



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Midwest Region *Private Lands Program*

Quick Facts

Midwest Region Partners Program by the numbers (1987-2006)

- 35,000 Partners projects completed
- 207,667 upland acres restored
- 123,952 wetland acres restored
- 510 stream miles restored
- 55 field offices offering landowner assistance

Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)

- More than 90 species of birds have been reported using CRP lands in the Midwest, including large numbers of grassland birds.
- 50 percent of all CRP contracts are in the Midwest Region (381,000 contracts)
- 25 percent of all CRP acres are in the Midwest Region (8 million acres)

Wetland Reserve Program (WRP)

- 1/3 of all Fiscal Year 2006 WRP funds went to the Midwest Region (\$79 million dollars)
- 25 percent of all WRP acres are in the Midwest Region (more than 450,000 acres)

More than 70 percent of the land in the eight states that comprise the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Midwest Region is privately owned. Conservation of these lands is critical to sustaining fish and wildlife populations.

The Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program was established in 1987 with a core group of biologists and a small budget for on-the-ground wetland restoration projects on private lands. This successful, results-oriented program has garnered support through the years and has grown into a larger and more diversified habitat restoration program assisting thousands of private landowners across the nation.

Conservation lands held by federal and state agencies and other conservation groups cannot completely provide for fish and wildlife needs, especially the needs of endangered and threatened species. Because of this, the Fish and Wildlife Service works on private lands to accomplish habitat improvements through cooperative conservation programs such as the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

The Partners Program provides technical and financial assistance to private landowners and tribes who are willing to work with the Fish and



Wildlife Service and other partners on a voluntary basis to help meet the habitat needs of federal trust species.

The Partners Program can assist with projects in all habitat types which conserve or restore native vegetation, hydrology, and soils associated with imperiled ecosystems such as longleaf pine, bottomland hardwoods, tropical pine forests, native prairies, marshes, rivers and streams, or otherwise provide an important habitat requisite for a rare, declining or protected species.

Locally-based field biologists work one-on-one with private landowners and other partners to plan, implement and monitor their projects. Partners Program field staff help landowners find other sources of funding and help them through the permitting process, as necessary. This personal attention and follow-through is a



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significant strength of the Partners Program that has led to national recognition and wide support.

More than 50 percent of the nation's wetlands have been destroyed, more than 70 percent of the nation's riparian habitats have been lost or significantly degraded, and 95 percent of our tall grass prairie and longleaf pine forests have been lost.

Further, less than 2 percent of the nation's rivers remain free flowing. These are just a few examples of habitat types affected by human activities.

Consequences of habitat loss include decreases in wildlife populations and many other natural, social, and economic impacts and, ultimately, a decreased quality of life.

To meet these challenges, the Fish and Wildlife Service works with myriad federal and non-federal partners. In particular, we work closely with U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service and Farm Service Agency to help deliver a variety of conservation programs of the Farm Bill.

The voluntary, incentive-based conservation programs of the Farm Bill provide more than \$3 billion annually for conservation practices on millions of acres nationwide and right here in the Midwest.

Twenty-five percent of the acres enrolled in the Wetlands Reserve Program are found in the Midwest Region. And nearly 25 percent of the Conservation Reserve Program acres are found here.

Demand for these programs and the suite of other Farm Bill programs by farmers, ranchers and other private landowners continues to grow, demonstrating strong support and willingness to restore and conserve fish and wildlife habitat.

Farm Bill conservation programs provide technical and financial assistance landowners and land managers need to restore and enhance grasslands, wetlands, forests and other habitat. The conservation programs contribute to the agricultural producer's bottom line and the health of the rural economy.

Farm Bill conservation programs on private lands benefit the landscape by conserving, restoring or enhancing fish and wildlife habitat on tens of millions of acres. Frequently, these private lands border other conserved lands such as national wildlife refuges.

More than two thirds of endangered and threatened species use habitat on private lands. The Farm Bill provides assistance to landowners willing to restore habitats essential to listed and other species of conservation concern.

Farm Bill programs are one of the most important tools state agencies use to implement State Wildlife Action Plans, which are designed to conserve fish and wildlife before they become endangered.

Conservation provisions of the Farm Bill that support healthy fish and wildlife populations also support wildlife-related recreational activities such as fishing, hunting and wildlife observation that have significant social and economic benefits.

Enrollment in the Conservation Reserve Program in the Prairie Pothole Region is estimated to produce an additional 2.2 million ducks per year.