United Sportsmen's League Wildlife Conservation Grant Program ■ *Guidelines*

Prepare your application now—deadline is Nov. 15, 2008

Funding for Habitat Projects

Purpose of Grant

The purpose of this grant program is to promote the study and use of wildlife management practices on agricultural lands. Whether your FFA chapter is planning an on-site project or exploring a collaborative effort with a local landowner, the United Sportsmen's League Wildlife Conservation Grant Program can help. Grants are available through competitive application. Each grant is worth up to **$500**.

Funding comes from a cooperative effort between the United Sportsmen's League (USL) and the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC).

Eligible Applicants

Any Missouri FFA chapter is eligible to apply.

Application Process

- The applicant must consult with a resource professional for advice in planning the project. A resource professional can help develop a quality wildlife management plan. A resource professional is any professional with expertise in wildlife habitat management such as MDC's private land conservationist, wildlife management biologist, fisheries biologist or resource forester.
- The wildlife management plan does not need to be complicated. One to two pages should be sufficient to explain your plan, but it must include the following information:
  1. Location of the project site
  2. Current conditions of the project site
  3. Wildlife that will benefit from the project
  4. Wildlife management practices that will be implemented
  5. Where and when wildlife management practices will be implemented

  A map showing your site's plan would be very helpful but is not required. You may include photos, but they are not required.
- The budget must indicate expense items and the estimated cost of each item. Budgeted items must support implementation of the proposed wildlife management plan. If the total estimated cost is more than $500, indicate how the remaining costs will be covered. Many different types of expenses can be covered by this grant including fertilizers, herbicides, seeds, plants, fuel to operate machinery, equipment rental, or tool or equipment purchases. If tools or equipment will be purchased, indicate how they will be used after this project is completed.
- Before submitting your application, double check to make sure it is complete and has your wildlife management plan and budget attached. Don't forget to include your resource professional's name and phone number on the application. His/her signature is not required.
- Applications must be postmarked by **November 15, 2008**. Send them to the address listed on the application.

Selection Process

- Representatives of USL and MDC will evaluate applications and award grants. The winning applications will excel at meeting the following criteria:
  1. The application is complete and has a wildlife management plan and budget attached.
  2. The application indicates how the project site will be used in training students and others about wildlife management principles.
  3. The wildlife management plan clearly indicates where and when which wildlife management practices will be used to improve habitat on the project site.
  4. The budget indicates reasonable expenses and estimated costs.
- Applicants awarded grants will sign cooperative agreements before beginning their projects.
- MDC will recognize grant awardees at the Missouri FFA Convention.

Reporting Requirements and Fund Distribution

- Any changes in the project must be approved by the USL Grant Coordinator (See contact information below) prior to their implementation.
- **Projects must be completed two years from the date of the grant award.** The grantee shall have their resource professional inspect the project when completed.
- The grantee shall submit a one- to two-page narrative and copies of all receipts to the USL Grant Coordinator after the project has been completed and inspected. The narrative must describe how wildlife habitat was improved at the site and how learning about wildlife management principles and practices benefits students and others. Narrative must also indicate when the project was inspected and by whom.
- **This is a reimbursement grant only.** The grant funds will be paid after the project is completed and inspected and upon submission of a narrative and copies of receipts. Only the amount incurred up to the awarded amount will be reimbursed. It will take 30 to 45 days for awardees to receive payment.
- Grantees shall keep financial records for each grant in accordance with applicable government accounting standards. **Keep copies of all paperwork related to this project.**

Consult your MDC private land conservationist (PLC) or other resource professional for project ideas and help with planning. To find your local PLC visit ***www.missouriconservation.org*** *and type "private land conservationist" in the search box.*

For more information about the USL Wildlife Conservation Grant Program, contact:

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573/522-4115, ext. 3285
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What kinds of projects will qualify?

Any habitat project that shows good planning, use of wildlife management practices, value in training about wildlife management principles and wildlife habitat improvement will be considered for funding. Your project should begin with a study of the management area to determine current conditions and to determine what practices are best for the land and its wildlife. You should get help with planning your project from your local MDC private land conservationist or other resource professional. Many different wildlife management practices can be used. See the sections listed below for ideas.

While school property may provide an appropriate location for a habitat project, consider finding a private landowner to cooperate with a project. By assisting a landowner, your students get real-world experience improving wildlife habitat on agricultural lands, your school gains more recognition for community service, the local landowner gets help practicing conservation and your chapter frees itself of long-term site maintenance.

Eligible projects in outdoor classrooms must include wildlife habitat improvements to be considered, and the associated costs must not be covered by an MDC outdoor classroom grant or other source.

Forest/woodland management

- Timber Stand Improvement for wildlife.
- Plant trees for reforestation.
- Manage for den, snag and wolf trees.
- Fence woodlots to exclude livestock.
- Enhance forest edge by thinning and/or planting.
- Create brushpiles from harvest slash.
- Grow native trees or shrubs for wildlife plantings.
- Control nuisance, non-native (exotic) plants.
- Restore shortleaf pine to native sites.

Cropland management

- Establish native warm-season grasses and other native plants on idle areas: grassed waterways, terraces, dams, end rows, etc.
- Create or enhance windbreaks, fencerows and travel lanes by planting native food and cover plants.

- Establish filter strips of native plants around ponds and streams.
- Stabilize gully and establish native cover.
- Practice agroforestry to include wildlife benefits.

Glade/savanna management

- Reestablish native plants eliminated by previous land uses.
- Control cedars and other invasive plants.
- Fence to regulate grazing.
- Thin to restore tree canopy to savanna conditions.
- Do prescribed burning. *(See note on fire under Grassland/prairie management.)*

Grassland/prairie management

- Establish native forbs and warm-season grasses.
- Control invasive trees, shrubs and exotics to benefit native grassland.
- Demonstrate rotational grazing system to favor native grassland species.
- Propagate native grasses or forbs and use for wildlife plantings.
- With appropriate permissions, collect seeds of native plants from roadsides or abandoned railways and use in grassland restoration.
- Do prescribed burning to benefit native plants. *(Note: Fire can benefit or devastate resources. Proper use requires training and careful planning. Students can safely assist in planning and preparing for a burn and in monitoring vegetation after. The actual burn involves considerable personal risk and liability.)*

Pond management

- Create, enhance or manage fishless amphibian ponds.
- Preserve woody cover in a new pond basin as fish habitat.
- "Landscape" new pond basin to provide diverse fish habitat.
- Stock forage and game fish.
- Install fencing to regulate livestock access.
- Provide alternative livestock watering facilities.
- Plant filter strips of native vegetation.
- Improve vegetative cover on watershed.
- Plant windbreaks and other woody vegetation around pond as shelter and wildlife habitat.
- Plant beneficial aquatic plants to protect shoreline and provide wildlife habitat.
- Add fish attractors such as Christmas trees to increase habitat.
- Improve angler access and pond facilities (gates, disabled access, trash cans, etc.)
- Practice fish husbandry for stocking purposes.
- Keep fishing records for pond management.
- Control nuisance exotic fish.
- Control nuisance aquatic vegetation.

Wetland management

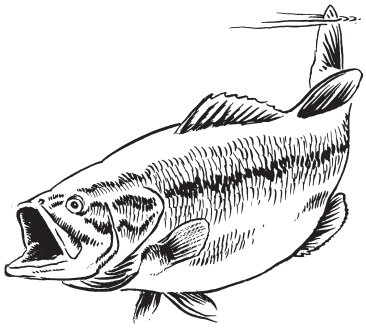
- Create, enhance or manage wetland habitat.
- Place and monitor nesting structures for wood ducks, Canada geese and prothonotary warblers.
- Reestablish native plants on restored wetlands.
- Protect springs, seeps and fens from livestock.
- Control exotic or invasive vegetation.
- Create, enhance or manage fishless areas or seasonally flooded wetlands as specialized habitat.

Wildlife management

- Conduct population studies to assist planning.
- Do wildlife habitat assessment to determine wildlife needs.
- Plant supplemental food and cover crops for specific wildlife needs.
- Control wildlife damage by trapping or other legal means.
- Place and monitor nest and den boxes, brushpiles, and other nest and habitat structures.
- Conduct highway beautification/habitat enhancement projects.

Riparian corridor and stream management

- Plant filter strips of native vegetation.
- Establish trees or other native vegetation along stream corridors to protect and stabilize streams.
- Improve vegetative cover on a watershed to prevent erosion and runoff.
- Establish stands of giant cane along streams.
- Stabilize eroding streambanks.
- Install fish habitat structures.
- Monitor water quality on a local stream.
- Conduct stream litter pickup.
- Fence riparian corridor to regulate access by livestock.
- Form a Stream Team and adopt a section of stream.



Other conservation practices

- Other conservation practices will be considered. Meet with your MDC private land conservationist or other resource professional to determine the best practices for your project site.