

FY2006 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund Grants

Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants by State:

* Indicates partial funding awarded

California

***Coachella Valley Fringe-Toed Lizard HCP** (Riverside County, CA): \$3,108,000. This grant will contribute to the acquisition and conservation of blowsand habitat for the federally endangered Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard. Acquisition of these parcels will compliment reserve lands established under the Coachella Valley Fringe-Toed Lizard HCP by conserving sand source lands that are integral to the conservation of the species.

***San Joaquin Multi-species HCP** (San Joaquin County, CA): \$6,531,054. This project will acquire ecologically valuable habitat for eight federally listed species, including San Joaquin kit fox, California red legged frog, three vernal pool shrimp species and 24 unlisted, but at-risk species. The parcels are part of the largest contiguous annual grassland remaining in the area, and contain more alkali grassland, alkali wetland, and vernal pools than any other portion of San Joaquin County or adjacent east Contra Costa County. The land will play a pivotal role in establishing a northwest-southeast movement corridor for the endangered San Joaquin kit fox , and protect habitat of regional importance for the threatened California red-legged frog and other species covered by the HCP.

Western Riverside County MSHCP (Riverside County, CA): \$12,000,000. This grant will fund the acquisition of approximately 450 acres in the San Jacinto River area and 128 acres in the Santa Rosa Plateau area to benefit 18 federally listed species. The acquisition of land in the San Jacinto River area will conserve core populations of several federally listed plants, including spreading navarretia, San Jacinto Valley crowscale, thread-leaved brodiaea, and slender-horned spineflower. Conservation of these lands along the San Jacinto River will also protect one of three major populations of the federally endangered San Bernardino kangaroo rat. The acquisition of land in the Santa Rosa Plateau area will protect one of the most ecologically significant complexes of vernal pools in southern California that supports populations of the Riverside fairy shrimp. Other species that will benefit from acquisition of these lands include Californica Orcutt grass, Munz's onion, least Bell's vireo, and the coastal California gnatcatcher.

Michigan

***Point Betsie Piping Plover HCP** (Benzie County, MI): \$550,823. This grant will acquire inholdings of piping plover habitat along Lake Michigan within the Zetterberg Preserve. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy have developed this acquisition strategy to support the Magic Carpet Woods Association HCP by providing land management and protection for both the piping plover and the Pitcher's thistle. This site is designated piping plover critical habitat and is ranked by the Michigan Natural Area as very good quality for Pitcher's thistle. The site was identified in the Pitcher's thistle recovery plan as an acquisition target to meet the recovery goals for the plant. A Lake Michigan dune and swale

management plan will be jointly developed by The Nature Conservancy and the Michigan Department of Natural Resources that will guide protection and management activities to aid in the recovery of both species.

Montana

***Native Fish HCP: Blackfoot Easement Project** (Lewis & Clark, Missoula and Powell Counties, MT): \$2,699,000. The Blackfoot watershed provides crucial connectivity for many imperiled wildlife species including native bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout and mountain whitefish. Intrinsic to this system as well are the imperiled grizzly bear, gray wolf, Canada lynx, trumpeter swan, bald eagle, and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse. The lands proposed for conservation easement acquisition are adjacent to National Forest and State lands and fill a critical void in maintaining the unfragmented landscape.

North Carolina

***Sandhills HCP – Odom Tract** (Scotland County, North Carolina): \$280,650. This grant will help provide perpetual protection and habitat management on 260 acres of land that will support one of the largest remaining populations of the federally-listed endangered red-cockaded woodpecker in the nation. This land protection will ensure conservation of a key inholding in the North Carolina Sandhills Game Lands, the core habitat of the Sandhills West essential support population of red-cockaded woodpeckers.

Texas

***Cibolo Canyonlands Golden-cheeked Warbler Land Acquisition** (Comal County, TX): \$3,500,000. This grant will assist The Nature Conservancy and City of San Antonio in the purchase of golden-cheeked warbler habitat to complement the Cibolo Canyon HCP. Acquisition of the property will contribute to the species' recovery plan goals, and will provide critical connectivity to several existing warbler conservation areas. Due to its location over the Edwards Aquifer recharge zone, the property will also provide water quality protection for 17 listed species associated with the Edwards Aquifer and regional karst formations.

Washington

Plum Creek HCP – Methow Watershed, Phase 4 (Okanogan County, WA): \$4,380,120. This phase of the partnership will secure up to 2,360 acres and 3 miles of stream frontage. Protection of these low elevation mature conifer and riparian forest habitats contributes to the State's most successful acquisition effort with almost 15,000 acres already protected. The Methow River Watershed supports a unique and diverse assemblage of fish and wildlife species and is one of the few places where northern spotted owls, bald eagles, grizzly bears, gray wolves, lynx, bull trout, and salmon can be protected together.

Plum Creek HCP – Swamp Lake/Amabilis Mountain II (Kittitas County, WA): \$2,350,470. The objective of this project is to purchase and permanently protect 71 acres of forested hillside on Amabilis Mountain and adjacent areas with waters that flow into Swamp Lake within the Yakima River Watershed. Protection of the property will support the HCP by providing conservation for grizzly bears, gray wolves, northern spotted owls, and numerous other species.

Plum Creek HCP – Hyak Gold Creek Corridor, Phase II (Kittitas County, WA): \$3,940,000. This acquisition will secure 76 acres along Gold Creek to protect species covered under the Plum Creek HCP including bull trout, northern spotted owl, bald eagle, marbled murrelet, gray wolf, and Canada lynx. In addition, the acquisition will significantly contribute to habitat protection and improved connectivity for 60 species of terrestrial vertebrates, including wolverine, marten, and Pacific giant salamander.

Washington DNR HCP – Hoh River Conservation Corridor, Phase IV (Jefferson County, WA): \$6,371,250. The Hoh River Conservation Corridor Project will acquire and protect 2,320 acres of riparian and upland forest habitat in the lower Hoh River Valley. This acquisition adds to the 4,481 acres already acquired and protected. The marbled murrelet, bull trout, northern spotted owl, and bald eagle will benefit as a result of the acquisition.

Washington DNR HCP – Barr Creek Forest Protection (Skagit County, WA): \$447,600. This project will acquire 46 acres of low elevation mature forest and 1,000 feet of high quality stream habitat. The property supports roosting bald eagles and is within The Nature Conservancy’s Skagit River Bald Eagle Natural Area. Barr Creek contains suitable habitat for bull trout and will also benefit northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets on adjacent State and Federal lands. Acquisition of this property will close a gap in landscape level habitat protection and reduce habitat fragmentation.

Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants by State:

* Indicates partial funding awarded

Arizona

***Multi-species HCP for the City of Tucson** (Pima County, AZ): \$252,829. This grant will enable continued development of two habitat conservation plans for 19 species in the greater Tucson area (Avra Valley and Greater Southlands/Santa Cruz River Corridor). City of Tucson, in collaboration with the Arizona Game and Fish Department, began developing a multi-species HCP in 2003; this effort has since expanded into the development of 2 multi-species HCPs. Covered species in the planning areas include the cactus ferruginous pygmy-owl, lesser long-nosed bat, Pima Pineapple cactus, western yellow-billed cuckoo, Chiricahua leopard frog, Gila topminnow, and others. Advisory groups to the city represent local governmental jurisdictions and areas of technical expertise such as natural resource conservation, civil engineering, and transportation planning.

Arkansas

The Big Woods of Arkansas (Arkansas, Phillips, Prairie, Monroe, St. Francis, White and Cross Counties, AR): \$250,140. This grant will help the State of Arkansas as it undertakes planning efforts for year two of a multi-species landscape-level HCP in the Big Woods Area of Arkansas where a sighting of the Ivory-billed Woodpecker was confirmed last year. The plan will focus on six federally listed endangered species, including the Ivory-billed Woodpecker, the interior least tern, the red-cockaded woodpecker, and three federally listed endangered mussels: the fat pocketbook, the pink mucket and the scaleshell. The State and its many partners will work

together to address ways to avoid disruption to traditional economic activities, such as hunting, farming, fishing and forestry while at the same time exploring ways to foster ecotourism that can lead to conservation for the involved species.

California

Butte County HCP/NCCP (Butte County, CA): \$500,990. At the northern end of the Sacramento Valley, Butte County was largely untouched by the rapid urban growth in much of California until recently. Now however, it is being hit by an unprecedented surge of growth. The Butte County Association of Governments, the county, and its four incorporated communities have agreed to develop a HCP that potentially will cover 330,000 acres with up to 11 different vegetation communities, that are home to 15 federally listed species, including all known populations of the endangered Butte County meadowfoam, plus 15 other species at risk.

Central Valley/BayDelta HCP/NCCP (Alameda, Amador, Butte, Calaveras, Colusa, Contra Costa, El Dorado, Fresno, Glenn Madera, Marin, Mariposa, Merced, Napa, Nevada, Placer, Plumas, Sacramento, San Joaquin, Shasta, Solano, Stanislaus, Sutter and Tehama Counties, CA): \$238,000. The San Francisco Bay-Sacramento/San Joaquin Delta (Bay-Delta) is the largest estuary on the West Coast, a maze of tributaries, sloughs, and islands. The Delta is critical to California's economy, supplying drinking water for more than 20 million Californians and irrigation water for 7 million acres of rich agricultural lands. The collaborative CALFED Bay-Delta Program seeks to assist in recovery of 19 imperiled species and 25 others. CALFED agencies want to develop a Delta HCP, covering up to 160,000 acres, to: 1) promote conservation and recovery, and 2) provide assurances for non-federal Delta-impacted water and power projects. In addition to this grant, the HCP will be supported with \$250,000 from non-federal sources.

East Bay Regional Parks District HCP/NCCP (Contra Costa County, CA): \$297,500. The East Bay Regional Park District (EBRPD) will utilize this funding to develop a plan for managing its 13,000 acres of preserves consistent with and linked to the 30,000 acres of preserves that will be created by the neighboring East Contra Costa County HCP. The EBRPD HCP/NCCP will cover 7 listed and 18 sensitive species. Filling a key void, it will target critical corridors and habitat for San Joaquin kit fox, Alameda whipsnake, and California tiger salamander in a regional preservation strategy. EBRPD's Vasco Caves Preserve includes 50% of the critical habitat for the listed longhorn fairy shrimp.

South Sacramento County HCP (Sacramento County, CA): \$240,975. This HCP will cover 345,000 acres near an urbanized area that is under intense development pressure. It will cover 41 species, 8 of which are federally listed threatened and endangered. Vernal pool habitat exists in a large portion of the area and is under threat of development. Listed Sacramento Orcutt grass is found only within the boundaries of this planned HCP. In addition, this HCP may provide some protection for the Cosumnes River watershed, important spawning habitat for anadromous fish. Funding will be used to develop the first draft of a plan. The HCP will be coordinated with similar habitat planning efforts in 5 adjacent counties.

Yuba & Sutter Counties HCP/NCCP (Yuba and Sutter Counties, CA): \$450,000. Two adjacent counties have joined to plan protection for open space in the valley and lower foothill

portion of both counties, covering 26 species on 200,078 acres. The boundaries were drawn in order to address the majority of the growth that will occur along the Highway 70/99 corridor. The proposed plan area includes portions of the Bear, Feather and Yuba river and the Honcut Creek watersheds, primarily agricultural lands, and significant vernal pool/grasslands, riparian and riverine habitats, wintering habitat for a variety of migrant bird species, wetland habitats and, potentially, small patch ecosystems. The HCP/NCCP will be coordinated with similar habitat planning efforts in adjacent counties.

Florida

Development of a HCP for Shoreline Protection on Walton County Beaches (Walton County, FL): \$446,000. This grant will provide funding for the initiation of planning efforts for a coastal multi-species HCP for shoreline protection measures on approximately 250 acres of beach habitat important to 7 federally-listed species and 12 State protected species. Species that will be considered during the process include five species of sea turtles, the endangered Choctawhatchee beach mouse, and piping plovers. The Choctawhatchee beach mouse is endemic to this area, and the proposed project would aid in the recovery efforts for this species. This section of the Florida Gulf coast is particularly susceptible to hurricanes. Development of an HCP will allow the State to address the needs for shoreline protection while at the same time ensuring the conservation of endangered, threatened and at-risk species.

Georgia

Lower Flint River Basin Habitat Conservation Planning (Baker, Calhoun, Clay, Dougherty, Early, Miller, Randolph, Stewart, Terrell and Webster Counties, GA): \$130,183. This grant will help the Georgia Wildlife Resources Division work with other partners to initiate planning for development of a HCP for the Lower Flint River. This area of the Flint River is known for its diversity of freshwater mussels. This HCP is expected to benefit at least five federally listed freshwater mussels, including the shiny-rayed pocketbook, oval pigtoe, Gulf moccasinshell, purple bankclimber and fat threeridge. In addition, four State threatened aquatic species, nine species of special concern and four State rare or unusual species are also expected to benefit. During the first year, activities will focus on education and outreach to raise awareness of the value of freshwater mussels, and assessing stream flow requirements for freshwater mussels through the use of hydrologic and statistical models. The State also will work to build partnerships with 18 agencies to guide the educational and outreach tasks and ultimately play an important role in the HCP development and implementation.

Montana

Montana Division of Natural Resources Forested Trust Land HCP (Twenty Five Counties in Western MT): \$574,334. This grant will enable the Montana Department of Natural Resources to complete a HCP that covers half a million acres of State lands protecting five listed species (grizzly bear, Canada lynx, bull trout, bald eagle, gray wolf) and two State sensitive species (Columbia River redband trout and westslope cutthroat trout) in northwestern Montana. This project will set a statewide precedence for balancing forest practices and public land

management with species conservation. The overall conservation strategy will emphasize forest management practices that maintain healthy ecosystems, promote biodiversity, and protect important ecological features across all HCP-covered lands.

Multi-State Grants

Kentucky and Tennessee

Development of a HCP for the Cumberlands Region (Wayne, McCreary, Pulaski, Clinton and Whitley Counties in KY; Anderson, Roane, Rhea, Scott, Campbell, Morgan, Cumberland, Bledsoe, Fentress, Pickett, Putnam and Overton Counties in TN): \$442,080. This third year grant will further support the States of Tennessee and Kentucky in the development of a multi-species, multi-county, landscape-level plan in the Northern Cumberlands area, including portions of the upper Tennessee and Cumberland River watersheds. The Northern Cumberlands area is well known for its biologically diverse ecosystems as demonstrated by the fact that the area supports over 19 federally-listed species. During this planning grant period, project objectives include continuing to build stakeholder support, reaching consensus on the species that will be addressed in the HCP, defining the specific area for the plan, continuing research priorities related to plan development, identifying major impacts to the species as well as addressing the alternatives that may be appropriate for minimizing and mitigating these impacts. The plan seeks to address imperiled species conservation needs while carrying out activities such as coal mining, water supply development or forestry.

Nebraska

***Salt Creek Tiger Beetle and Eastern Saline Wetlands HCP** (Lancaster and Saunders Counties, NE): \$500,000. This HCP will cover an approximately 200 square mile area, which encompasses the entire range of the endangered Salt Creek tiger beetle. This project is essential to preclude extinction of the tiger beetle, which is one of the rarest insects in the United States. At least 11 other species will be covered by the HCP. Given the limited range of these saline wetlands in Nebraska, their isolation from other such habitats in the Midwest, and their unique environmental conditions, it is likely that additional rare and possibly endemic invertebrate species occur in these saline wetlands.

Nevada

Southern Nye County MSHCP (Nye County, NV): \$52,000. Nye County is ready to move into the final steps necessary to complete their Multiple Species HCP for the Mojave Desert region of the county. This grant will aid in funding work necessary to respond to public comments on the Draft HCP and Environmental Impact Statement, and to prepare the final versions of these documents. Proposed conservation actions in the plan will benefit the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act and five additional species of concern, while allowing for economic growth and urban development.

Texas

***Comal County Regional HCP** (Comal County, TX): \$612,852. With this grant, Comal County will initiate a 362,880-acre regional habitat conservation plan for the golden-cheeked warbler and black-capped vireo. The HCP will also benefit aquatic Edwards Aquifer species, including the Peck's cave amphipod, Comal Springs riffle beetle, Comal Springs dryopid beetle, fountain

darter, San Marcos salamander, Texas blind salamander, and Texas wild-rice. Through this proposal, Comal County demonstrates a strong interest in balancing responsible economic development with natural resource conservation. The County has proposed an ambitious schedule and will collaborate with a large network of stakeholders in the development of this HCP.

Utah

Development of New Iron County HCP (Iron County, UT): \$150,000. The current HCP relies on translocating problem Utah prairie dogs from occupied habitat to marginal unoccupied habitat where they often fail to survive. This proposal is to develop a new HCP to establish a string of preserves on private lands that already support the greatest concentration of prairie dogs. The string of private land preserves will provide dispersal corridors between preserves, which in turn will increase the conservation benefits and promote gene dispersal without human intervention. The new county-wide HCP will contribute to the recovery of the Utah prairie dog while still allowing continued development and economic growth in Iron County.

Washington

Walla Walla Basin Bi-State HCP (Walla Walla and Columbia Counties, WA and Umatilla County, OR): \$509,670. This grant will fund the fifth year of an ongoing planning process, covering over 1 million acres in the Walla Walla Basin. The HCP development process will result in benefits to bull trout and steelhead by addressing municipal and agricultural water issues in a forum with numerous State and local entities in Oregon and Washington.

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Area HCP (Statewide, all 39 counties, WA): \$ 590,000. This grant funds the second year of an HCP process for the State's wildlife areas covering a total of approximately 830,000 acres. The HCP will offer benefits to protected species and land users by providing certainty that land management activities meet Federal species protection requirements. Federally listed species expected to benefit include, but are not limited to: pygmy rabbit, woodland caribou, snowy plover, spotted owl, marbled murrelet, bull trout, Chinook salmon, steelhead, Oregon silverspot, golden paintbrush, and Kincaid's lupine. Additional species expected to benefit include greater sage-grouse, northern goshawk, burrowing owl, Oregon spotted frog, Larch Mountain salamander, coho salmon, Mardon skipper, Taylor's checkerspot, and giant Columbia River limpet.

Washington Department of Natural Resources Aquatic Resources HCP (Statewide, all 39 Counties, WA): \$598,200. This grant will fund the fourth year of a five-year planning process for the Washington DNR to develop a multi-species, programmatic HCP to ensure that authorized activities on State-owned aquatic lands promote sustainable ecosystems; minimize cumulative impacts; and increase protection, conservation, and recovery for approximately 20 species. Federally listed species expected to benefit include, but are not limited to: the bald eagle; marbled murrelet; western snowy plover; bull trout; Chinook, coho, and chum salmon; sockeye salmon; and steelhead. Other species that are expected to benefit include Columbia spotted frog, western pond turtle, western toad, northern leopard frog, common loon, coastal cutthroat, and pinto abalone.

Washington State Hydraulic Project Approval HCP (Statewide, all 39 counties, WA): \$694,800. Funding is for the second year of the HCP process for the State's primary fish-protection regulatory program, the Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) program. Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife seeks an HCP as a means of continuing conservation of fish and shellfish species and habitat, while achieving long-term certainty that the HPA program meets Federal species protection requirements. Federally listed species that are expected to benefit include bull trout; steelhead; and Chinook, coho, and sockeye salmon. Additional species expected to benefit include but are not limited to coastal cutthroat trout; green sturgeon; Pacific, river, and western brook lamprey; California floater, and giant Columbia River limpet.

Recovery Land Acquisition Grants by State:

Alabama

Acquisition of the Pate Tract, Red Hills Alabama (Monroe County, AL): \$493,500. This grant will enable the purchase of 270 acres for the Red Hills salamander, a threatened species found in southern Alabama. The species is considered unique in both its life history and narrow geographic range. The lack of adequate habitat under permanent protection and impacts to habitat are the primary threats to the species. The purchase of this parcel will provide habitat protection and a reference site for land management and restoration of other parcels in the region.

Arizona

Coal Mine Spring Phase III (Santa Cruz County, AZ): \$750,000. This grant will enable the acquisition of up to 874 acres by the Arizona Game and Fish Department for the benefit of the Gila topminnow, Mexican spotted owl, western yellow-billed cuckoo, and lesser long-nosed bat. The acquisition is the third phase of property acquisition in Coal Mine Spring, bringing the complete acquisition to 4,376 acres and providing critical protection to an existing population of Gila topminnow. Phase III complements the adjacent State park natural area and provides a buffer to the acquisitions in Phases I and II.

California

Arroyo Toad, Long Potrero (San Diego County, CA): \$575,000. This grant will support the purchase of 1,800 acres of land at the headwaters of Potrero Creek, thereby preventing the degradation of this naturally functioning stream ecosystem and its floodplain which supports all phases of the arroyo toad's lifecycle. Acquisition of these lands will contribute to the fulfillment of recovery criteria for the species by protecting an existing population of arroyo toads within the Tijuana River-Cottonwood Creek basins.

Arroyo Toad, Whitewater Canyon (Riverside County, CA): \$335,000. Acquisition of approximately 230 acres of land within Whitewater Canyon will enhance recovery of the arroyo toad by protecting habitat for the only known location of the species in the Coachella Valley. The acquisition of these lands will contribute to the conservation of breeding and non-breeding habitat for the arroyo toad and reduce threats to the species from development and activities that degrade the habitat.

Coachella Valley Fringe-Toed Lizard (Riverside County, CA): \$800,000. The acquisition of approximately 30 acres of land in the Whitewater floodplain will contribute to recovery of the Coachella Valley fringe-toed lizard by enhancing protection of blowsand habitat necessary to sustain the species. Other species that will also benefit from the conservation of these lands include the Coachella Valley milk-vetch, Coachella Valley round-tailed ground squirrel and flat-tailed horned lizard.

Peninsular Bighorn Sheep, Santa Rosa Mountains (Riverside County, CA): \$727,434. This grant will assist in the acquisition of up to 66 acres of land to further recovery efforts for the Peninsular bighorn sheep by eliminating development threats to the species. Lands proposed for acquisition are within currently occupied, core habitat that supports one of the largest concentrations of the species in California. These lands provide some key foraging and lambing areas, including areas that support alluvial fan vegetation communities which provide unique nutritional benefits such as greater plant diversity with a high protein content.

Santa Cruz Long-Toed Salamander, Larkin Valley (Santa Cruz County, CA): \$225,000. The grant will provide \$225,000 to acquire an approximately 8.5-acre parcel in the Larkin Valley that is located 1,000 feet downstream of a primary breeding pond for the federally endangered Santa Cruz long-toed salamander. Acquisition of this parcel will contribute towards recovery of the salamander by protecting upland habitat and by providing an opportunity to improve upland habitat and create breeding ponds. This parcel will also provide habitat for the federally threatened California red-legged frog and will benefit State species of special concern, the southwestern pond turtle and birds such as the yellow warbler.

Colorado

Wacker Ranch – Clay-loving Wild Buckwheat Preservation Project (Montrose County, CO): \$159,450. The magnitude and imminence of the threat of development and associated increase in off-road vehicle use and an approved new highway have increased the urgency of acquiring this 43-acre private land parcel. The parcel, which is adjacent to a preserve on BLM land, contains the largest and most viable population of the endangered clay-loving wild buckwheat. The project has strong local and State support and is essential to the eventual recovery of the species.

Georgia

Acquisition of the Raccoon Creek Tract (Paulding County, GA): \$1,000,000. This purchase, located within the Etowah River basin, is expected to result in the protection of 3,296 acres to benefit listed species of fish, including Etowah and Cherokee darters. This project is expected to result in protection of over two miles of stream frontage and buffers along the main stem of Raccoon Creek. The acquisition will also complement previous State acquisitions in the area, such as the Sheffield Wildlife Management Area.

Hawaii

Yee Hop South Kona Multiple Parcel Acquisition (Hawai'i County, HI): \$1,794,500. This acquisition will protect Yee Hop parcels totaling 3,148 acres on the leeward flank of Mauna Loa in the South Kona District of the Island of Hawai'i. These parcels are located between and

adjacent to currently protected State lands and within the core of a region identified for enhancing wildlife conservation management in the recently completed Hawai'i Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. The acquisitions provide a unique opportunity to increase existing efforts to protect and manage rare forest habitats that support threatened and endangered species. The species to benefit are the Hawai'i Forest Birds including 'akepa, 'akiopo'a'au, and Hawai'i creeper. It is also within the range of the 'alala (Hawaiian crow) and 'io (Hawaiian hawk).

Iowa

Northern Monkshood and Iowa Pleistocene Snail Recovery Land Acquisition (Clayton County, IA): \$326,887. The Iowa Department of Natural Resources will acquire 167 acres for the conservation and protection of the Northern monkshood and the Iowa Pleistocene snail. Both species require cold, moist conditions provided by the outflow of cold air on algific talus slopes. The site is in the Cow Branch and is adjacent to a 110 acre unit of the Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge. It contains sinkholes and critical buffer areas important to the function of the algific slope habitat that both species depend upon.

Kentucky

Acquisition of Tracts for Short's Goldenrod and Listed Mussels (Fleming and Nicholas Counties, KY): \$550,000. This acquisition will enable in the protection of 822 acres in the Licking River watershed. The purchase will benefit Short's goldenrod by protecting occupied habitat and providing sites for reintroduction of the species. It will also benefit the fanshell, clubshell, and sheepsnose mussels within the project area by protecting water quality and reducing sediment load within the watershed.

Maine

Heart of the Watershed: Protection of the Barth and Weary Properties (Lincoln County, ME): \$172,147. This grant will contribute to the landscape level program to protect the riparian buffers along the Sheepscot River. Together with numerous partners, including The Nature Conservancy, Maine Audubon, and the Sheepscot Valley Conservation Associations, the project will protect both in fee and conservation easement approximately 527 acres including 3 miles of the Sheepscot River shoreline. It will protect habitat important to the endangered Atlantic salmon and the threatened bald eagle.

Maryland

Delmarva Fox Squirrel Protection in the Nanticoke-Blackwater River Watershed (Dorchester County, MD): \$400,000. This grant will contribute to the purchase of a permanent conservation easement on two properties, the Good Luck Farms and Knauer tracts, totaling 1,429 acres of habitat protected for the benefit of the threatened Delmarva fox squirrel. These two sites are the keystone properties that connect two significant corridors of the Delmarva fox squirrel habitat. The Nature Conservancy is expected to assist with easement negotiations. The Eastern Shore Land Conservancy and the State will be co-holders of the easement.

Michigan

Conservation Easement Acquisition for Mitchell's Satyr (Washtenaw County, MI): \$268,625. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will acquire two conservation easements for Mitchell's satyr totaling 129 acres. The Mill Creek fen area is geologically and biologically unique, providing habitat for over 32 State and federally listed plant and animal species, including the eastern massasauga and Blanding's turtle. These acquisitions will protect the existing ecosystem by preserving the high-quality fen and supporting uplands. The project will serve as a model for subsequent land protection on adjacent lands.

Minnesota

Western Prairie Fringed Orchid in Minnesota (Kittson County, MN): \$110,865. The Minnesota Department of Natural Resources will acquire approximately 190 acres of orchid habitat for the nation's most northern population of Western prairie fringed orchid. The acquisition will unite two halves of the Lake Bronson Parkland State Natural Area into a single unit. Ownership of the site will result in enhanced fire management that is essential to the perpetuation of the documented orchid population.

Nebraska

Habitat Protection for Whooping Cranes, Interior Least Terns and Piping Plovers on the Central Platte River (Buffalo and Phelps Counties, NE): \$175,000. Funding for the grant will purchase an important tract of stop-over critical habitat for the endangered whooping crane, and essential breeding habitat for the threatened piping plover and endangered least tern. Wetlands and adjacent uplands in this section of the Platte River have a high risk of development in the next few years. This section of the river is also an important migratory habitat for many species of ducks, geese, and shorebirds.

North Dakota

Acquisition of Sullivan Tract (McKenzie County, ND): \$250,000. The Sullivan tract is located along the west bank of the Yellowstone River less than one mile upstream from the confluence of the Missouri and Yellowstone Rivers in North Dakota. The Missouri River confluence area supports the most important remaining habitat for the endangered pallid sturgeon. Acquisition of the 242-acre Sullivan Tract, including 1.5 miles of river frontage, will maximize the connection between riverine and floodplain habitats that are essential to the listed pallid sturgeon, least tern, and piping plover. This last remaining stronghold of pallid sturgeon habitat provides vital sources of organic matter, sediments, nutrients, and woody debris as well as habitat for invertebrate and fish forage. Sediments from the tract will also maintain essential sandbar breeding habitats for least terns and piping plovers immediately downstream. In addition, multiple species listed as part of North Dakota's 100 Species of Conservation Priority will benefit from this acquisition.

Oregon

Coburg Hills Conservation Easement (Benton County, OR): \$412,000. This grant funds the acquisition of a conservation easement over 1,000 acres at Coburg Ridge. The site contains some of the best remaining native prairie habitat in the Willamette Valley with populations of

both Fender's blue butterfly and Kincaid's lupine, both listed under the Federal Endangered Species Act. The easement will also benefit two dozen additional listed and at-risk species in the Willamette Valley, including potentially providing habitat for Willamette daisy.

Zumwalt Prairie Acquisition (Wallowa County, OR): \$707,000. This grant is for the acquisition of 6,065 acres at Zumwalt Prairie in northeast Oregon to protect a population of Spalding's catchfly as well as Snake River steelhead, both federally listed threatened species. This acquisition is also expected to benefit Columbia spotted frog, nesting raptors including ferruginous hawks and northern goshawks, and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse.

South Carolina

Acquisition of the Hamilton Ridge Tract (Hampton County, SC): \$1,740,266. This purchase will protect approximately 1,163 acres to benefit listed and candidate species, including the robust redhorse, along the Savannah River in South Carolina. The property is located adjacent to the Savannah River, which supports the largest known concentrations of the federally endangered short-nose sturgeon. The property also supports the endangered wood stork by providing roosting, nesting and foraging habitat. This purchase is part of a larger effort to acquire 13,281 acres along Hamilton Ridge, an area that supports a number of rare species and other wildlife.

Texas

Sink Creek Watershed and Recharge, San Marcos Springs (Hays County, TX): \$1,000,000. For the City of San Marcos, in partnership with Hays County and Texas State University, to acquire approximately 250 acres for the benefit of the San Marcos and Texas blind salamanders, Texas wild-rice, fountain darter, Comal Springs riffle beetle, and golden-cheeked warbler. This is the largest undeveloped property immediately upstream of San Marcos Springs / Spring Lake, with all 250 acres draining into Sink Creek or the San Marcos River, and over half the property located within the recharge zone of the Edwards Aquifer. Protection of this tract could therefore contribute significantly to the recovery of these aquatic species by helping to protect the water quality and recharge features associated with their habitats.

Utah

June Sucker Habitat Acquisition and Restoration (Utah County, UT): \$276,491. Protection and restoration of Hobble Creek will provide a second spawning site for the endangered June sucker as mandated in the recovery plan and a requirement for downlisting. There is an urgent and critical need for acquisition of this land and associated water rights as the area is under heavy development pressure. The acquisition will allow the partners of the June Sucker Recovery Implementation Program to restore and protect spawning, young-of-year and juvenile habitat for the June sucker while restoring wetland, tributary and lake function of Utah Lake.

Virginia

Clinch River Project (Russel County, VA): \$228,167. This grant will be utilized to purchase conservation easements on two properties totaling 184 acres, along the Clinch River. Purchase of these easements will result in the reduction of sedimentation in the Clinch River, thereby

improving the water quality for seven endangered freshwater mussels, and the threatened yellowfin madtom. The Nature Conservancy will partner with the State of Virginia negotiating the conservation easement language.

Protection of Smooth Coneflower and Roanoke Logperch Habitat (Montgomery County, VA): \$150,000. This grant will contribute to the purchase of 86 acres of habitat supporting the endangered smooth coneflower and Roanoke logperch. The property will be added to the Pedlar Hills Natural Area Preserve system. The purchase of this parcel will bring the entire watershed of an unnamed tributary to the South Fork Roanoke River under conservation ownership by the Department of Conservation and Recreation.

Washington

Boistfort Valley Acquisition (Lewis County, WA): \$256,157. The objective of this acquisition is to permanently protect a remnant prairie that includes a portion of the northernmost known occurrence of the federally listed threatened Kincaid's lupine. This plant occurs only in isolated prairie remnants in the Puget Trough and the Willamette Valley, including two areas in Washington State. The acquisition will also provide an opportunity to reintroduce Nelson's checker-mallow.

Wisconsin

Eastern Prairie Fringed Orchid in Wisconsin (Rock County, WI): \$93,800. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will purchase a conservation easement on approximately 61 acres of eastern prairie fringed orchid habitat and surrounding oak savanna. The Department will hold the easement and manage the land in perpetuity for the long-term benefit of the orchid. The site contains natural communities including wet prairie, wet-mesic prairie, and oak savanna. Monitoring results for the last few years indicate this is one of Wisconsin's larger populations containing between 50-100 flowering plants. The acquisition greatly complements the management and protection efforts occurring at the site and on adjacent properties.