



Examples of Landowner Tools for At-Risk Species Conservation

<https://www.fws.gov/southeast/endangered-species-act/at-risk-species/>

	Best Management Practices	Partners for Fish and Wildlife and Coastal Program	Candidate Conservation Agreement (CCA)	Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA)	Safe Harbor Agreement (SHA)	Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP)	Conservation Banks
Purpose of the Tool	Voluntary guidelines to identify resource management options that benefit at-risk species when implemented.	Restore fish and wildlife habitats through voluntary agreements between the landowner and FWS.	Conserve species by removing enough threats to preclude the need to list under the Endangered Species Act (ESA).	Use regulatory assurances to provide incentives to landowners to conserve species by removing enough threats to preclude the need to list under the ESA.	Use regulatory assurances to provide incentives to conserve Federally listed species and contribute to their recovery.	Conserve species while providing a mechanism that allows development and other economic activities to continue.	Conserve Federally listed species by using a mitigation credit market to permanently protect land that is managed as mitigation for habitat loss elsewhere.
Participants	Any landowner/land manager on public or private lands.	Partners: Private landowners, and any non-Federal and non-state landowners. Coastal: Any landowner or land manager.	Any landowner/land manager.	Non-federal entities (public and/or private sector)	Non-federal entities (public and/or private sector).	Non-federal entities (public and/or private sector).	Any landowner/land manager can set up a bank, but Federal entities may require special consideration.
Species Covered	All species	All species, but the focus is on Federally listed, candidate and imperiled species, and their habitats.	Species that are candidates, or likely to become candidates for listing under the ESA.	Species that are candidates, or likely to become candidates for listing under the ESA.	Federally listed species.	Must include a Federally listed species; can also include non-listed species.	Candidate species and imperiled species may be included as part of an effort for listed species.
Regulatory Standard	BMPs have voluntary standards, and may be used in formal conservation agreements that provide regulatory certainty, such as CCAA, SHA, HCP.	Cooperative agreements. Partners: with a minimum duration of 10 years. Coastal: no minimum duration, although long-term conservation is preferred.	The Policy for Evaluation of Conservation Efforts (PECE) may apply. PECE assesses whether proposed conservation measures are likely to be implemented and are sufficient to reduce or eliminate threats to the species.	FWS must determine that the benefits of the conservation measures to be implemented by the property owner under a CCAA are reasonably expected to improve the status of and result in a net conservation benefit to the covered species. FWS may also consider the PECE standard.	Landowner must provide a net conservation benefit that contributes to species recovery.	Landowner must minimize and mitigate expected incidental "take" to the maximum extent practicable.	FWS has guidance under the ESA for conservation banks. Banked land is protected in perpetuity by a conservation easement, with a management plan and a management endowment.

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Assurances to Signatories	None. There is no formal conservation agreement required. However, BMPs can be a basis for any other formal conservation agreement, which can provide regulatory certainty.	Partners: Agreements may potentially be converted to a CCAA. Coastal: Agreements may be converted to a CCA or CCAA.	None	Would not be asked to do more than agreed to in the CCAA, even if the covered species is listed under the ESA in the future.	Will not be required to carry out additional land management/conservation actions beyond the terms of the SHA. May return to the species' original baseline condition at the end of the SHA term.	Landowners will not be required to carry out additional land management/conservation actions beyond the terms of a properly functioning HCP.	The mitigation credit buyer can receive documented credit for their conservation investment and continue with development activities elsewhere.
Benefits for Species	Reduction of threats and conservation of important habitats.	Reduction of threats and conservation of important habitats.	Removal of threats, which should improve species' status.	Provides a net conservation benefit for the species by removing or minimizing threats so that populations are stabilized, the number of individuals is increased, or habitat is improved.	Provides a net conservation benefit that contributes to the recovery of enrolled species.	Impacts to the species are minimized and mitigated.	Permanently preserved habitat managed specifically for the species.
Benefits for Landowners	Fulfills habitat conservation goals through independent stewardship actions.	Fulfilling habitat conservation goals on the land by working one-on-one in partnership with local FWS biologist, who provides expert technical and financial assistance.	Intrinsic benefits and satisfaction of conserving species. Potential funding platform for cost share in conservation actions.	Flexibility in management and conservation actions. If the species is listed: (1) regulatory certainty that they will not have to do anything more because they have already done their part, and (2) an incidental "take" permit for prescribed management activities. Programmatic agreements with States issuing certificates of inclusion to landowners can facilitate the process and buffer landowners from "red tape." Potential funding.	Regulatory certainty that they have flexibility to return to baseline conditions for the species. Will not be penalized for land management that improves listed species habitat. Programmatic agreements with States or municipalities issuing certificates of inclusion to landowners can facilitate the process and buffer landowners from "red tape."	Local solutions for species conservation. Can proceed with economic enterprises. Regulatory certainty that landowners will not be asked for more commitment of resources and/or mitigation. Programmatic agreements with local governments can facilitate the process and buffer landowners from "red tape."	The landowner retains title to land while making money by selling mitigation credits to other landowners who need to mitigate for development impacts on listed species.
Potential FWS Funding Sources	BMPs are the basis for formal conservation agreements, other funding identified here may be available.	Program-specific financial assistance; State Wildlife Grants.	States can provide grants to landowners via Sec. 6 funds.	States can provide grants to landowners via Sec. 6 funds.	States can provide grants to landowners via Sec. 6 funds.	Section 6, HCP Planning Assistance Grants to States (competitive grants).	This is a market-based system, public funding is not available.