

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FY 2015 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund
Project Descriptions Arranged by State**

Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Land Acquisition Grants by State:

California

Western Riverside County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (Riverside County) \$2,000,000.

This grant will support the acquisition of up to 1,025 acres of land in Riverside County. This acquisition will benefit numerous sensitive species including Federally-listed species like the California gnatcatcher, Arroyo southwestern toad, and Quino checkerspot butterfly. The acquisition will support the assembly of a 500,000-acre preserve that is part of the Western Riverside MSHCP by protecting large blocks of coastal sage scrub, chaparral, and grassland habitats.

East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan/Natural Community Conservation Plan (Contra Costa County) \$2,000,000.

These funds will purchase up to 600 acres that will provide important habitat and wildlife corridors for many of the species covered by the HCP/NCCP, including Federally-listed species such as the San Joaquin kit fox, California red-legged frog, and vernal pool tadpole shrimp. The acquisition of these properties adds to the reserve system and provides protection for lands that have rich on-site resources and support a diverse mosaic of habitat types.

Shell Oil Company/Metropolitan Water District Habitat Conservation Plan (Los Angeles County) \$2,000,000.

This grant will support the acquisition of approximately 56 acres of land in Los Angeles County. Los Angeles and Orange Counties are largely urbanized, and all remaining open space in these counties is highly vulnerable to urban development. The remaining natural open space in the area also contains a surprising diversity and abundance of wildlife and plant species. These factors combine to create an urgent need to conserve remaining available natural open space to support populations of native species and habitats as well as to ensure recovery of listed species. This grant will help conserve habitat in eastern Chino/Puente Hills for an important population of Federally-listed threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, and will help protect important habitat for the cactus wren, a California Species of Concern.

Coachella Valley Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan (Riverside County) \$2,000,000.

This grant will result in the acquisition of up to 4,526 acres of land that will greatly enhance the existing Coachella Valley MSHCP by securing key regional wildlife linkages, sand transport areas, and preserving core habitat areas. The land acquisition will benefit many sensitive species, including Federally-listed species such as Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard, desert tortoise, and peninsular bighorn sheep. The proposed acquisition will complement and greatly enhance the ecological value of the many other acquisitions that have previously occurred in these areas in the last few years.

This project will purchase up to 133 acres of important biological core habitat areas for the coastal California gnatcatcher. The purchases will also benefit numerous listed and unlisted species covered by the Carlsbad HMP, including the least Bell's vireo, California least tern, western snowy plover, and numerous plant species. The proposed acquisition supports a larger landscape-level conservation initiative and will greatly enhance the conservation goals of the Carlsbad HMP by securing key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core habitat in the three targeted areas. The proposed acquisition parcels support a mosaic of high quality, native riparian and upland habitats.

County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program (San Diego County) \$2,000,000.

This project will result in the acquisition of up to 200 acres of land that will greatly enhance the existing San Diego MSCP by securing key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core habitat in four targeted areas. The acquisitions will benefit numerous listed and unlisted species, including the San Diego fairy shrimp, arroyo toad, least Bell's vireo, coastal California gnatcatcher, southwestern willow flycatcher, and bald eagle. The proposed acquisition areas support a mosaic of high quality riparian, vernal pool, and upland habitats that support numerous listed and unlisted species covered by the San Diego MSCP. The proposed acquisition supports a larger landscape-level conservation initiative and will greatly enhance the conservation goals of the San Diego MSCP by connecting one of the largest intact blocks of publicly-owned and managed land within San Diego County.

Montana

Trumbull Creek Watershed Project (Flathead County) \$2,000,000.

The Trumbull Creek Watershed Project conservation easement will complement conservation efforts for the landscape-scale Montana Department of Natural Resources and Conservation HCP. It will prevent impacts to grizzly bear and Canada lynx habitat from imminent development and ensure vital linkages for these species. This acquisition will address some of the last remaining unprotected habitat in a large partnership effort to conserve much of the Crown of the Continent, including working lands, in northwestern Montana.

North Carolina

Red-cockaded Woodpecker Longleaf Pine Ecosystem Protection and Corridors (Richmond and Scotland Counties) \$275,076.

This grant will enable the acquisition of up to 526 acres of longleaf pine habitat in the Sandhills region of North Carolina used by red-cockaded woodpeckers. Acquisition of this property will promote connectivity among woodpecker groups to expand managed areas in and around the Fort Bragg and Camp Mackall woodpecker populations, and throughout the North Carolina Sandhills.

Texas

Fern Bank Springs Conservation Easement (Hays County) \$1,067,500.

This grant will establish a conservation easement for all above ground spring habitat at Fern Bank Springs, one of the two designated critical habitat areas for the endangered Comal Springs dryopid beetle, and prohibit threats to the beetle from activities on the property. Fern Bank Springs has not been greatly impacted by development and presents the only opportunity for conservation of the beetle's surface habitat on private land. The expected result of this easement acquisition will be the continued management of this private parcel for the protection of known habitat for this rare endemic species, consistent with its conservation needs.

Utah

Utah Prairie Dog Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition (Garfield County) \$1,000,000.

This grant will lead to the protection of up to 400 acres of essential habitat for the Utah prairie dog, a keystone species in the shrub-steppe and grassland ecosystem. It will also secure habitat connectivity with some of the largest known Utah prairie dog complexes range wide and make important steps toward recovery of the species.

Washington

I-90 Wildlife Corridor Phase VI (Kittitas County) \$2,000,000.

This grant will lead to the acquisition and permanent protection of 1,014 acres of habitat for four Federally-listed species: bull trout, northern spotted owl, Canada lynx, and gray wolf. In addition, it will contribute to habitat protection and improve connectivity for 60 species of terrestrial vertebrates, including wolverine, marten, and Pacific giant salamander, and enhance the effectiveness of the new fish and wildlife crossing structures on the adjacent I-90 freeway. Conservation of these properties is essential to protect habitat for animals occupying areas between the north and south Cascade Mountains. Opportunities to connect habitat in this corridor are limited due to natural landscape structure and increasing human development near the highway. These acquisitions will target critical properties within the I-90 wildlife corridor to connect habitat near Keechelus Lake with lands in the central Cascades ecosystem and the lands covered by the Cedar River Watershed HCP.

Mt. Si Area Old Growth (King County) \$2,000,000.

This grant will lead to the acquisition of 1,415 acres of habitat for the marbled murrelet, northern spotted owl, gray wolf and 11 unlisted species covered by the Washington State Lands HCP, including the Pacific fisher and wolverine. The acquisition will prevent habitat loss due to development and will complement the resource goals of the Washington Department of Natural Resource's Forest Lands HCP. The acquisition also will fill significant voids in the matrix of protected state and federal lands and prevent further fragmentation of high quality habitat. The grant will be matched with land that consists of mid-elevation drainage with old-growth forests, subalpine meadows, and mid-elevation lakes and is designated as northern spotted owl nesting, roosting, and foraging habitat. The acquired habitat will be protected and managed by Washington Department of Natural Resources and Forterra Northwest.

HCP Planning Assistance Grants by State:

California

City of Santee Multiple Species Conservation Program (San Diego County) \$188,798.

This funding will support the planning phase of the City of Santee's Plan in southern California. The Plan will provide large blocks of high quality shrubland, grassland, and riparian habitat which support a variety of sensitive species, many of which are generally restricted in their coastal southern California range. A few of these species, such as the Federally-listed threatened California gnatcatcher and the unlisted variegate dudleya and San Diego goldenstar, occur in relatively high numbers within Santee. Many other species occur in low to moderate numbers, and the primary benefit of the Plan to these species is through providing large habitat blocks, to confer regional stability of local populations faced with pressure from urbanization and infrequent disturbance, such as from fires.

Placer County Conservation Plan (Placer County) \$102,000.

This funding will support the planning phase of the Placer County Conservation Plan in northern California. Placer County is currently developing a comprehensive, multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan and Natural Community Conservation Plan. The county has partnered with other local, state and federal agencies to develop the plan. The primary objective of the plan is to balance development with the conservation of the County's natural resources, and provide for the protection of sensitive species and their respective habitats. Numerous sensitive species will benefit from this plan including; vernal pool fairy shrimp, giant garter snake, and American peregrine falcon.

Upper Santa Ana River Watershed HCP (San Bernardino and Riverside County) \$148,444.

The Upper Santa Ana River HCP seeks to balance conservation of primarily aquatic species with the effects from water infrastructure and maintenance activities. The Upper Santa Ana River HCP will include conservation and restoration of habitat at different locations throughout Santa Ana River watershed in San Bernardino and Riverside counties. Conservation efforts associated with the Plan will focus on restoring aquatic, riparian, and adjacent upland habitat and protecting the proposed 16 or more covered species including the Federally-listed least Bell's vireo, California gnatcatcher, and southern mountain yellow-legged frog.

United Water Conservation District Multiple Species HCP (Ventura County) \$750,000.

The United Water Conservation District HCP seeks to balance conservation of species with the effects from water infrastructure and maintenance activities. With completion of the Plan, United will implement a conservation program that accomplishes specific biological goals and objectives for 11 covered species, while continuing to operate and maintain its Freeman Diversion facility for the benefit of regional groundwater resources and the municipal and agricultural entities that rely on this water. Species that will be covered under the plan include the yellow-billed cuckoo, least Bell's vireo, California least tern, and several reptile and anadromous fish species.

Yuba & Sutter Counties Regional Conservation Plan (Yuba and Sutter Counties) \$550,000.

This plan seeks to balance conservation with urban development. Although much of the Plan Area remains undeveloped or in agricultural uses that benefit natural communities and the species they support, most of the land is in private ownership without protection. Many undeveloped areas within the Plan Area are anticipated to accommodate population growth over the next few decades. The plan is a unique opportunity for the plan participants to develop a comprehensive, multi-species conservation plan addressing both listed and non-listed but sensitive species. The plan will provide a regional framework for conservation including natural land and agricultural use preservation. Species that will be covered under the Plan include vernal pool fairy shrimp, Swainson's hawk, California black rail, and giant garter snake.

Florida

Statewide Habitat Conservation Plan for Florida Beaches (35 Coastal Counties- Statewide) \$750,000.

This grant will assist in the ninth and concluding year of this HCP planning effort. Stakeholders plan to assimilate acquired data into a final draft of the HCP. Activities in the coastal area and their threats to listed species will be analyzed. The goal of the HCP is to allow ongoing beach structure protection measures while limiting and mitigating the adverse effects to nesting loggerhead, Kemp's ridley, leatherback, green, and hawksbill sea turtles, five beach mouse subspecies, and shorebirds, including wintering piping plover. The Florida Department of Environmental Protection is leading this effort in conjunction with builders groups, municipalities, and other partners.

Hawaii

Coordination and Planning of the Kaua'i Seabird Habitat Conservation Program (Kauai County) \$559,990.

The Hawai'i Department of Land and Natural Resources, in coordination with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, continues to develop the Kaua'i Seabird Habitat Conservation Program to address incidental take of the endangered Hawaiian petrel, threatened Newell's shearwater, and band-rumped storm-petrel, a federal candidate for listing, due to light attraction and utility line collisions. Completion of the KSHCP will result in the implementation of landscape-scale conservation to mitigate for island-wide take of listed seabird species on Kaua'i. It is critical to the survival of the listed seabird species that landscape-scale colony management is implemented to abate the species' current decline. Without continued efforts to complete the KSHCP, the interested applicants on Kaua'i would need to develop individual HCPs or not seek coverage for incidental take. This would result in more delays in mitigating for take as well as higher costs per applicant. Preventing such delays is particularly urgent given the dramatic declines in some seabird populations, especially the Newell's shearwater.

Iowa

Multi-Species Wind Power Habitat Conservation Plan for MidAmerican Energy Wind Power Facilities (Statewide) \$562,500.

The State of Iowa, in partnership with MidAmerican Energy, proposes to develop a multi-species HCP for 19 wind power facilities in the State of Iowa. The State of Iowa is a leader in wind energy capacity, ranking third in the Nation for installed megawatt capacity. MidAmerican Energy constitutes the majority of that capacity. MidAmerican Energy is seeking incidental take authorization through Section 10 of the Endangered Species Act for the Indiana bat and the federally proposed as endangered northern long-eared bat. The HCP will also serve to satisfy statutory and regulatory compliance with the State of Iowa. The HCP will cover MidAmerican's current and proposed wind energy facilities. The project will also support critical studies and investigations associated with bat distribution and migration patterns, which will be collaborated with other HCP planning efforts.

Multi-State

Multi-State Habitat Conservation Plan for Cave- Dwelling Bats (Minnesota, Michigan, Wisconsin) \$487,350.

This grant will enable the continued development of the multi-species HCP, associated NEPA document, and on-going studies and investigations to inform forest management practices and bat conservation in the Midwest. The project will result in a better understanding of species distribution and summer habitat use by cave dwelling bats, species currently severely threatened by an epizootic disease outbreak. The project will also develop approaches to conserve covered species while allowing sustainable forest management practices, which in-turn, will allow public and private landowners to meet economic, ecological and social goals. The covered species include the Federally-listed endangered Indiana bat, the proposed northern long-eared bat, the little brown bat, and the tri-colored bat. Once the HCP is complete, the states will work with landowners and conservation groups to further the conservation of cave dwelling bats.

Tennessee

Development of Habitat Conservation Plans for the Cumberland Region, Tennessee (Cumberland County) \$511,890.

This grant will assist in the ongoing development of the Cumberland region-wide HCPs to protect aquatic and forest resources. Several mammals, mussels, reptiles, amphibians, fish, and aquatic invertebrates would benefit from this pre-emptive attempt to develop protective measures in an ecologically diverse region that is beginning to experience increased development and resource extraction issues. The HCP will provide management prescriptions and regulatory guidelines to minimize and mitigate development effects on the target species and habitats. With the plan in operation, regulatory processes for the covered municipalities will be streamlined. Listed species include the Indiana bat, gray bat, spotfin chub (a fish species), purple bean (a freshwater mussel), and Cumberland rosemary and Virginia spiraea (plants).

Washington

City of Tumwater Habitat Conservation Plan Phase 1 (Thurston County) \$132,000.

The City of Tumwater, in cooperation with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, will develop an HCP to cover activities that will affect listed species and their habitats. The prairies of south Puget Sound are among the rarest habitats in the United States. Development, agriculture, and fire suppression have resulted in a dramatic decline of this habitat and less than 10% of historic prairies remain and most of these are low quality. Tumwater has a long history of innovative planning to accommodate urban human population density while maintaining and enhancing ecological function and value. With the federal listing of several prairie species, and with approximately two-thirds of Tumwater having soils suitable for prairie species, it is imperative that the city proactively plans to protect these species while managing responsible urban growth to fulfill the obligations under the state growth management act. It is not possible for Tumwater to exercise its permitting authority for private development and to build necessary infrastructure while completely avoiding the take of listed species, thus the development of an HCP is critical for the city to fulfill its state-mandated growth objectives while protecting listed species such as the Mazama pocket gopher, Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, and streaked horned lark.

Recovery Land Acquisition Grants by State:

Alabama

Six Mile Creek Recovery Land Acquisition to Benefit the Recovery of Federally listed, Fish, Mussels, Snails, and Bats (Bibb County) \$795,900.

This grant will enable the acquisition of approximately 583 acres with four miles of frontage on the Six Mile Creek for the recovery of endangered and threatened species like the round rocksnail, orange nacre mucket (mussel), fine-lined pocketbook (mussel), and the Cahaba shiner. Acquisition will protect important habitat for Federally-listed bats such as the endangered gray bat. This parcel contains numerous cave systems and protecting it has importance to the whole recharge area. Also, this acquisition will allow for protection of the proposed for listing northern long-eared bat and the recently petitioned Cahaba pebblesnail.

Arkansas

Land Acquisition along the Saline River for the Recovery of Winged Mapleleaf (mussel); Pink Mucket (mussel); Red-cockaded Woodpecker; and Rabbitsfoot (mussel) (Ashley County) \$901,791.

This grant will enable the acquisition of 1,073 acres of important riparian and upland habitat adjacent to the Saline River to directly benefit the recovery of two Federally-listed freshwater mussel species, and the red-cockaded woodpecker. This tract contains the largest population of winged mapleleaf range-wide and one of the largest populations of pink mucket, both endangered. This acquisition will help further woodpecker recovery by reconnecting populations at Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuge and Warren Prairie State Natural Area. Securing this site

will also grow the Longview Saline State Natural Area that is adjacent to it along the Saline River and allow for protection of at risk species including three petitioned mussels.

California

Mojave River Riparian Areas- Palisades Ranch (San Bernardino County) \$1,300,000.

This funding will result in permanent protection of lands known as the Palisades Ranch to support recovery of threatened and endangered species near the Mojave River in southern California. Protection of these lands along this stretch of river is important to at least 15 Federal or State listed species including the federally endangered southwestern willow flycatcher and least Bell's vireo. Upland areas adjacent to the riparian habitat are inhabited by the federally threatened desert tortoise. The habitat acquisition area falls within a unique 15.2-mile region of the Mojave River where perennial water flows support a lush riparian plant community. The acquisitions would maintain important habitat connectivity and support native species dispersal in the only major riparian habitat corridor in the western Mojave Desert region.

San Diego Vernal Pool Species (San Diego County) \$1,000,000

This grant will enable the acquisition of lands that will support the recovery of southern California vernal pool species. Vernal pools are seasonal wetlands that occur in specific soils and micro-topography in Mediterranean-type climates. San Diego vernal pools provide essential habitat for five federally endangered species (Otay Mesa mint, San Diego button-celery, California Orcutt grass, Riverside fairy shrimp, and San Diego fairy shrimp) and the Federally-listed threatened spreading navarretia. In addition, the pools contain a large number of sensitive and endemic plant and animal species.

Colorado

Washburn Ranch Conservation Easement (Montezuma County) \$231,175.

The acquisition of this conservation easement on the Washburn Ranch demonstrates partnership between Colorado Parks and Wildlife, Montezuma Land Conservancy, Washburn Ranch, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to work toward recovery of the Gunnison sage-grouse by protecting important habitat in an area vital for conservation of one of the satellite populations, the Dove Creek population. This project will protect habitat from residential development and help maintain linkages to habitat on adjacent conservation easements and federal land.

Hawai'i

Pua'ahala Watershed Acquisition (Maui County) \$1,566,875.

The Pua'ahala Watershed Acquisition supports the protection and management of some of the highest quality native forest habitat on Moloka'i. The acquisition also protects a coastal wetland that contains the island's largest freshwater pond, Paialoa, and is used by endangered Hawaiian waterbirds, including the Hawaiian stilt and Hawaiian coot. Pua'ahala is approximately five miles east of the Kakahaia National Wildlife Refuge, and will provide a new link in Moloka'i's chain of secured coastal wetland systems. The State of Hawai'i will own and manage the 800 acres of

acquired property as a combination of wetland Wildlife Sanctuary and upland Forest Reserve. This strategic acquisition directly benefits the protection of a much larger area on the south slope of Moloka‘i, and is essential for access by the East Moloka‘i Watershed Partnership to control invasive species, prevent and control wildfires, and enhance watershed health. In particular, State ownership of Pua‘ahala will facilitate the strategic fencing of an additional 1,300 acres of high quality upland forest managed by the East Moloka‘i Watershed Partnership.

Idaho

Spalding’s Catchfly Conservation Phase II (Latah County) \$454,475.

The second phase of this ongoing project will acquire properties that provide a critical link between existing conservation areas and protect some of the last Palouse Prairie remnants. The protection of these properties, totaling 333 acres, will contribute to the recovery of Spalding’s catchfly, along with eight species of greatest conservation need, five rare endemic plants, and a critically endangered ecosystem. Because most of the habitat for this plant is on private land, ensuring long-term recovery requires securing permanent protection of these key conservation areas. The properties to be acquired are within the only key conservation area in the Idaho Palouse Grasslands and together with previously-acquired lands, constitute nearly 75% of this recovery unit. The Palouse Prairie is a critically imperiled ecosystem with less than one percent of the original area remaining.

Michigan

Acquisition of Karner Blue Butterfly Habitat (Newaygo County) \$42,926.

The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will acquire an 18.32-acre property that includes approximately 15 acres of savanna habitat that has supported almost 50% of the known Karner blue butterfly population on the Huron-Manistee National Forests since its discovery in 2000. The property fills a critical role in the life cycle of the butterfly, as it contains the larval host plant wild lupine, the only food consumed by Karner blue butterfly caterpillars. Acquisition would ensure the long-term protection and management for vital Karner blue butterfly habitat on the site, and contribute to recovery of a sustainable metapopulation within the Newaygo recovery unit.

New Jersey

Bog Turtle Recovery in Northern New Jersey, Project 1 (Sussex County) \$75,000.

The State of New Jersey will use funding to acquire a 20-acre property to protect confirmed critical habitat for the Federally-listed threatened, State-listed endangered bog turtle. The State of New Jersey Green Acres Program is working with the New Jersey Lands Trust to protect this and adjacent properties in perpetuity.

Bog Turtle Recovery in Northern New Jersey, Project 2 (Sussex County) \$375,000.

The State of New Jersey will acquire approximately 130 acres of property (approximately 46 different tax parcels) to protect confirmed critical habitat for the bog turtle in a drainage with the highest density of bog turtle populations in New Jersey. The State of New Jersey Green Acres Program is working with the New Jersey Lands Trust to protect this and adjacent properties in perpetuity. Protection of these properties will enhance existing conservation investments.

Indiana Bat Recovery/Mt. Hope Mine (Morris County) \$500,000.

The State of New Jersey will use these funds to acquire approximately 48 acres of property to protect confirmed critical habitat for the Federally-listed endangered, State-listed endangered Indiana bat. The property contains one of only two Indiana bat hibernacula within the New Jersey Highlands. The State of New Jersey Green Acres Program is working with the New Jersey Lands Trust to protect this and adjacent properties in perpetuity.

North Carolina

Land Acquisition to Benefit Plant Recovery at Bat Fork Bog for the Endangered Bunched Arrowhead and Threatened Swamp Pink (Henderson County) \$41,746.

This grant will enable the acquisition of 7.6 acres of mountain bog habitat for the recovery of two Federally-listed plants. This important site will also secure critical bog habitat that will allow for reintroduction efforts of the Federally-listed endangered mountain sweet pitcher plant, and the white fringeless orchid, a candidate species. The State of North Carolina along with Botanical Garden partners will initiate proactive restoration of this site as soon as it is acquired.

Protection of North Carolina's Only Canby's Dropwort Site- McIntosh Bays (Scotland County) \$37,479.

This grant will enable the acquisition of 211 acres of mountain bog habitat for the recovery of Canby's dropwort, an endangered plant species. This important site will also secure significant Carolina bay habitat that will allow for possible reintroduction efforts, restoration, and management activities. This grant will also permanently protect nine State-listed species.

Oregon

Deming and Sun Creek Easements (Klamath County) \$590,431.

This project will acquire a conservation easement on the Deming and Sun Ranches that will permanently transfer water rights. The hydrologic reconnection of Sun and Deming Creeks to the Wood and South Fork Sprague Rivers, respectively, will allow existing populations of bull trout to move upstream and complete their life cycle. This project aligns with the draft bull trout recovery plan's recovery action to "protect, restore, and maintain suitable habitat conditions for bull trout that promote diverse life history strategies and conserve genetic diversity." Oregon spotted frog, the shortnose sucker and Lost River sucker will benefit from the additional water and changes in land management likely to accompany the water acquisition.

Tennessee

Sherwood Forest Land Acquisition (Franklin County) \$800,000.

This grant will enable the acquisition of 1,056 acres of Sherwood Forest in Franklin County to benefit the Federally-listed Morefield's leather flower and painted snake coiled forest snail. This entire area will be designated as a Tennessee State Natural Area. Permanent protection of this tract will not only provide a huge leap forward in recovery for the snail because the majority of its habitat would be protected in conservation in perpetuity, but also provide critical bat foraging and roosting areas for the northern long-eared bat, recently proposed for listing.

Texas

Prime Prairie and Wetland Habitat for Whooping Cranes Wintering in Texas (Refugio and Calhoun Counties) \$316,800.

This grant will be used to acquire a 218-acre tract located in Calhoun and Refugio Counties that will primarily benefit the whooping crane, Atwater's prairie chicken, and northern aplomado falcon. The parcel is located between two of the four main North American Migratory Flyways in the coastal bend area of Texas. Acquisition of this habitat will provide a conservation easement for whooping crane habitat within the Guadalupe Basin and San Antonio Bay areas along the Texas coast.

Utah

Acquisition of Land for the Holmgren Milkvetch Preserve (Washington County) \$122,005.

Acquisition of this parcel would complete the Holmgren Milkvetch Preserve and protect this endangered plant from residential development and ongoing recreational impacts. Completion of the Holmgren Milkvetch Preserve is important for the species' recovery as it preserves the unique genetic structure and diversity of the species at a location that historically served as the central corridor of gene flow between its largest populations.

Vermont

Athens Dome Wetlands Complex Phase II (Windham County) \$330,000.

The State of Vermont proposes the acquisition of approximately 459 acres of property to protect the Federally endangered Northeastern bulrush. The land proposed for acquisition contains one documented population of the plant, and will also result in additional protection of a second known population. This acquisition would result in expansion of the Turner Hill Wildlife Management Area (WMA), which was purchased under a 2008 Recovery Land Acquisition Grant. The WMA supports numerous wetlands that contain ideal habitat for the Northeastern bulrush.

Washington

Grand Coulee Ranch* (Douglas County) \$596,958.

This proposal is part of an ongoing Washington Department of Fish Wildlife effort to conserve over 21,000 acres of critical shrub-steppe habitat along Rufus Woods Reservoir in northern Douglas County to provide long-term conservation for a suite of shrub-steppe obligate species. The two target properties total 4,279 acres and are part of a signed option to purchase the entire Grand Coulee Ranch which will protect one of the last remaining large blocks of habitat for the Columbian Basin pygmy rabbit, Greater sage grouse, Washington ground squirrel, and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse in Washington. The WDFW recently purchased 4,268 acres adjacent to these properties and is expecting full funding through a Washington State grant to purchase another 8,000 acres. This acquisition will significantly expand options for the successful recovery of pygmy rabbits as well as securing important Greater sage grouse habitat. In addition, the area is important habitat for 24 State- listed wildlife and plant species and will allow the public access to a significant new natural area and roughly 13 miles of shoreline along Rufus Woods Reservoir.

West Rocky Prairie 2015 (Thurston County) \$2,000,000.

The West Rocky Prairie 2015 acquisition will protect 745 acres, one of the largest available tracts of mima mounded prairie-oak wetland habitat in western Washington. Habitat would be available for reintroduction or augmentation of the listed Taylor's checkerspot butterfly, Mazama pocket gopher, Oregon spotted frog, golden paintbrush, and water howellia as recommended in recovery plans. The acquisition of this site also would protect the headwaters of salmon-bearing Allen and Beaver creeks. This phase would add a vital piece to a 3,615 acre conservation network between Millersylvania State Park, McIntosh Tree Farm, Rocky Prairie Natural Area Preserve, and West Rocky Prairie Wildlife Area. Regionally, this property would be one of 10 prairies conserved by the South Puget Sound Prairie Landscape Working Group across 105 square miles. Intact, conserved prairies are necessary to recover several listed species and to reduce the need to list additional state and federal candidate prairies species.

Wisconsin

Prairie Bush Clover Project at Empire State Natural Area (Dane County) \$122,500.

The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will acquire 10 acres of land to aid in the recovery of the Federally-listed threatened prairie bush clover. Prairie bush clovers occur in remnants of native tallgrass prairie and are endemic to four Midwestern states. Destruction of native prairie approaches or exceeds 99% in all states within the species' range. This acquisition would buffer the second largest peripheral population of prairie bush clovers throughout its range from the effects of development, gravel mining, and agriculture. It would also afford additional habitat for associated prairie plants and wildlife, and provide for the future expansion of additional prairie bush clover habitat.

*Indicates partial funding awarded