

FY2004 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund Grants

Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants by State:

California

- **Assessment District 161 HCP** (Riverside County, CA) \$4,545,000. The grant will support the purchase of habitat within the Wilson/Cactus Valley area. The acquisition of properties in Wilson/Cactus Valley will benefit wildlife populations by conserving occupied habitat in large, interconnected blocks, ensuring that the ecosystem processes are maintained. In addition to providing core habitat areas for the Western Riverside Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Program (MSHCP), both of these areas support a suite of Federal and State listed species covered under the MSHCP. These species include the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, endangered least Bell's vireo, Quino checkerspot butterfly, and Stephen's kangaroo rat. The plant communities found in the area, such as Riversidean sage scrub and riparian habitat, are representative of the original, native habitats of the region. The public benefits of maintaining these areas as open space include the use for various recreational purposes such as hiking, mountain biking and other appropriate activities.
- **City of San Diego and County of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Program NCCP/HCP** (San Diego County, CA) \$4,402,238. The grant will be used to acquire parcels of land on Otay Mesa that make up a large part of the southern portion of lands within the Multi-Habitat Planning Area (MHPA), the City of San Diego's targeted preserve area under the Multiple Species Conservation Program (MSCP). Because of their size and location, the parcels are crucial for protecting the integrity of the MHPA along the U.S./Mexico border and for connecting the southern portion to other MHPA areas to the north. The parcels support a number of listed and rare habitats and species, including the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, burrowing owl, cactus wren, and species endemic to the San Diego region such as San Diego barrel cactus and snake chollas. There are several vernal pools on the parcels, some of which support the federally listed endangered San Diego fairy shrimp, California orcutt grass and San Diego button celery. Acquisition of the Crest Tract is a high priority for San Diego County's MSCP. The Crest Tract supports threatened California gnatcatcher and San Diego thornmint, and provides upland habitat for the federally listed arroyo toad. In addition, numerous other MSCP covered species are known in the area. The Crest tract provides a key linkage between the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge to the south and the State-owned Crestridge Preserve. This approximately 1,400 acre tract includes numerous parcels, which if allowed to develop, would result in a fragmented landscape that will preclude connectivity between two large conserved areas.
- **Colton Transmission Line HCP** (San Bernardino and Riverside Counties, CA) \$1,500,000. This grant will support the purchase of habitat within the Colton Dune ecosystem. The proposed acquisitions are intended to protect portions of the Colton Dune ecosystem, unique to this region of Riverside and San Bernardino counties. Approximately two percent of the Colton Dune ecosystem still exists. The proposed acquisitions will permanently conserve habitat occupied by a suite of federally and State listed species native to this area including the endangered Delhi Sands flower-loving fly, the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, the Los Angeles pocket

mouse and the western burrowing owl. These lands are critical to the survival and recovery of the Delhi Sands flower-loving fly and many other species that occur within this ecosystem. The Delhi Sands flower-loving fly and its habitat are addressed in the Western Riverside MSHCP and possibly in the regional multiple species habitat conservation plan in San Bernardino County. Conservation of these areas will be protected in perpetuity allowing for appropriate recreation.

- **El Sobrante Landfill HCP** (Riverside County, CA) \$5,180,000. This grant will support the purchase of habitat within the Alberhill area. The acquisition of properties in Alberhill area is anticipated to benefit wildlife populations by conserving occupied habitat in large, interconnected blocks. In addition to providing core habitat areas for the Western Riverside MSHCP, both of these areas support a suite of Federal and State listed species covered under the MSHCP. These species include the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, the endangered least Bell's vireo and Stephen's kangaroo rat. The plant communities found in the area such as Riversidean sage scrub and riparian habitat are representative of the region's original, native habitats. The Alberhill area has one of the densest populations of the coastal California gnatcatcher in the western Riverside County. The public benefits of maintaining these areas as open space include the use for various recreational purposes such as hiking, mountain biking and other appropriate activities.
- **Fieldstone NCCP/HCP** (San Diego County, CA) \$1,512,900. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is awarding a grant to acquire the Batiquitos Bluffs parcel. The tract is central to a large expanse of wildlife habitat that includes the Batiquitos Lagoon and habitat to be preserved in the Multiple Habitat Conservation Program (MHCP) to the north, and the only contiguous corridor between the lagoon and habitat conserved through the Fieldstone Habitat Conservation Plan to the south and east. The property is within the proposed MHCP preserve. It supports the federally threatened gnatcatcher and is within its designated critical habitat. A variety of native vegetation communities occur on the parcel including coastal sage scrub, wetlands, and one of the largest remaining expanses of southern maritime chaparral, which is a rare and declining vegetation type, that likely supports the federally listed Del Mar manzanita and Encinitas baccharis and possibly the federally listed Orcutt's spineflower.
- **Orange County Central/Coastal NCCP/HCP** (Orange County, CA) \$3,000,000. This grant will support the acquisition of Saddle Creek. The acquisition of Saddle Creek will reduce habitat fragmentation and provide critical habitat and a movement corridor for the threatened coastal California gnatcatcher, large mammals and other wildlife within this region of Orange County. Saddle Creek straddles the Central/Coastal and Southern Subregion NCCP/HCP and is significant as the only existing low-elevation wildlife connection between the Subregions of Orange County. The property is designated as critical habitat for the coastal California gnatcatcher. In addition to the coastal California gnatcatcher, about 17 other listed or sensitive species occur or potentially occur within this area. Conservation of these parcels will ensure that the rural character of the area is maintained which will benefit adjacent residents.

Montana

- **Plum Creek HCP Land Acquisition** (Lincoln County, MT) \$3,610,800. This grant will help protect 1,003 acres of habitat that could otherwise be subject to logging and development. The project is part of a larger, community-based conservation effort to eventually conserve 88,712 acres of former Plum Creek Timber Company lands. The grant will be matched by donation of a conservation easement on 435 acres of nearby important habitat. The projects would protect bull trout, grizzly bear, and one of the last remaining populations of genetically pure westslope cutthroat trout.

North Carolina

- **North Carolina Sandhills, Red Cockaded Woodpecker** (Scotland County, NC) \$1,901,250. The objective of this project is to acquire and manage land that will contribute to the recovery of the North Carolina Sandhills West population of the federally-endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. Acquisition of the Rich Tract will provide protection of a critical corridor between two disjunct blocks of the North Carolina Gamelands, and acquisition of the Carrington Tract will add 725 contiguous acres to Block F of the Gamelands, protecting foraging habitat currently used by red-cockaded woodpeckers on Block F. Purchase of these two tracts will help ensure that encroachment of incompatible development around these blocks does not adversely affect the State's ability to manage its lands for the benefit of both listed and unlisted species. Further, this action will enable the State to increase the intensity of restoration and management of the longleaf pine habitat in this area, particularly with the use of prescribed fire. The project will contribute substantially to fulfilling the recovery strategies developed for the Sandhills population of the red-cockaded woodpecker. Recovery of this population is a high priority for the North Carolina Sandhills Conservation Partnership, which is composed of six parties including the United States Army.

Texas

- **Balcones Canyonlands Preserve** (Travis County, TX) \$3,375,000. Grant funds will be used for the acquisition of new preserve tracts vital for the ecological viability of the Balcones Canyonlands Preserve. This preserve was designed to encompass high quality habitat for the golden-cheeked warbler, black-capped vireo, and the entire known range of three endangered karst invertebrates.
- **Bone Cave Harvestman Preserve** (Williamson County, TX) \$1,353,750. Acquisition and conservation of this 40-acre tract by the Williamson County Conservation Foundation will add to the long-term success of the Brushy Creek MUD Preserve as well as augment the conservation measures pursuant to the Sultan & Kahn HCP, and will contribute to the eventual recovery of the Bone Cave harvestman. The tract contains nine caves; the endangered Bone Cave harvestman species has been confirmed in six of the caves.

- **Storm Ranch, Texas Conservation Easement** (Hays County, TX) \$1,766,004. This project partners the Hill Country Conservancy with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Texas Parks & Wildlife Department to conserve the 5,685-acre Storm Ranch, which is located within the contributing zone of the Edwards Aquifer in Hays County, Texas. A conservation easement will be purchased to protect the quality of water recharging the aquifer and the springflow discharging into habitat for the endangered Barton Springs salamander at Barton Springs. This project was initiated in 2003 through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund program.

Utah

- **Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, Mojave desert tortoise** (Washington County, UT) \$4,422,459. This grant will be used to acquire parcels of Mojave desert tortoise habitat key to the viability of a reserve created under the Washington County HCP. The reserve is vital to the long term survival and recovery of the desert tortoise and will benefit a suite of other species, including six federally listed species (the bald eagle, southwestern willow flycatcher, Virgin River chub, woundfin, dwarf bear poppy, and Silar pincushion cactus), one proposed endangered plant (Shivwits milkvetch), and at least two dozen BLM species of concern and State of Utah sensitive species. Purchase of the parcels proposed for acquisition will significantly reduce habitat fragmentation in the reserve.

Washington

- **Cedar River Watershed HCP** (King County, WA) \$1,000,000. The land acquisition will result in securing the best of the remaining habitats in the lower third of the Cedar River Watershed, as the upper two-thirds of the watershed is already protected under the City of Seattle's HCP. Acquisition will extend habitats for both listed and unlisted species, improve connectivity particularly along the riparian corridor, and protect habitats under immediate threat of development.
- **Tieton River Project, Cugini High Cascade Timberlands, Hoh River Conservation Corridor** (Yakima, King, and Jefferson Counties, WA) \$10,050,710 (total for three projects). The grant will be used to acquire lands on approximately 3,000 acres of fish and wildlife habitat in both eastern and western Washington State. Conservation benefits will be secured by the purchase of old-growth timber occupied by northern spotted owls and marbled murrelets in the west, and the protection of rare pine forests and diverse canyon habitats in the east. The Tieton River Project is awarded \$631,350 to protect 640 acres of mature ponderosa pine, Douglas fir and riparian habitats in the Tieton River Canyon (Yakima County). The Cugini High Cascade Timberlands project is awarded \$5,716,143 to acquire approximately 560 acres of old growth forest in the northern Washington Cascade Mountains (King County). The Hoh River Conservation Corridor project is awarded \$3,703,217 to conserve approximately 1,755 acres of Hoh River lands between the interior and coastal portions of Olympic National Park (Jefferson County).

- **Yakima River Wildlife Corridor Phase III, Washington State** (Kittitas County, WA) \$1,763,795. The funding will allow The Cascades Conservation Partnership to complete the third and final phase of acquisition of the Yakima River Wildlife Corridor. The corridor connects essential wildlife habitat across Interstate 90 through a low elevation passage in one of the narrowest sections of the Central Cascades. This conservation project provides habitat and a travel route for five federally listed land species, and protects bull trout and steelhead habitat in and along the Yakima River.

Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants by State:

California

- **East Contra Costa County HCP** (Contra Costa County, CA) \$358,000. The endangered San Joaquin fox, the threatened California red-legged frog and many other declining species, are found in this area and their ability to persist in this rapidly developing area depends upon the protection of large blocks of contiguous habitat. This is an opportunity to plan urban development in such a manner that will provide habitat for sensitive species and open space for residents. In addition, the HCP/Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) will allow Contra Costa Water District to utilize its full contractual allotment of federal water (Bureau of Reclamation) from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta by addressing the indirect effects resulting from water deliveries.
- **Mendocino Redwood Company HCP/NCCP** (Mendocino and Sonoma Counties) \$258,000. Funds are being awarded to finalize the development of a combined federal Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) and a California state Natural Community Conservation Plan (NCCP) covering approximately 232,000 acres of the Mendocino Redwood Company's forest lands in Mendocino and Sonoma Counties, California. This HCP/NCCP will benefit more than 11 species, including 19 federal listed species including the marbled murrelet and northern spotted owl, several California state listed species, and numerous species of conservation concern.
- **Placer County Phase 2 Area HCP/NCCP** (Placer County, CA) \$349,000. In partnership with other local agencies and state government, Placer County's open space and agricultural conservation effort known as Placer Legacy is currently developing a comprehensive, multi-species HCP and NCCP that will address listed and non-listed species, including Lahontan cutthroat trout and the mountain yellow-legged frog. The plan is to be developed in three phases. This 2004 grant will allow Placer County to begin developing an Adaptive Management/Monitoring program through the purchase of the HabiTrak system, development of the Phase 2 Land Cover and Habitat Inventory, allow for the funding of the Phase 2 Science Advisors for two years, and allow for half-time participation of a Department of Fish and Game environmental scientist. These project tasks are fundamental to further implementing a successful Phase 1 and initiating Phase 2 of the HCP/NCCP. The Phase 2 area, particularly the Martis Valley, is currently experiencing intense development pressure, which makes the timing of this project crucial to the preparation of the HCP/NCCP.

- **San Bruno Mountain HCP Reassessment Project** (San Mateo County, CA) \$118,560. The project is for an amendment to the existing HCP. At a minimum, the proposed HCP amendment will consider: (1) the extent that non-native species invasion on San Bruno Mountain is affecting the callippe silverspot, mission blue, and San Bruno elfin butterflies on San Bruno Mountain in a manner not previously considered; (2) whether management and restoration of conserved habitat on San Bruno Mountain is not occurring consistent with the San Bruno Mountain HCP; (3) the extent callippe silverspot and designated bay checkerspot critical habitat will be affected by full implementation of the HCP's incidental take permit; (4) the adequacy of the HCP's funding; and (5) the adequacy of the HCP's avoidance and minimization measures.
- **Santa Clara County HCP/NCCP** (Santa Clara County, CA) \$300,000. Santa Clara County has initiated a county-wide HCP/NCCP program which proposes to cover most of the 841,000-acre county. The project is being undertaken in partnership with the City of San Jose, Santa Clara Valley Transportation Agency, and the Santa Clara Valley Water District, with potential involvement from other cities in the southern portion of the county. Santa Clara County has experienced enormous amounts of population growth over the past 50 years and is continuing to experience growth pressures which pose a threat to more than 100 endangered, threatened, and other rare species. This HCP/NCCP will provide a comprehensive approach to conservation and management of multiple species countywide, including preservation of much of the remaining habitat for several federally listed species, establishment of habitat preserves, habitat restoration, and streamlined regulatory permitting processes.
- **South Sacramento HCP** (Sacramento County, CA) \$308,000. The grant will help local officials in South Sacramento continue the planning phase of a regional HCP. This HCP is expected to cover 45 species, including seven federally threatened and endangered species, within a planning area of approximately 490 square miles. This HCP proposes to cover two species of Orcutt grass that are restricted to Sacramento County or for which this is the southernmost extent of its range. The development community is actively involved in this HCP because of their desire to streamline the regulatory process in an area that has intense development pressure. Environmental groups are also actively involved due to the wide variety of biological resources in the planning area and because this is an opportunity to preserve large, contiguous areas of habitat on a landscape level.
- **Western Stanislaus County HCP/NCCP** (Stanislaus County, CA) \$285,000. The grant, combined with local funding, will enable local officials to initiate an HCP/NCCP process to develop a regional plan for 388,000 acres in western Stanislaus County. Currently, the Interstate 5 corridor and the cities of Patterson and Newman are experiencing significant growth. Adequate and appropriate resolutions to endangered species issues are key to successful implementation of economic development and public works projects in these areas. Central to the plan will be a conservation strategy developed by the County, California Department of Fish and Game, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the San Joaquin kit fox. The conservation strategy, currently in draft form but yet to be implemented, will identify and protect a regional movement corridor for the kit fox. Ecologically valuable grassland, riparian woodland, and foothill habitats will also be conserved within the corridor, providing for other covered species and maintaining

connectivity and ecosystem function in several watersheds. Stanislaus County will partner with other local agencies, as well as federal and state agencies, to develop this HCP/NCCP.

- **Yuba and Sutter Counties HCP/NCCP** (Yuba and Sutter Counties, CA) \$178,000. The grant will help local officials in portions of Yuba and Sutter Counties initiate the planning phase of a regional HCP/NCCP. Since many land use plans within the HCP/NCCP planning area are still being developed by the local jurisdictions, there are significant opportunities to provide for natural resource conservation at this time. There is an opportunity, through this HCP/NCCP effort to promote the development of a comprehensive, multi-species conservation plan that will address both listed and non-listed species including: California tiger salamander, Swainson's hawk, giant garter snake, steelhead, and tricolored blackbird. The Counties will partner with other local agencies, as well as federal and state agencies, to develop this HCP/NCCP.

Colorado

- **San Luis Valley Regional Habitat Conservation Plan** (Alamosa, Conejos, Mineral, Rio Grande, and Saguache Counties, CO) \$384,000. The grant will fund the development of a regional approach to southwestern willow flycatcher conservation planning in the San Luis Valley. The HCP will cover approximately two million acres and 150 stream miles. The project has widespread support from numerous State, local, and Federal agencies as well as non-governmental organizations. The project lies within the Rio Grande Recovery Unit, one of six recovery units for the southwestern willow flycatcher. The San Luis Valley is one of four management units within the recovery unit, and provides the best potential in Colorado for supporting recovery of the flycatcher. In addition to the flycatcher, the HCP will cover the bald eagle and the yellow-billed cuckoo.

Commonwealth of Northern Mariana Islands

- **Rota Island-wide Habitat Conservation Plan** (Rota, CNMI) \$339,522. To develop an island-wide habitat conservation plan (HCP) that addresses economic development and endangered species conflicts on the island of Rota. The HCP will protect and conserve existing secondary limestone forests for the benefit of the endangered Mariana crow, and other suitable habitats required by other species that may be impacted by development on similar habitats elsewhere on Rota. Finalization of this HCP will complete the early planning efforts for the Rota island-wide HCP begun in the mid-1990s.

Georgia

- **Development of an HCP for Imperiled Aquatic Species of the Etowah River Basin** (Bartow, Cherokee, Cobb, Dawson, Forsyth, Fulton, Lumpkin, Paulding, and Pickens Counties, Georgia) \$392,608. The proposed project will complete the planning process for the comprehensive Habitat Conservation Plan for the Etowah River Basin in Georgia, ultimately resulting in an incidental take permit. The overall goal of the HCP effort is for each local government to implement growth management and local preservation efforts that ensure the future conservation of aquatic imperiled species in this basin. The incidental take permit will

provide county and municipal governments (regulatory agencies) the authority to authorize projects that provide for the conservation of numerous aquatic species in the Etowah Basin while allowing environmentally-acceptable development to proceed. This is the fourth and final stage of planning for this HCP. Specific objectives for this year include: Working with the 20 local governments to implement ordinances and policies that minimize the impact of development on aquatic biota; Working with local governments to revise comprehensive plans to reduce development pressures in sensitive areas; Assisting local governments in putting policies in place for acquisition and protection of sensitive watersheds; Establishing a coordinating body for monitoring, enforcing and funding the implementation of the Etowah HCP; Conducting scientific and economic analyses for supporting the adaptive management aspect of the HCP; Crafting the Environmental Assessment for the Etowah HCP; Completing a draft of the HCP, the incidental take permit and the adaptive management plan; and holding meetings with stakeholder groups and the public and working with the media to facilitate better understanding of HCP implementation.

Maryland

- **HCP Development for the Delmarva fox squirrel and Timber Harvesting on Maryland's Eastern Shore** (Caroline, Dorchester, Kent, Queen Anne's, Talbot, Somerset, Wicomico, and Worcester Counties, Maryland) \$128,625. The grant will help support the conservation of the Delmarva fox squirrel in 90 percent of the species' range. In partnership with the timber industry, the objectives include assessing the impacts of timber harvesting on the Eastern Shore of Maryland to the Delmarva fox squirrel, development of conservation strategies for minimizing and mitigating such impacts at a landscape level, and drafting an HCP for timber harvesting on both private and State lands on the Eastern Shore of Maryland. In addition, using light detection and ranging technology, establish a baseline estimate of the acreage of suitable Delmarva fox squirrel habitat on the Eastern Shore.

Montana

- **Montana DNRC Forested Trust Lands HCP** (Montana) \$589,500. The grant will allow the State of Montana to complete the development of the HCP and associated Environmental Impact Statement for 1,206,102 acres of lands owned by the Department of Natural Resources and Conservation. These lands provide important habitat and fulfill key life requirements for many listed and sensitive species, including gray wolf, grizzly bear, Canada lynx, bald eagle, and bull trout.

Nevada

- **Southern Nye County Multiple Species Habitat Conservation Plan** (Nye County, NV) \$175,000. Nye County, Nevada, will initiate the development of a MSHCP within the Mojave Desert portion of southern Nye County. This portion of the county lies within the range of the desert tortoise (*Gopherus agassizii*), a species listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. To provide conservation for the tortoise and five additional species of concern while allowing economic growth and urban development plans to move forward, Nye County will

develop a draft MSHCP and related Environmental Impact Statement and Implementing Agreement within one year of the grant award. The MSHCP will include conservation actions for six federally-listed and sensitive species that occur within the planning area. These species occur in Mojave Desert scrub, mesquite woodland, and desert riparian habitats. Development of the MSHCP will complement the existing Clark County MSHCP and the draft Southeastern Lincoln County MSHCP currently under development. Once the Lincoln and Nye County MSHCPs are complete, almost all of the desert tortoise habitat that occurs in Nevada will be included under habitat conservation plans, with the exception of tribal and military lands.

South Dakota

- **South Dakota Statewide HCP** (South Dakota) \$188,249. The grant will assist the State of South Dakota in gathering biological data that is essential in their development of a statewide Habitat Conservation Plan. The funds will also allow the State to begin developing the operating conservation strategy for the HCP. Because of the large geographic scope of the covered lands, the project has the potential to result in substantial conservation benefits for the pallid sturgeon, least tern, piping plover, and bald eagle.

Texas

- **Williamson County Regional Habitat Conservation Plan** (Williamson County, TX) \$1,005,000. Grant funds will be used to finalize Williamson County's Habitat Conservation Planning effort, which was initiated in 2003. Establishment of the Williamson County Regional HCP (RHCP) will aid in the conservation and recovery of three endangered karst species, the golden-cheeked warbler, black-capped vireo, and the Georgetown salamander, a candidate for listing. The RHCP is anticipated to include at least nine species as covered species.

Washington

- **Dungeness Comprehensive Irrigation District Management Plan/HCP** (Clallam County, WA) \$79,500. The HCP covers the lower 11 miles of the Dungeness River, addresses long-term irrigation needs, and improves instream habitat. The HCP will provide for the implementation of 24 specific conservation measures with direct, measurable benefits for listed and unlisted species as a result of addressing water quantity, fish passage, and water quality issues.
- **Family Forest HCP** (Lewis County, WA) \$469,150. The HCP will cover over 100,000 acres of small family forestlands managed by private landowners. The HCP will provide an alternative to riparian harvest restrictions required under state forest practices rules. Family forest landowners seek this HCP as an incentive to keep family forests on the landscape.
- **Foster Creek HCP** (Douglas County, WA) \$518,605. The HCP will cover over one million acres of agricultural land in Douglas County. The HCP will provide a tool for agricultural landowners, operators, and managers to meet their land management objectives while protecting and enhancing shrub-steppe, riparian, and aquatic habitats for up to 63 proposed covered species.

- **Teanaway Conservation Plan** (Kittitas County, WA) \$312,700. The HCP will cover 55,800 acres of forest lands owned and managed by American Forest Resources. The HCP would result from an innovative pilot effort between the landowner and the state to develop a Landowner Option Plan for northern spotted owls, as a precursor to receiving a federal incidental take permit.
- **Washington DNR Aquatic Lands HCP** (Statewide, WA) \$1,057,100. This HCP will cover over 2.4 million acres of submerged land managed by Washington State's Department of Natural Resources in marine, estuarine, and freshwater habitats. The HCP will ensure that covered activities promote sustainable ecosystems, minimize cumulative impacts, and increase protection, conservation, and recovery efforts for up to 75 proposed covered species.

Multi-State

- **Development of a Habitat Conservation Plan for the Northern Cumberlands Region** (Tennessee and Kentucky) \$272,500. The project will result in the initiation of planning for a comprehensive Habitat Conservation Plan for the Northern Cumberlands Area, including the Tennessee and Cumberland River watersheds, that will lead ultimately to an incidental take permit. The permit will allow the States of Tennessee and Kentucky, working with partners, to implement conservation measures to minimize and mitigate impacts to rare and imperiled species while allowing authorized activities such as timber harvest and coal mining to occur. The HCP will focus on both terrestrial and aquatic species. This area is renowned for its biodiversity and supports many rare plant communities and some of the best remaining habitats for a number of endangered freshwater mussels. The HCP will build upon The Nature Conservancy's ecoregional planning effort for the Northern Cumberlands. The information from this effort will provide a strong foundation from which to initiate the planning for the HCP. Fifty-nine rare and imperiled species are documented for the project area, and of these, 22 are listed as federally-endangered or threatened. The Plan will focus on a minimum of 15 species including freshwater mussels (Cumberland elktoe, Spectaclecase, Cumberlandian combshell, Oyster mussel, Tan riffleshell, Catspaw, Fine-rayed pigtoe, Alabama lamp mussel, and Little-wing pearlymussel, Purple bean, Cumberland bean), endangered plants including Cumberland rosemary and Cumberland sandwort as well as two bird species, the Cerulean warbler and the Golden-winged warbler. Initial planning efforts include establishment of a Steering Committee and an HCP Development Team; completion of a literature review of land use impacts on the imperiled species for those species where knowledge gaps exist; research on impacts of land management activities on imperiled species; GIS analyses to define the priority habitats for the HCP; and, development of an outreach program to engage additional partners, landowners and stakeholders in the HCP process.

Recovery Land Acquisition Grants by State:

Alaska

- **Nelson Lagoon Steller's Eider Habitat Project** (Nelson Lagoon, Alaska) \$191,304. Project partners will purchase strategic private inholdings from willing sellers in the Nelson Lagoon area to protect Steller's eider habitat. Nelson Lagoon is the most important fall molting area for the world's population of Steller's eiders. Nelson Lagoon is located within the state-designated Port Moller Critical Habitat Area. There are several private inholdings in the Port Moller Critical Habitat Area that, if developed, could threaten important Steller's eider staging, molting, and wintering habitat, as well as hamper recovery of the listed Alaska-breeding population of this species. Other species benefiting from this project will include the emperor goose, Pacific brant, cackling Canada goose, marbled godwit, bristle-thighed curlew, Hudsonian godwit, and other more common species of ducks and shorebirds. This project is part of a larger-scale project to integrate waterfowl and wetland protection initiatives such as the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, and the Pacific Coast Joint Venture.

Arizona

- **Coal Mine Springs Acquisition Phase II** (Santa Cruz County, Arizona) \$750,000. The funding will purchase a 1900-acre tract of land in Coal Mine Canyon, Santa Cruz County, Arizona. This is the second phase of a two-phase acquisition benefiting the recovery of the Gila topminnow; the Phase I acquisition was fully funded through this program in fiscal year 2003. Acquisition of the property will further protect water quality for the Coal Mine Canyon population of the Gila topminnow, one of the two largest naturally existing populations. Protection of this population is of paramount importance to the continued existence and recovery of the topminnow. In addition, the property will provide foraging habitat for the lesser long-nosed bat, riparian corridor for the Mexican spotted owl, and augmentation to primary nesting habitat along Sonoita Creek for the western yellow-billed cuckoo.

Arkansas

- **An ecoregion approach to recovery of the Ozark big-eared bat and three other federally listed karst dependent species: Phase I** (Benton, Marion, Newton and Washington Counties, Arkansas) \$584,237. The funds will purchase tracts in Arkansas adjacent to several protected areas that provide foraging habitat or habitat adjacent to foraging habitat for Ozark big-eared bat, gray bat, Indiana bat, and Ozark cavefish. The project will result in the protection of entire cave systems and their watersheds in the Ozark Karst Ecosystem. Acquisition of land near to Slippery Hollow and Garrett Hollow Natural Areas will provide protection of essential surface foraging habitat and movement corridors for bat species. Acquisition of land near to Cave Springs Natural Area will help better protect the recharge zone of a cave which supports over half the world's population of Ozark cavefish, as well as habitat for gray bats. Another grant funded in Oklahoma with the same title will protect several of the same species, and is part of a larger three state effort (OK, AR, and MO) to protect species in the Ozark highlands ecoregion.

California

- **Dirty Socks Spring** (Inyo County, California) \$92,500. This acquisition will protect property that contains a natural spring, one-acre pond, outflow streams, alkali wetlands, and salt grass marsh. Aquatic habitats on the property will be used to establish new populations of Owens tui chub and Owens pupfish, completing an activity identified in the Owens Basin Wetland and Aquatic species Recovery Plan for Inyo and Mono Counties, California.
- **Gabbro soil plant habitat 2004** (El Dorado County, California) \$450,000. This acquisition will purchase essential habitat of an extremely rare natural community comprising approximately 10 percent of California's native plant species, including the six Gabbro plants. This grant will add 227 acres to the existing Pine Hill Ecological Preserve.
- **Morro Bay shoreline** (San Luis Obispo County, California) \$500,000. This acquisition will conserve approximately 21 shoreline acres, connecting other State and privately owned conservation areas. The wetland and dune habitats provide habitat for several State and federally listed species and other species of concern, including California sea-blite, salt-marsh bird's-beak, western snowy plover, marsh sandwort, and Morro shoulderband snail.
- **Peninsular bighorn sheep (Highway 74)** (Riverside County, California) \$75,000. Acquisition of these parcels will contribute to the conservation goals outlined in the recovery plan for bighorn sheep in the Peninsular Ranges by ensuring that this area remains intact, preventing further fragmentation.
- **Ramona Grasslands** (San Diego County, California) \$500,000. This acquisition will protect intact and undisturbed grassland in Santa Maria Valley, benefiting Stephen's kangaroo rat, arroyo toad, San Diego fairy shrimp, and coastal California gnatcatcher. The grasslands contain numerous vernal pools and will link adjacent parcels into a contiguous preserve of nearly 2,000 acres.
- **Soledad Canyon riparian properties** (Los Angeles County, California) \$185,000. This acquisition will help achieve recovery goals for Arroyo southwestern toad, unarmored threespine stickleback, least Bell's vireo, southwestern willow flycatcher, and slenderhorned spineflower by securing habitat and habitat connectivity within the upper Santa Clara River watershed. The Santa Clara River is one of the last undammed wild rivers in southern California and subject to natural hydrologic flow events which are crucial for target species.
- **Vernal pool species recovery, Millville Plains** (Shasta County, California) \$317,716. This grant will be used to purchase a conservation easement on approximately 250 acres of land containing vernal pool complexes within Millville Plains, benefiting vernal pool fairy shrimp and slender Orcutt grass. This conservation easement is adjacent to approximately 600 acres of vernal pool habitat already protected.

Georgia

- **Acquisition of the Patterson Tract on Holly Creek** (Murray County, GA) \$950,563. Holly Creek is a tributary to the Conasauga River which is considered globally significant to the conservation of freshwater diversity. Approximately 80 native fish (including three federally listed fish) and 40 native mussel species (nine federally listed mussels) occur in the watershed. Although no federally listed species have yet been documented in the project area, the federally listed endangered blue shiner, southern pigtoe, coosa moccasinshell, and the federally listed threatened fine-lined pocketbook and Alabama moccasinshell are known to occur in the creeks adjacent to the property. The purchase of this tract will contribute to a larger effort to enhance water quality and protection of the Conasauga River watershed by securing land which includes important riparian buffers in the headwaters and by enhancing water quality by guarding against increased siltation.

Hawaii

- **Manana Valley watershed protection & habitat restoration project** (Honolulu County, Hawaii) \$900,000. This acquisition and restoration is a multi-species conservation effort that includes critical habitat for 15 listed plants and Oahu elepaio as well as essential habitat for the Oahu tree snail. This parcel contains five distinct forest types including wet and mesic forest types and four miles of stream. This parcel is also adjacent to a State forest reserve.

Idaho

- **Moen Ranch property – Pahsimeroi River.** (Lemhi and Custer Counties, Idaho) \$640,000. The grant award to Idaho Department of Fish and Game (IDFG) will help purchase approximately 208 acres of riparian lands along the Pahsimeroi River that runs through the Moen Ranch. This acquisition would protect habitat critical to listed bull trout, salmon, and steelhead. This purchase will be accomplished through a collaborative partnership with the State of Idaho Office of Species Conservation, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), the Soil and Water Conservation District and IDFG. The collaborative effort coincides with the property owner's desire to avoid subdivision, and to continue agricultural production along with habitat conservation. Therefore TNC will purchase the entire property and sell the riparian section to IDFG for perpetual conservation management, along with undertaking other transactions to protect habitat while keeping cultivated areas in production. The Pahsimeroi River is one of three key tributaries to the Upper Salmon River sub basin which provides more anadromous fish spawning areas (redds) than any other sub basin in the Columbia River Basin. The sub basin produces 39% of the spring chinook salmon, 45% of the summer chinook salmon and 25% of the summer steelhead returning to the mouth of the Columbia River. In 2002 the Moen Ranch accounted for 63 of the total 125 chinook redds on the Pahsimeroi River.

Iowa

- **Land acquisition for eastern prairie fringed orchid protection** (Jones and Jackson Counties, Iowa) \$254,625. This grant will be used to acquire approximately 180 acres of wet to tallgrass prairie through fee-simple acquisition, which will facilitate management for the benefit

of over 2,500 eastern prairie fringed orchid plants. This project will advance the objectives of the recovery plan by protecting sites in private ownership, enhancing the protection of known populations, and acquiring a potential reintroduction and expansion area. Acquisition of the site will protect and enhance the viability of these populations, ensure that the minimum recovery goals are met, and help move the species toward possible de-listing.

Maine

- **Machias River Project, Phase II** (Hancock and Washington Counties, Maine) \$500,000. The Service's contribution toward the Phase II project will help protect over 47 miles of lakeshore and over 13 miles of stream frontage. Some of the special features of the Phase II project that will benefit include: Atlantic salmon rearing and spawning habitat along Fifth Machias Stream, the primary water source for downstream Atlantic salmon habitat along the main stem of the Machias River; and multiple bald eagle nesting sites on Third Machias Lake. The Machias River is one of the eight river systems in Maine that are included in the Atlantic salmon Gulf of Maine distinct population segment. Preserving the Machias River system may help improve the status of the Atlantic salmon.

Maryland

- **Delmarva fox squirrel habitat protection in the Nanticoke River Watershed** (Maryland – statewide) \$267,183. Project partners will acquire a permanent conservation easement in the Nanticoke Watershed, Maryland. The property, referred to as the Mowbray Tract, totals 708 acres, and the entire property will be under the easement. Protection of this parcel of Delmarva fox squirrel habitat requires little or no management and will expand upon an adjacent permanently protected area of land totaling over 3,000 acres. The easement will eliminate all but one development right and require a Department of Natural Resources approved Forest Stewardship Plan that addresses habitat requirements of the squirrel along with migratory songbirds and other sensitive species that utilize the forested block. The owner is also willing to explore reforestation of certain areas of the property as squirrel habitat.

Michigan

- **Mitchell's satyr recovery land acquisition** (southwest Michigan) \$416,189. The grant will support acquisition of two parcels (53 acres) within the Blue Creek Fen area, a 35 acre parcel in the Cook Lake/Rudy Road Complex, and additional properties within the Mitchell's satyr priority area. In addition to the Mitchell's satyr, the Blue Creek Fen hosts several state-listed or special concern species including eastern box turtle, spotted turtle, and white lady-slipper. The site has also been identified as likely habitat for the Eastern massasauga rattlesnake, a candidate for Federal protection. Blue Creek Fen exhibits high species diversity, has strong natural community integrity, and is supported by relatively intact hydrological processes. The largest landowner, the Michigan Department of Transportation, has been working with The Nature Conservancy and the Service to develop and implement a management plan to achieve long-term protection and management for the Mitchell's satyr butterfly on the publicly owned portions of the fen since the mid 1990s. The acquisition of this tract will increase managed habitat to nearly one mile along Blue Creek. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources will partner with

the Southwest Michigan Land Trust to acquire approximately 35 acres in the Cook Lake/Rudy Road Complex, adding to the amount of permanently protected land in the complex. In 2001, the Land Trust leveraged private funds from donors and members to acquire the 12-acre Cook Lake Fen Preserve which protects high quality prairie fen occupied by the Mitchell's satyr.

Nebraska

- **Eastern Nebraska saline wetland land acquisition** (Lancaster County, Nebraska) \$160,000. These funds will help acquire and restore 31 acres of eastern saline wetland habitat, a habitat type that has experienced major losses (approximately 80 percent) in Nebraska and is considered critically imperiled. Without the project, the property would likely be bought for development, resulting in a loss of the habitat benefits of the property to least terns, piping plovers, and the Salt Creek tiger beetle, and compromising the habitat benefits of nearby protected saline wetlands by the indirect and direct effects of urban development. The property is the highest priority acquisition for the Salt Creek tiger beetle, a declining, narrowly distributed species awaiting listing. The property will be managed in perpetuity for endangered species and other wildlife benefits.

Nevada

- **Dave's Island tract** (Elko County, Nevada) \$1,000,000. This acquisition will benefit the Jarbidge River Distinct Population Segment of bull trout. The draft recovery plan identified acquisition as the most important recovery action for the Dave Creek population. This acquisition will also benefit sage grouse and redband trout and eliminate grazing impacts.

New Mexico

- **Blue Hole Cienega, Santa Rosa, New Mexico: core conservation habitat for Pecos sunflower** (Guadalupe, New Mexico) \$107,000. This acquisition will protect 130 acres of high quality habitat within the Town of Santa Rosa for the threatened Pecos sunflower. Pecos sunflower is a wetland plant confined to spring and cienega (desert wetland) areas in New Mexico and west Texas. The acquisition will protect one of the known Pecos sunflower core conservation areas, and will fulfill a criterion of the draft recovery plan.

North Carolina

- **Pettiford Creek, Ahearn Tract Land Acquisition** (Carteret County, North Carolina) \$270,000. The Ahearn Tract (adjacent to recently purchased conservation areas and near Croatan National Forest) is under immediate threat of development. The purchase of this property will complete protection of a 900 acre area bounded on three sides by Croatan National Forest and 2.4 miles of frontage along Pettiford Creek. The purchase will benefit red-cockaded woodpeckers directly by protecting foraging habitat and active clusters on the tract and indirectly through its use as a buffer to existing populations on Croatan National Forest. Biologists believe the site has a high probability of supporting rough-leaved loosestrife, which could benefit from protection and management (such as prescribed burning) on-site. The property also supports a

number of rare and candidate species including Bachman's sparrow, Carolina goldenrod, Venus flytrap, and southern hognose snake.

Ohio

- **Conservation easement acquisition along Pymatuning Creek for clubshell mussel recovery** (northeast Ohio) \$72,575. The objective of this initiative is to continue to secure permanent conservation easements from willing landowners along the main stem of Pymatuning Creek to aid in recovery efforts for the clubshell mussel. The easements will help complement the land acquisition efforts by the state and local agencies and other organizations. Conditions of the conservation easements will assure the permanent protection of the riparian corridor and create significant buffers from potentially adverse land uses on adjoining properties. There are three landowners identified to protect approximately 120 acres to benefit 5,000 feet of riparian habitat.

Oklahoma

- **Recovery of the Ozark big-eared bat and three other federally listed karst-dependent species** (Adair County, Oklahoma) \$469,083. Purchase of up to 1,274 acres in Adair County, Oklahoma, by the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation, will benefit the Ozark big-eared bat and the gray bat. The tract of land contains a portion of the largest known cave in Oklahoma, which provides important maternity roost and hibernacula habitat for the bats. 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.

Oregon

- **Elk River Spit conservation easement for snowy plover** (Curry County, Oregon) \$307,000. This grant will acquire a conservation easement for up to 80 acres of beach foredune behind the mean high tide line at the Elk River Spit in Oregon. The purpose of the project is to manage the land for the federally threatened western snowy plover and the State listed pink sand-verbena and migrating shorebirds. The recovery plan for the plover identified the Elk River Spit as one of 19 areas in Oregon important to the western snowy plover's future recovery. The spit's landowners are cooperating in the project by donating 25% of the value of the conservation easement.
- **Jacksonville Woods *Fritillaria gentneri*** (Jackson County, Oregon) \$358,000. The acquisition will benefit a very narrowly distributed plant found in oak - madrone habitat. This species only occurs in two counties in Oregon. Upwards of 1,000 individuals occur on the two parcels addressed in the proposal.

South Carolina

- **Bonneau Ferry Tract** (Berkeley County, South Carolina) \$1,646,671. The property is part of a larger three-phase project located along the Cooper River. The Cooper River is the primary freshwater migration route for manatees in South Carolina. The Cooper River also supports habitat for the endangered shortnose sturgeon. These species will benefit directly by protection of water quality in the river. Habitat for the shortnose sturgeon may be included in the purchase. Additionally, the larger property and adjacent properties already under protection support bald eagle, foraging and roosting sites for wood stork, and a number of other rare species (including swallow-tailed kite). The purchase of this tract will contribute to the overall acquisition of 10.5 miles of river frontage along Cooper River.

Tennessee

- **Bellamy Cave Purchase** (Montgomery County, Tennessee) \$65,500. Bellamy Cave is identified in the Gray Bat Recovery Plan as a priority one site for this species. This cave provides both winter and summer habitat for gray bats with a colony of approximately 91,000 bats in winter and a maternity colony of 35,000 bats in summer. Gray bats are sensitive to human disturbance and the size of this colony makes this cave a high priority. The State will purchase this property to ensure protection and long-term management for this species and others such as the small-footed bat, southern cavefish, and, potentially, Indiana bat.
- **Land Acquisition of the Lane Farm in Middle Tennessee** (Wilson County, Tennessee) \$285,750. Acquisition of this property will provide protection for one of the five existing populations of Tennessee coneflower and permit active management and enhancement of a population of leafy prairie-clover. Additionally, the property supports limestone cedar glades, an extremely rare community which provides habitat for many narrowly distributed plant species, including seven state listed plants. The property also contains a small mixed grass barren. In the state of Tennessee, nearly all such barrens have been lost to conversion for agricultural and commercial or residential development.

Texas

- **Land acquisition of endangered and threatened wildlife habitat, specifically for golden-cheeked warbler, near Cedar Hill State Park (Dogwood Canyon)** (Dallas County, Texas) \$286,500. The acquisition of a 24-acre tract of land will provide high quality breeding habitat for the golden-cheeked warbler in Dogwood Canyon. Dogwood Canyon may be the only location in Dallas County currently inhabited by the warbler, although this species was present in the county historically. The acquisition is part of a larger project to protect 250 acres of Dogwood Canyon for the benefit of the warbler and the black-capped vireo, and other wildlife species.

Utah

- **State of Utah Virgin River Confluence acquisition** (Washington County, Utah) \$615,000. The funds will be used to purchase 56 acres of riparian habitat at the Virgin River Confluence

essential for the protection of threatened and endangered species, including woundfin, Virgin River chub, southwestern willow flycatcher, desert tortoise, and bald eagle. The proposed parcel represents pristine habitat where the Mojave Desert meets the Great Basin and Colorado Plateau, and provides habitat for dozens of species unique to the State of Utah. This project represents Phase III of a project that will eventually protect a 530-acre ecosystem complex of riparian habitats along 3.5 miles of the Virgin River. To date, the State and its partners have permanently protected 275 acres of this total.

Virginia

- **Purchase of Mitchell's satyr habitat in Virginia** (Floyd County, Virginia) \$183,974. This project will provide permanent protection for one of the largest concentrations of the federally endangered Mitchell's satyr butterfly in Virginia. The wetlands on the subject property also support the state endangered bog turtle. A key parcel at Camp Branch Wetlands will be protected through purchase of a conservation easement and the property will be dedicated by the Department of Conservation and Recreation (DCR) as a state natural area preserve. Natural area stewardship of the DCR Natural Heritage Program will manage the property to ensure the continued viability of the two rare species and their habitats. When Mitchell's satyr was federally listed, it was not known from the State of Virginia. The species was discovered in Virginia in 1998, one year after the recovery plan was finalized. All known sites of Mitchell's satyr in Virginia occur within a 50 square mile area of the New River watershed.

Washington

- **Golden paintbrush recovery at Ebey's Reserve** (Island County, Washington) \$187,300. This acquisition proposal is a single species project that benefits a narrowly distributed plant species. It is vital for species recovery because it is one of only 11 remaining sites and one of the three largest sites on which this plant is found. Acquisition will make a major contribution toward recovery.