane ramp. The new ramp will be located on the leeward side and will



Corpus Christi Marina

Photo: Corpus Christi, Texas Convention and Visitors Bureau

be much more useable in all weather conditions.

Tourism in the Corpus Christi metropolitan area generates almost 11,000 jobs, \$625 million in travel spending, and \$58 million in tax receipts each year. The Corpus Christi Municipal Marina, located on the Corpus Christi bay front, is the only marina in Texas located in the center of a metropolitan district. As a sporting destination, Corpus Christi has partnered with private organizations to attract sporting events to the marina, including the J22 World Sailboat Championships, the World Optimist Sailboat Championships, the Performance Catamaran Nationals, the Powerboat Shootout, and other prestigious boating championships. The marina had been at full capacity before the construction of the new transient slips and had turned away nearly 100 vessels annually due to insufficient sized boat slips and lack of electrical hookups. The additional boat slips should have a positive impact on the economy by increasing the number of medium to large non-trailerable vessels. In addition, the City believes that it is in a stronger position to continue to partner with private organizations to sponsor boating sports events in the Corpus Christi Bay area as a result of the improved public facilities and boating amenities.

Island Haven for Colonial Waterbirds and Shorebirds Restored

National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grants are awarded to States yearly through a competitive process. The program is funded under provisions of the 1990 Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act, with money generated from excise taxes on fishing equipment, and motorboat and small engine fuels. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will award more than \$15 million in grants to 12 States to help acquire, restore and protect coastal wetlands for long-term conservation benefits to wildlife and habitat. When the 2006 projects are complete, they will have



Banding a brown pelican/USFWS

protected, restored or enhanced about 14,000 acres.

In December 2000 Texas Parks and Wildlife in cooperation with the Texas General Land Office was awarded a National Coastal Wetlands grant for the protection and restoration of North Deer Island. North Deer Island is the most important colonial waterbird and shorebird rookery island in the Galveston Bay system, where 19 species of waterbird and shorebird species have nested including 1,000 pair of the federally listed brown pelican. Prior to this restoration project, erosion threatened the ecological integrity of this small island. By placing 5000 feet of protective features including breakwaters, 100 acres of estuarine emergent marsh and 44 acres of palustrine and upland habitat were protected.

In 2006 Texas was awarded an additional coastal wetlands grant for \$653,300 that will be used for Phase II of the North Deer Island Protection and Restoration plan. Phase II will protect and restore over 135 acres of habitat by saving 82 acres of habitat from erosion and

restoring eight acres of estuarine marsh. The State provided matching funds of \$350,000; another \$167,000 was provided by private partners; Galveston Bay Estuary Program, Gulf of Mexico Program, the Service's Coastal Program in Texas, Texas Genco EcoCenter and Audubon Houston. Deer Island is one of many National Coastal Wetlands grants awarded for projects in and around Galveston Island. Together, TPWD and its many diverse partners are working to restore resources in the ecologically important Galveston Bay area.

Tobusch Fishhook Cactus in Texas

The Tobusch fishhook cactus, *Ancistrocactus tobuschii*, is a federally and State-listed endangered species that ranges across the south-central portion of the Edwards Plateau. The species is most commonly found on thin rocky soils overlaying limestone in live oak-juniper woodlands. This species is often difficult to find, growing secretly nestled within grasses, spikemoss and rock fractures and usually can only be located when it is blooming. In the original status report, there were only four populations known in Bandera and Kerr counties. Using traditional Section 6 funding, Texas Parks and Wildlife sponsored intense surveying efforts. In the last 10 years over 60 populations of Tobusch fishhook cactus have been verified and the species may soon be considered for delisting.

Rana chiricahuensis in New Mexico

The Chiricahua leopard frog was given protection under the Endangered Species Act in 2002 after a rapid decline in populations throughout its range. This species is found in the mountain regions of central and southeastern Arizona, southwestern New Mexico, and the southeastern mountains of Arizona and adjacent Sonora, Mexico. With traditional Section 6 funding, the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish is investigating the distribution of this species throughout New Mexico and Sonora, Mexico. The Department is also monitoring existing populations and



Chiricahua leopard frog
Photo by Randy D. Jennings

determining threats to these populations. One of the greatest threats to the Chiricahua leopard frog is the presence of chytrid fungus in many populations. This fungus has been found to be the primary cause of population declines for many amphibian species worldwide. The development of a management plan for this species has helped determine the threats and set goals for increasing populations in the future.

Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Recovery in Oklahoma

The red-cockaded woodpecker was federally listed as an endangered species in 1970 because of widespread habitat loss and population decline. The McCurtain County Wilderness Area is the last sizable expanse of old growth oak/shortleaf pine forest in the Nation. It is located 25 miles north of Broken Bow. The red-cockaded woodpecker, a federally endangered species, has its last stronghold in Oklahoma within the wilderness area. Here, this species is on the northwest extreme of its present continental range.

In 1992 only nine clusters of red-cockaded woodpeckers were active on the area, a decline from 29 in 1977. Using a traditional Section 6 grant, Oklahoma,



Red cockaded woodpecker/USFWS

banded the woodpeckers, monitored populations, installed artificial cavities, translocated woodpeckers controlled hardwoods, and created corridors between clusters. These activities have benefited the species and have resulted in an increase in the number of clusters. Twenty one out of 35 of the hatchlings successfully fledged and eight of the woodpeckers were recaptured and banded in the last year.

Sport Fish Restoration Funds in Texas Allow Intensive Fisheries Management

Both the Inland Fisheries and Coastal Fisheries divisions of Texas Parks and Wildlife Department provide outstanding fishing opportunities in the waters of Texas. The mission of the Inland Fisheries Divisions is to provide the best possible fishing in Texas while protecting and enhancing its aquatic resources. The mission of the Coastal Fisheries Division is to manage the marine fishery resources of Texas to prevent depletion or waste. These resources are found in the State's lakes, streams, bays and estuaries, and in the Gulf of Mexico out to 9 nautical miles. Sport Fish Restoration funds provide the means to meet these missions.

The Inland Fisheries Division has the responsibility for managing the fishery resources in approximately 800 public reservoirs and 80,000 miles of rivers and streams—totaling 1.7 million acres of water. Texas Parks and Wildlife Department annually surveys the freshwater habitats, fish and anglers to gather the necessary information to apply the best possible management practices for sport fisheries in the public waters of Texas. But to assure this is accomplished, the Inland Fisheries Division developed and implemented a scientifically valid and defensible standardized survey and reporting system to provide effective and efficient management of freshwater fisheries resources for Texas anglers and the general public. The surveys of the biological, physical and chemical components of Texas waters and surveys of Texas anglers allow fishery management biologists the flexibility to focus fisheries management problems effectively, efficiently and timely.

Funding for this intensive and comprehensive program is the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act. Annually, between \$2 and \$3 million of Sport Fish Restoration funds are directed towards monitoring the freshwater fisheries resources of Texas.

Similarly, the Coastal Fisheries Division recognized that effective management of finfish and shellfish resources must be based on a thorough knowledge of the population dynamics and status of the resource for the more than 1 million saltwater anglers. Long-term trend information based on statistically reliable sampling programs are used to assess changes in resource abundance and size of organisms. Bag seines, trawls, oyster dredges, and gill nets are used in Texas' coastal waters to determine relative abundance, catch-per-effort, size and species composition of finfish and shellfish in various life history stages. Monitoring sport fish and fishing in the Texas Gulf Coast is accomplished with Sport Fish Restoration funds.

In November of 2005, Texas celebrated 30 years of continuous resource monitoring and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Coastal Fisheries Division was recognized nationally at their Coastal Fisheries Symposium for tremendous fisheries management successes. Annually, over \$1 million Sport Fish Restoration funds are directed at standardized sampling of the biological, physical and chemical components of Texas coastal waters and surveys of Texas anglers to provide effective and efficient sport fish management.

Texas Aquatic Education Sea Center

Sea Center Texas is a state-of-the-art marine fish hatchery and aquarium located on 75 acres in Lake Jackson, Texas. This \$13 million facility was created with a partnership among the Dow Chemical Company, the Coastal Conservation Association and the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department with the support of the Sport Fish Restoration Funds. This showcase educational and entertainment facility opened in 1996. The Center's facilities include an exceptional free aquarium, the largest red drum hatchery in the world and a wetland walkway and exhibit. Over 2,000 individuals visit this facility annually.

Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center

The center was built as a joint venture among the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, and the Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas. The Texas Freshwater Fisheries Center (TFFC) combines a visitor center, freshwater production hatchery and a wetlands with world-class aquatic education programming. Developed on a 107-acre site, the facility includes over 300,000 gallons of indoor and outdoor aquariums, an interactive dive theater, free fishing, guided hatchery tours, and a variety of displays featuring 42 species of native fish, waterfowl, alligators and amphibians in natural and recreated habitats. Between 60,000-80,000 individuals visit the facility annually.



TFFC specializes in the production of largemouth bass, the most popular gamefish in Texas. Hatchery operations consist of the indoor (intensive) hatchery and the outdoor (extensive) unit. The intensive unit is a high-tech system designed for the spawning and rearing of freshwater fish. The indoor hatchery also works with some very special fish, the 13-pound-plus largemouth bass brood stock which are caught by anglers and entered into the Budweiser ShareLunker program each year. The large females are paired with male fish for spawning, and the resulting fry are stocked into public waters in an effort to improve the size and growth rate of largemouth bass in Texas. The TFFC also provides aquatic education experiences for schools, clubs and scout groups. Teachers and group

leaders may choose from activities such as wetlands tours, fishing, study of aquatic invertebrates, water quality investigation, fish identification, dive shows, tram tours of the production hatchery, tours of the Visitor Center exhibits and more.

Independent learning stations are available for self-guided study of properties of water and aquatic organisms. Teachers are encouraged to prepare their classes for field trips by completing pre-visit activities and to take an active role in instruction on site.

Arizona Using Sport Fish Restoration Funds for Aquatic Education

Arizona's aquatic education program promotes awareness of, appreciation and support for Arizona's aquatic resources and recreational fishing opportunities. It is designed to help anyone become more proficient in basic fishing techniques. Our instructional programs are conducted in a safe non-threatening manner and are especially useful to the beginning angler. This statewide program takes advantage of the many fishable waters available in both rural and urban areas of the State. From urban lakes, to our largest reservoirs, to White Mountain streams, our program strives to provide a quality educational experience for young and old alike.

The Arizona Game and Fish Department uses sport fishing contractors, and Department qualified volunteer instructors to conduct fishing programs, throughout Arizona. The Department conducts "Open to the Public" fishing programs that individuals, families or groups may attend to learn more about basic fishing techniques. The Department also conducts sport fishing programs for specific groups that request them. The Arizona Game and Fish Department supplies all educational materials, rods, reels, bait and instruction. Normal fishing license requirements are waived during all Sport Fishing Education Programs. All fishing programs are offered free of charge.

Texas Marine Fish Hatcheries Use Sport Fish Restoration Funds for Fish and Fisheries Outreach

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department's Coastal Fisheries Division embraces the responsibility to manage the marine fisheries of Texas for the more than 1 million saltwater anglers. And it accomplishes the fisheries management largely with the use of Sport Fish Restoration funds.

The Coastal Fisheries Division enhances and stabilizes sport fish populations through spawning, rearing and stocking coastal fishes from three marine fish hatcheries. The Division operates three marine fish hatcheries strategically located along the Texas coast; they are Sea Center Texas located near Lake Jackson, Perry R. Bass Marine Fisheries Research Station located near Palacios, and Coastal Conservation Association/Central Power and Light Company (CCA/CPL) Marine Development Center in Corpus Christi. Both the Sea Center Texas and the CCA/CPL Marine Development Center hatcheries have associated visitors' centers to accommodate the many interested visitors to the fish hatcheries.

Sport Fish Restoration (SFR) funds are significant in providing necessary monies to raise coastal fishes. Red drum and spotted sea trout are the primary fish species cultured at the coastal hatcheries. Marine fish hatcheries targets are around 24 million red drum and 4 million spotted sea trout to be reared and stocked annually. In some years, Texas stocked more than 37 million red drum fingerlings alone. Since 1982, these hatcheries have reared and stocked nearly 500 million red drum fingerlings and 44 million spotted sea trout fingerlings into Texas bays to supplement natural reproduction, assist in quick recoveries after disasters, and balance the pressure of overfishing.

SFR funds have also been instrumental in the construction and renovation of the three marine fish hatcheries. A recent renovation at the CCA/CPL Marine

Development Center included both building renovations and rearing pond plastic liner replacements. Throughout construction and renovation of hatcheries, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department has capitalized on leveraging license monies and Sport Fish Restoration funds with corporate donations and in-kind contributions from supportive groups and individuals.

Fish hatcheries attract public visitors, and the visitor centers at CCA/DPL Marine Development Center and Sea Center Texas have provided many opportunities for education and outreach. The facilities provide hatchery tours, fishing events and other outreach activities for thousands of visitors annually.

Additionally, collaborative research on saltwater sport fish and the stocking program is ongoing. The coastal fish hatcheries and facilities provide a venue for university and independent researchers to work with the stock enhancement program—all to improve coastal sport fishing. Sport Fish Restoration funds have been used to operate the Corpus Christi center since 1989 and the Lake Jackson center since 1995.

Texas Parks and Wildlife Department hatcheries are developing a southern flounder stocking program. Atlantic

croaker, black drum, tarpon and sheepshead have all received attention as potential stocking species as well. Sport Fish Restoration funds will be needed in the future to help the Coastal Fisheries Division of Texas improve angling opportunities.

New Mexico State Wildlife Grants

New Mexico State Wildlife Grants program has addressed numerous topics including translocation and establishment of Chiricahua leopard frog populations; restoration of desert bighorn sheep populations; studies of habitat use and movement of Rio Grande suckers; documentation and inventory of grassland birds; surveys of yellow-billed cuckoo, burrowing owls, flammulated owls, and black swifts; denning biology of prairie rattlesnakes; restoration of wetland and riparian habitats; distribution of prairie dogs; feasibility of reintroduction of river otters, conservation and recovery of State-listed threatened and endangered species; distribution and conservation of the Conchas crayfish and the fishes of the South Canadian River drainage; ichthyological investigations of the upper Rio Grande; monitoring of the Texas hornshell mussel; the impact of forest thinning on populations of the Sacramento Mountain salamander; and development and implementation of the Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy.



Kemp's Ridley Sea Turtles on the Upswing in Texas

The Kemp's ridley sea turtle is one of the smallest of the sea turtles, with adults reaching about two feet in length and weighing up to 100 pounds. Nesting occurs from April to June on the beaches of the States of Tamaulipas and Veracruz in Mexico. A small number of Kemp's ridleys nest consistently at Padre Island National Seashore. The range of the Kemp's ridley includes the gulf coasts of Mexico and the United States and the Atlantic coast of the United States.

The Marine Monitoring State Wildlife Grant provides partial funding for this program. The objectives of the program are to protect and recover the Kemp's ridley sea turtle population at the primary nesting site for the species in Mexico as part of a binational effort, and to establish a robust secondary nesting colony of

Kemp's ridley sea turtles on Padre Island, Texas. Assistance is provided to operate seven turtle beach camps at the primary nesting sites in Mexico, under permit by the Instituto Nacional de Pesca. Nesting Kemp's ridley female turtles are monitored, protected, and their nests relocated to protected corrals. Hatchlings are released on the beaches to imprint so that the females will return to nest.

Between November 2002 and August 2005, the seven camps were fully staffed with skilled sea turtle biologists, over 25,200 nests were relocated and protected, and over 1,606,000 hatchlings were incubated and released. In Texas, staff and volunteers patrol the entire length of Padre Island each day from April through July looking for nesting sea turtles, sea turtle tracks, and stranded sea turtles. Patrols for stranded turtles are also conducted daily in February, March,

August and September and weekly in October. Nests are relocated and incubated in a protected lab, and hatchlings released on Padre Island beaches. Live stranded turtles are rehabilitated and released. Between November 2002 and August 2005, 112 Kemp's ridley, 5 green, and 5 loggerhead turtle nests were identified and most relocated to the Padre Island National Seashore lab, over 8,300 hatchlings were released, and 651 stranded sea turtles were documented and examined.

Archery Education in Oklahoma

As part of the Section 10 Hunter Education program, Oklahoma has joined with the National Archery in the Schools Program (NASP) to bring the sport of archery to thousands of students in the Oklahoma public schools. The program teaches Junior Olympic Archery Development style target archery in grades 4-12 and follows national physical education standards. The course content includes safety, technique, equipment, mental concentration, and self-improvement. Before presenting the two-week archery course, teachers undergo an eight-hour National Archery Association Level 1 archery-training program provided by instructors from the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. The level 1 training provides information on range layout, safety, shooting sequences, target scoring, accuracy, equipment maintenance and shooting opportunities beyond the classroom.

Students shoot at bulls-eye targets placed before an arrow resistant net in their gymnasium. The state of the art equipment is designed to fit every student. Thanks to support from the archery industry and the Section 10 Hunter Education Program, the equipment kits can be purchased by schools for a minimal cost. Students and teachers with no prior exposure to archery or hunting are now gaining self confidence and are excited about shooting.



Archery education in the Oklahoma public schools brings the sport to thousands of students.

New Mexico Hunter Education Program

The New Mexico Hunter Education Program had 3,970 students enrolled in the basic 12-16 hour hunter education class this past year. Students were given hands-on opportunities to learn gun safety, animal identification, and field safety and all other aspects of hunting safety. Last year the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish also provided six bow hunting courses with at least 10 hours of classroom time and another 4 hours of field experience. This program provides students with the opportunity to participate in live firing exercises and field activities that allow them to take what they learn in the classroom and apply it to real life situations. New Mexico maintains a core group of 500 Certified Volunteer Instructors and offers numerous workshops to train volunteers throughout the year.

Release, Monitor and Manage a Viable Population of Merriam's Wild Turkey on the Pueblo of Santa Ana, Sandoval County, New Mexico

The people of the Pueblo of Santa Ana have lived along the banks of the Rio Grande and Rio Jemez for over 400 years. They have endured through the centuries by maintaining their traditional economic, cultural and spiritual ways that are strongly influenced by their connection to the natural world. The Pueblo continues to maintain an identity and strong connection to the natural world by consistently engaging in ceremonial practices. Like many other tribes, the Pueblo ceremonies involve the use of traditionally important wildlife species such as bison, antelope, and Merriam's wild turkey. Historically, wild turkeys were common along the banks of the Rio Grande, Rio Jemez and the surrounding

upland areas, but about 40 years ago they were extirpated. Despite the prolonged absence of wild turkey, the residents of the Pueblo continue to revere the birds.

The possibility of reintroducing turkeys led the Pueblo to enter into partnerships with the New Mexico Department of Game and Fish (NMDGF) and the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) to develop a plan to reintroduce, monitor and maintain a population on Pueblo lands. Ecologically, the reintroduction of wild turkeys reestablishes a species that had been extirpated, contributed to overall ecosystem functions through multitrophic inter-actions, and sustains an important wildlife species. Further, the reintroduction may ultimately provide a foundation that could lead to repopulation on suitable habitat through the Middle Rio Grande.



Merriam's wild turkeys



Release of wild turkeys

With funding from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Tribal Wildlife Grants Program, wild turkeys were released on Pueblo lands over the past 2 years. In mid-March 2004, a trapping effort was cooperatively accomplished by the Mescalero Apache Tribe in southeastern New Mexico, the NWTF, NMDGF, Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) and the Pueblo. Turkeys were captured and then released on Pueblo lands before an enthusiastic audience of community members, Pueblo employees, and Fish and Wildlife Service representatives.

To supplement the initial release of wild turkey, the Pueblo initiated a trapping effort on a private ranch in northeastern New Mexico in February 2005. The trapping event was a cooperative effort between the Spahn and Friends Bison

Ranch, NM State Parks, NMDGF, BIA and the Pueblo. Thirty wild turkeys were captured and released onto Pueblo lands. Four of these turkeys were fitted with backpack VHF transmitters and two were fitted with GPS receivers. In the winter of 2005-06, the partners will attempt to capture and release an additional 30 turkeys each from the Cheyenne River Sioux Tribe in South Dakota and from the State of New Mexico.

Although available habitats along the Rio Grande provide excellent forage resources for wild turkey, the Pueblo will begin strategic plantings of silver buffaloberry, three-leaf sumac, Arizona grape, golden currant, wild rose and wild plum to supplement available forage and insure the success of establishing a self-sustaining wild turkey population. In

addition, community members have expressed a genuine interest in supplementing available wild turkey forage by planting small sections of the irrigated croplands specifically for turkey.

This project, partially funded through the Tribal Wildlife Grant program, involves many partners and supporters. The expectation of the project managers is that the Pueblo will continue to establish the capacity for scientific wildlife management and apply that capacity to rectify some of the constraints that have hindered cultural expression. Community support and protection of wild turkeys will go a long way to establishing the concept of wildlife management on Pueblo lands in addition to establishing a self-sustaining wild turkey population for current and future Pueblo generations to enjoy.



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