

Project Descriptions Arranged by State
FY2008 Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund

Habitat Conservation Plan Land Acquisition Grants by State:

California

City of San Diego Multiple Species Conservation Plan (San Diego County, CA): \$4,918,000. The grant will aid in the acquisition of 230 acres of land in the East Elliot and Otay Mesa areas, benefiting numerous federally listed species, including the coastal California gnatcatcher, least Bell's vireo, San Diego fairy shrimp and Riverside fairy shrimp. This acquisition will complement the County of San Diego MSCP's reserve design by securing key regional wildlife linkages and preserving core areas of habitat. These areas of coastal sage scrub, chaparral, oak woodlands, grasslands, riparian habitat, and vernal wetlands constitute an exceptional concentration of regionally and globally significant resources.

East Contra Costa County Habitat Conservation Plan (Contra Costa County, CA): \$6,000,000. The grant will contribute to the acquisition and conservation of 2,000 acres in eastern Contra Costa County, benefiting a number of federally listed species, including California red-legged frog, California tiger salamander, San Joaquin kit fox and vernal pool fairy shrimp. This acquisition will protect a mosaic of habitat types such as chaparral, oak woodland and savanna, grasslands, ponds, seasonal wetlands, and stream and riparian areas. The acquisition will also unite an assembly of larger and more interconnected core preserves that will benefit species such as the San Joaquin kit fox, who are dependent on regional habitat connectivity.

* **Willow Canyon Acquisition for the Santa Cruz Long-toed Salamander in Aptos** (Santa Cruz County, CA): \$1,695,122. This grant will support the acquisition of two parcels of land in southern Santa Cruz County that total 63.81 acres. Protection of the Willow Canyon property will increase the amount of available upland habitat necessary for dispersal, foraging, and sheltering for the federally listed Santa Cruz long-toed salamander. Additionally, acquisition of this land will preserve a corridor between ponds in the Seascape Uplands HCP and the Tucker Pond HCP, benefiting the federally listed California red-legged frog.

Georgia

A Proposal to Acquire 8,430 acres of Mature Pine Habitat in Decatur County, Georgia to Benefit the Red-cockaded Woodpecker (*Picoides borealis*) (Decatur County, GA): \$2,000,000. The State of Georgia will acquire a sizeable tract of land currently supporting the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. The land will be protected in perpetuity as a State Heritage Preserve and will be managed as a State Wildlife Management Area. This project offers significant benefits by providing permanent conservation for lands that are essential to habitat connectivity for red-cockaded woodpeckers in this area. Benefits to wood stork, Eastern indigo snake, Flatwoods salamander and state listed species such as the gopher tortoise and southern hognose snake are expected. The rare Bachman's sparrow and swallow-tailed kite may also benefit from the acquisition.

Montana

Native Fish HCP: Blackfoot Easement Project (Powell, Missoula, and Lewis & Clark Counties, MT): \$6,515,319. The Blackfoot watershed provides crucial connectivity for many imperiled wildlife species including native bull trout, westslope cutthroat trout and mountain

whitefish. The funds provided will help complete the Blackfoot Easement Project, which aims to provide permanent protection for at least 34,000 acres of watershed and working landscape. The parcels proposed for acquisition are adjacent to National Forest and State lands and will fill a critical void in maintaining the unfragmented landscape benefiting other species such as the grizzly bear, gray wolf, Canada lynx, trumpeter swan, bald eagle and Columbian sharp-tailed grouse.

Ohio

East Point, South Bass Island, Ohio to Complete Recovery of the Threatened Lake Erie Watersnake (Ottawa County, OH): \$1,835,000. This land acquisition completes the “Habitat Protection and Management” recovery criterion of the species’ recovery plan and will result in the protection of a core population area of the Lake Erie watersnake on South Bass Island. The purchase of this property is a rare opportunity to permanently protect a core population site and the last large tract of undeveloped habitat on the rapidly developing island. Partners include the Ohio Department of Natural Resources, First Energy Foundation, Black Swamp Conservancy, Ohio Public Works Commission and Western Reserve Land Conservancy. This 8.6 acre site currently holds 14 percent of the islands’ Lake Erie watersnake population and contains the elements needed to support the species year-round. Purchase of this site satisfies the last recovery criterion and will allow the Service to propose delisting in 2009.

Texas

Balcones Canyonlands Preserve/Purcell Tract (Travis County, TX): \$5,250,000. The project will result in the purchase of two tracts of land (5.6 acres and 1.2 acres) within the Balcones Canyonlands to protect habitat for seven endangered species and three karst species of concern. The target tracts are adjacent to or near the 17.3 acre tract acquisition funded in FY07. One tract includes caves that may benefit endangered karst species, including the Bone Cave harvestman, Tooth Cave ground beetle, Tooth Cave spider, Tooth Cave pseudoscorpion, and Kretschmarr Cave mold beetle; the other is high-quality golden-cheeked warbler habitat. Both tracts are of critical biological value to these species. These tracts are adjacent to preserve land owned by Travis County and will provide critical connectivity between adjacent protected lands.

Washington

Plum Creek HCP – Okanogan-Similkameen Watershed, Phase 1 (Okanogan County, WA): \$5,000,000. This project will secure approximately 6,200 acres of ecologically critical animal movement corridors for grizzly bear, gray wolf, Canada lynx, and wolverine and their ungulate prey. The corridors will link the North Cascades Ecosystem with the Kettle/Selkirk Mountains Ecosystem as well as the grassland/shrub-steppe habitat of southern British Columbia with the shrub-steppe habitat of the Columbia Basin. The acquisition will provide benefits for at least 48 species listed by the State, Federal, or Canadian governments.

***Plum Creek HCP – Heart of the Cascades, Phase I** (Kittitas County, WA): \$2,087,781. This project will conserve biodiversity at the landscape scale by conserving the checkerboard ownership pattern in the Central Cascades. This grant funding will acquire ponderosa pine, Douglas-fir mixed conifer, and riparian habitats in the Rock Creek drainage along the Naches River. Benefits are expected for the northern spotted owl, bull trout, grizzly bear, gray wolf, Canada lynx, and a number of unlisted species.

Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance Grants by State:

Arkansas

The Big Woods of Arkansas – Year 4 (Arkansas, Phillips, Prairie, Monroe, St. Francis, White and Cross Counties, AR): \$225,500. The project will continue the planning for a comprehensive Habitat Conservation Plan for the Big Woods Corridor of Arkansas, a 550,000 acre area in Arkansas that supports extensive bottomland forests. The forests serve as a corridor along the Bayou DeView and the lower portions of the Cache, White and Arkansas Rivers which all drain to the Mississippi River. Development of the HCP will promote the recovery of the Ivory-billed woodpecker and five other endangered species, including the red-cockaded woodpecker, the Interior least term and three freshwater mussels – the Fat pocketbook, Pink mucket and Scaleshell. The HCP is important to the development of ecotourism for this area in a way that is responsive to the needs of private landowners, hunters and others while providing protection for the species.

California

Bay Delta Conservation Plan (numerous counties, CA): \$300,000. The Bay Delta Conservation Plan (BDCP) will cover certain activities that affect the San Francisco Bay/Sacramento-San Joaquin Delta (Bay-Delta) estuary, which is the largest estuary on the West Coast. It is a maze of tributaries, sloughs, and islands and a haven for wildlife, supporting over 750 plant and animal species, 126 of which are sensitive or listed as threatened or endangered. The Bay-Delta is critical to California's economy, supplying drinking water for two-thirds of Californians and irrigation water for over 7 million acres of the most highly productive agricultural lands. When completed, the BDCP could be a key tool to help resolve the long-term needs of the Bay/Delta watershed.

Butte County CP/NCCP (Butte County, CA): \$378,600. At the northern end of the Sacramento Valley, Butte County is on the threshold of unprecedented growth. The Butte County Association of Governments, the county, and its five incorporated communities are developing a regional HCP. The plan will potentially cover 330,000 acres that are home to federally listed species, including all known populations of the endangered Butte County meadowfoam. This will be third successive grant for the Butte HCP/NCCP and will be used to continue its planning process.

Los Osos Habitat Conservation Plan (San Luis Obispo County, CA): \$364,800. This grant will support the completion of a multi-species HCP for the coastal community of Los Osos, San Luis Obispo County, California. Although Los Osos is a relatively small geographic area, it provides potential habitat for 89 special status plant and animal species, including the federally-listed western snowy plover, Morro Bay kangaroo rat, Morro shoulderband snail and Monterey spineflower. Development the HCP will provide the opportunity to conserve and recover at least four species that are found entirely within the HCP Plan Area and adjacent protected properties, and will contribute to the conservation and recovery of at least 20 other species.

San Luis Obispo Northeast County Regional HCP/NCCP (San Luis Obispo County, CA): \$500,000. The proposed HCP/NCCP will encompass approximately 800,000 acres in northeastern San Luis Obispo County that are largely un-fragmented and include a wide variety of species and habitats. The area consists largely of arid interior-California grasslands, with

elements of oak woodland, oak savannah, chaparral, scrub, vernal pool, wetland and riparian habitats, urban areas, vineyards, grazing lands and agricultural row crops. The HCP/NCCP will conserve 14 federally listed species, including least Bell's vireo, San Joaquin kit fox, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, and California red-legged frog. The relatively undeveloped state of the proposed HCP/NCCP area within San Luis Obispo County provides an excellent opportunity to develop a meaningful and effective conservation strategy for San Joaquin kit fox.

Fresno County HCP/NCCP (Fresno County, CA): \$199,800. Fresno County is developing a multi-species HCP/NCCP to conserve agricultural lands and natural habitats that are at risk from urban development. By 2050, the population of Fresno County is projected to increase by 95% and expand into unincorporated rural areas that are currently primarily used for agriculture. The anticipated growth will threaten key habitat corridors needed to protect a variety of state and federally-listed Threatened and Endangered species including the San Joaquin kit fox, California tiger salamander, foothill yellow-legged frog, golden eagle, bald eagle, white tailed kite, least Bell's vireo, western yellow-billed cuckoo, western burrowing owl and Swainson's hawk.

Yuba & Sutter Counties HCP/NCCP (Yuba and Sutter Counties, CA): \$360,696.

Two adjacent counties have joined to plan protection for open space in the valley and lower foothill portion of Yuba County and Sutter counties, covering 26 species on 450,000 acres. The boundaries were drawn in order to address the majority of the growth that will occur, along the Highway 70/99 corridor. It includes portions of the Bear, Feather and Yuba river and the Honcut Creek watersheds, primarily agricultural lands, and significant vernal pool/grasslands, aquatic, riparian and riverine habitats, wintering habitat for a variety of migrant bird species, wetland habitats and, potentially, small patch ecosystems. The HCP will be developed in coordination with similar habitat planning efforts in adjacent counties.

Florida

***Development of a HCP for Charlotte County, FL** (Charlotte County, FL): \$226,390. The Charlotte County HCP will focus on addressing impacts of County permitting activities on the Florida scrub jay, Eastern Indigo snake and the gopher tortoise. Development of a HCP provides a mechanism for a comprehensive County approach to the conservation and recovery of the covered species. The grant will provide for the following activities: holding public meetings and community workshops about the HCP, updating the biological information about the species, identifying alternatives to minimize impacts, formulating a Technical Committee, and assessing efficient funding mechanisms for the acquisition of scrub habitat.

Development of a HCP for the City of Cape Coral, FL (Leon County, FL): \$151,450. This HCP will address 5 federally-listed species, the bald eagle (protected under the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act), 14 state listed species and numerous state species of special concern. The city seeks adequate protection for threatened and endangered species in a manner that also addresses development needs. Funding will be used to conduct public workshops, develop a website and conduct biological species surveys.

Development of a HCP for Scrub Habitats in Highlands County, FL (Highlands County, FL): \$277,247. Highlands County and the State of Florida will develop an HCP to address development pressures on the Highlands tiger beetle (a candidate species), the blue-tailed mole skink, sand skink, eastern Indigo snake, Florida scrub jay, gopher tortoise and 18 federally-listed plants. During the first year of planning, they propose to establish a Steering Committee, hold meetings with local governments and partners to inform them about the HCP, delineate the scrub habitats to be covered, and identify the avoidance and minimization alternative to be covered in

the HCP.

Development of a Statewide HCP for Florida Beaches (Bay, Brevard, Broward, Citrus, Collier, Lee, Levy, Manatee, Martin, Miami Dade, Monroe, Pasco, Pinellas, St. Johns, St. Lucie, Santa Rosa, Sarasota, Dixie, Duval, Flagler, Franklin, Gulf, Hernando, Hillsborough, Indian River, Jefferson, Nassau, Okaloosa, Palm Beach, Taylor, Volusia, and Wakulla Counties): \$479,518. This is the second year of planning for a multi-county, multi-species HCP that will cover Florida beach activities seaward of the Florida Coastal Construction Control Line (FCCCL). The FCCCL is a major part of the Florida Coastal Program and sets standards to protect the natural resources in this area while allowing eligible infrastructure. Activities that may be included in the HCP include single and multi-family developments, public infrastructure, coastal armoring, beach scraping, beach cleaning, post-storm emergency activities, and beach berm and dune restoration projects. The HCP will cover habitat important to 15 federally-listed species and two candidate species, including five species of sea turtles and five sub-species of beach mice, among others.

Georgia

Development of a HCP for Imperiled Aquatic Species of the Etowah River Basin (Bartow, Cherokee, Cobb, Dawson, Forsyth, Fulton, Lumpkin, Paulding, and Pickens Counties): \$217,772. This project involves the continuation of planning for a multi-species HCP for the Upper Etowah Basin to protect two federally-endangered species of fish (the Etowah darter, the amber darter), the federally-threatened Cherokee darter and a number of other aquatic species likely to become candidates. Residential development pressures are growing in this area north of Atlanta, and the State has been working with numerous partners and stakeholders to address development in an environmentally acceptable manner that considers the needs of imperiled species.

Indiana

See Multi-State Grants

Kentucky

See Multi-State Grants

Louisiana

See Multi-State Grants

Multi-State Grants

Indiana, Kentucky, Louisiana, New Hampshire, New Jersey, Ohio, Tennessee, and Virginia Development of a Multi-Species Habitat Conservation Plan for NiSource Natural Gas Transmission Facilities in Cooperation with NiSource Gas Transmission and Storage (Multiple Counties, in Multiple States): \$3,007,270. Working in partnership with 17 states and other partners, NiSource will develop a landscape level, multi-species Habitat Conservation Plan to avoid and minimize impacts to endangered and threatened species associated with construction, operation and maintenance of its natural gas transmission lines and ancillary facilities running from Louisiana to Indiana, and Ohio throughout the northeast to Maine. This 15,500-mile planning area and associated 1-mile corridor covers 6.4 million acres of land and has the potential to affect 74 federally listed species. As a part of the Habitat Conservation Plan, NiSource will work in collaboration with The Conservation Fund who will lead a strategic conservation planning process that focuses on integrating species needs with potential habitat

mitigation across the landscape, providing multiple species benefits and addressing needs in a cumulative and comprehensive fashion. Species expected to benefit include the Indiana bat, copperbelly watersnake, and numerous species of federally listed freshwater mussels.

Tennessee and Kentucky

Development of a Habitat Conservation Plan for the Cumberlands Region (Wayne, McCreary, Pulaski, Clinton, Rockcastle, Laurel, Knox, Bell, Jackson, Harlan, Whitley and Lincoln Counties, KY; Anderson, Roane, Rhea, Scott, Campbell, Morgan, Cumberland, Bledsoe, Fentress, Pickett, Putnam and Overton Counties, TN): \$129,150. This two-state, multi-species, landscape level effort has evolved into the development of two Habitat Conservation Plans: one for water resources in Tennessee and one for forestry and forestry-related impacts in Tennessee and Kentucky. The planning process for the two HCPs will take advantage of shared resources, thereby minimizing overall project costs. The HCP project area, well-known for its extraordinary biodiversity, supports at least 19 federally listed species, the majority of which are freshwater mussels and fish. The states are making steady progress on the planning for these HCPs. During year five of the planning, the objectives include: researching the hydrology of spotfin chub and spotfin chub habitat and developing the legal expertise necessary to create the basic HCP policies and management agreements. Species expected to benefit include the Indiana bat, Cerulean warbler, spotfin chub, blackside dace, Bluemask darter, Cumberland darter and Cumberland elktoe, purple bean, Cumberland rosemary and Virginia spiraea.

New Hampshire

See Multi-State Grants

New Jersey

See Multi-State Grants

Ohio

See Multi-State Grants

Oregon

Upper Deschutes Basin Habitat Conservation Plan (Jefferson, Crook, and Deschutes Counties, OR): \$306,000. This funding will assist the Deschutes Basin water users and other stakeholders in the initiation of an HCP that supports bull trout recovery and steelhead reintroduction above the Pelton Round Butte Hydro-electric Project. The HCP, when completed, will provide ecosystem benefits to large areas of the upper Deschutes River basin, which includes the Metolius, Crooked and Deschutes River Basins.

See Multi-State Grants

Tennessee

See Multi-State Grants

Texas

Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer (Travis and Hays Counties, TX): \$105,000. These funds will allow the Barton Springs Edwards Aquifer Conservation District to complete an HCP and EIS to benefit the Barton Springs salamander and the Austin blind salamander that began with a HCP Planning Assistance grant awarded in FY05.

Utah

Garfield County HCP Planning Grant (Garfield County, UT): \$58,080. Garfield County contains one of the three recovery areas for the Utah prairie dog. Critical populations for the viability of the species in Garfield County occur on private lands, which are subject to increasing development pressure in growing communities such as Panguitch and Hatch. These funds will be used to identify priority colonies on private and public lands. Once the colonies are identified, the HCP will outline the means to secure and manage lands needed to maintain connectivity and viability of the colonies. In identifying and preserving these lands, a cooperative approach to species conservation and open space preservation will be achieved.

Virginia

See Multi-State Grants

Washington

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Wildlife Area HCP (Statewide, all 39 counties, WA) \$666,900. This grant funds the fourth year of an HCP process for the State's wildlife management 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. Listed species that will benefit include but are not limited to the following: pygmy rabbit, woodland caribou, snowy plover, spotted owl, marbled murrelet, bull trout, Chinook salmon, steelhead, Oregon silverspot, golden paintbrush and Kincaid's lupine. Other species that will benefit from the HCP include the 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 State Hydraulic Project Approval HCP (Statewide, all 39 counties, WA) \$680,400. Funding is for the fourth year of the HCP process for the State's primary fish-protection regulatory program, the Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA) program. The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife is seeking an HCP as a means of continuing conservation for fish and shellfish species and habitat, while achieving long-term certainty that the HPA program meets Federal species protection requirements. Listed species that will benefit include bull trout, steelhead, and Chinook, Coho, and sockeye salmon. Additional species that will benefit include but the following: coastal cutthroat trout; green sturgeon; Pacific, river, and western brook lamprey; California floater mussel; and giant Columbia River limpet.

Recovery Land Acquisition Grants by State:

California

Hunt Property, MacKerricher State Park (Mendocino County, CA): \$671,250. This grant will assist with the purchase of approximately 64 acres adjacent to the Inglenook Fen - Ten Mile Dunes Natural Preserve, MacKerricher State Park. The Inglenook Fen - Ten Mile Dunes ecosystem, which includes the Hunt property, represents a natural heritage treasure of statewide significance. The Hunt property is comprised of relatively pristine coastal dune, coastal prairie and riparian wetland habitats and contains the largest block of coastal dunes under private ownership in the Ten Mile Dunes. This acquisition will expand the area of the Preserve managed by California State Parks and reduce imminent threats from development. The acquisition will enhance recovery of three federally and state listed species: Western snowy plover, (*Charadrius alexandrinus nivosus*), Howell's spineflower (*Chorizanthe howellii*), and Menzies' wallflower (*Erysimum menziesii* spp. *menziesii*) and protect several other special-status plants. The distribution of Howell's spineflower is limited to the area in and around MacKerricher State Park.

Jacumba-Eade Property (San Diego County, CA): \$600,000. The grant will assist in the acquisition of about 1,080 acres of land located in the center of the Jacumba Complex of the recovery unit for Quino checkerspot butterfly. It is believed that the property supports a core population of the species. Acquisition of Jacumba-Eade property will protect habitat for a population of Quino checkerspot butterflies, and contribute to ecological and perhaps landscape-scale connectivity to the South Riverside/North San Diego Recovery Unit to the north along the western slope of the Laguna Mountains. Conservation of this property will also help buffer the Carrizo Gorge, which is designated as critical habitat for the Peninsular bighorn sheep and supports an important water source for the sheep.

Big Gun, Sierra Nevada Foothills (Placer County, CA): \$490,350. The grant will assist in the acquisition of 21 acres of the largest of only six known California red-legged frog populations remaining in the Sierra Nevada Mountains. The California red-legged frog was historically abundant in the Sierra Nevada. However, its survival there is now at risk because almost all of the remaining populations in the Sierra Nevada are small and isolated and are at risk from colonization by non-native species. The Big Gun site includes breeding ponds and adjacent uplands, and breeding has been confirmed at the site. The site is located within a much larger matrix of natural land and is contiguous with protected U.S. Forest Service land.

La Posta Linkage, San Diego Mountain Ranch (San Diego County, CA): \$1,000,000. The grant will assist in the acquisition of about 1,020 acres of land. San Diego Mountain Ranch occupies a large part of the Miller Creek watershed, and the streambed itself bisects the property. Acquisition of San Diego Mountain Ranch will protect sensitive resources, including the federally endangered arroyo toad and Quino checkerspot butterfly. Conservation of these lands will also facilitate the maintenance of hydrologic and fire regimes necessary for the long-term viability of the native plant and wildlife resources and help prevent invasion by non-native species. It will also enhance connectivity between existing protected areas and facilitate land management in the area. The oak woodlands, willow woodlands, and chaparral, and associated plant and wildlife communities on the property represent an ecological transition between coastal ecological communities, higher elevation communities of the Peninsular Range and the Sonoran Desert ecological zone.

***Santa Rosa Mountains** (Riverside County, CA): \$466,613. The grant will assist in the acquisition of up to 2,869 acres of land to further the recovery of the Peninsular bighorn sheep by reducing development threats to the species in the Santa Rosa Mountains. 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. Conservation of these lands will contribute to the long-term survival and recovery of Peninsular bighorn sheep and will also maintain connectivity of desert tortoise habitat in the Peninsular Ranges. Habitat on these parcels may also support occurrences of the federally endangered desert slender salamander and triple-ribbed milk-vetch.

Georgia

Acquisition of the Lewis Property for Hairy Rattleweed (Brantley County, Georgia): \$500,000. This grant will enable the acquisition of a conservation easement on 368 acres of lands to benefit the hairy rattleweed, an endangered plant species. This project is expected to result in protection of the first and best site of hairy rattleweed plants remaining in natural habitat. The acquisition also will lay the groundwork for future recovery efforts for this plant in adjacent areas.

Hawai'i

Kawa Bay Acquisition (Hawaii County, HI) \$1,000,000. The objective of this acquisition is to acquire and permanently protect approximately 551 acres in the District of Ka'u along the southeast coast of the Island of Hawaii. The property provides approximately 2 miles of pristine coastline containing nesting beaches for the endangered Hawaiian hawksbill turtle and protecting offshore feeding areas for the threatened green sea turtle. The protection of this property will also benefit tidepools, coral reefs, an intertidal brackish water pond, and coastal freshwater springs which provide habitat for the endangered Hawaiian coot and the orange-black Hawaiian damselfly, a candidate species.

***Honouliuli Preserve Acquisition** (Honolulu County, HI) \$361,196. This funding will contribute toward the acquisition and permanent protection of the 3,582-acre Honouliuli property. The Department of Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife's acquisition of this area will permanently protect habitat for over 90 rare species, including 38 threatened and endangered plants, one endangered bird, one endangered pomace fly and two endangered tree snails. There are 15 species (four of them endangered) that can only be found on the Honouliuli parcel. The area represents the largest known population of 'elepaio in the Wai'ane Mountains and the second largest on the Island of O'ahu.

Hamakua Marsh Watershed Acquisition (Honolulu County, HI) \$740,000. The goal of the Hamakua Marsh Watershed acquisition project is to acquire and permanently protect 65 acres of wetland and watershed lands and add them to the existing Hamakua Marsh Wildlife Sanctuary administered by the Department of State Land and Natural Resources, Division of Forestry and Wildlife. This acquisition will enhance ongoing recovery efforts for endangered Hawaiian waterbirds and plant species in the Hamakua Marsh. Species benefited include Hawaiian stilt, Hawaiian coot, Hawaiian gallunule, Hawaiian duck, and the federally listed sedge – *Cyperus trachysanthos*.

Idaho

Boundary Creek Conservation Easement (Boundary County, ID) \$1,471,500. This grant will support The Nature Conservancy's acquisition of a conservation easement for more than 654

acres of high-priority private forestland in the Kootenai Valley of northern Idaho. The subject property provides a critical link between the higher elevation public lands of the Selkirk Mountains and over 2,000 acres of low-elevation protected areas owned by the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Vital Ground Foundation and the Owens Foundation for Wildlife Conservation. The protection of this property will contribute to the recovery of grizzly bear, mountain caribou, bull trout, Canada lynx, and gray wolf.

Michigan

Copperbelly water snake habitat easement acquisition and protection along the Upper St. Joseph River (Hillsdale County, MI): \$689,305. The Michigan Department of Natural Resources and The Nature Conservancy will acquire conservation easements in perpetuity on three parcels totaling 442 acres of copperbelly watersnake habitat. The management and restoration of these sites will also benefit the endangered clubshell mussel, as well as 12 state-listed or special species of concern including wavy-rayed lampmussel, silver shiner, smallmouth salamander, and Blanding's turtle. The complex of wetlands, riparian forests, and upland forests that occurs at the site along the West Fork of the West Branch is one of the largest remaining along this headwater stream. Maintaining and expanding these complexes of natural communities help preserve the ecological integrity of this watershed and is critical for maintaining the copperbelly watersnake population.

Nebraska

***Salt Creek Tiger Beetle** (Lancaster County, NE): \$385,911. This grant will help acquire and restore 80 acres of Eastern saline wetland habitat, a habitat type that has experienced major losses (~80 percent) in Nebraska. The property provides habitat for the critically endangered salt creek tiger beetle. With only three subpopulations remaining, this property is vital to protecting known populations from light pollution and water quality impacts while allowing for expansion of occupied habitat to ensure against catastrophic events. The property will be managed in perpetuity for the beetle. This property also will provide additional habitat for the least tern and piping plover.

Oklahoma

Red-cockaded Woodpecker (McCurtain County, OK): \$186,000. The Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation will bring approximately 160 acres of native forest into public stewardship to benefit the red-cockaded woodpecker through implementation of management activities. It will expand the size of the existing McCurtain County Wilderness Area and support the Ouachita National Forest short-leaf pine/bluestem restoration that will provide additional dispersal habitat for the red-cockaded woodpecker. McCurtain County Wilderness Area supports the only remaining population of the red-cockaded woodpecker in Oklahoma.

Puerto Rico

Acquisition of San Miguel Natural Reserve for Leatherback Sea Turtles (Phase II) (Luquillo, Puerto Rico): \$1,500,000. This grant will enable the acquisition of 171 acres. This acreage will add to the 270 acres that the Puerto Rico Department of Natural and Environmental Resources and the Trust for Public Lands worked to acquire in Phase I for San Miguel Natural Reserve. This area is part of the proposed Northeastern Ecological Corridor that is being established to protect unique strands of functional wetlands. The Luquillo beaches in the San Miguel property are the most important nesting beaches for leatherback sea turtles in areas under U.S. jurisdiction and their long-term protection is a high priority. Hawksbill sea turtles also nest

on these beaches. In addition, acquiring this property will benefit several other listed species including the brown pelican and Puerto Rican boa.

Tennessee

Acquisition of Virgin Falls for Virginia spiraea (Davidson County, Tennessee): \$1,538,450. This grant will help acquire 1,551 acres of natural forest to be protected as a State Natural Area for the recovery of Virginia spiraea and Cumberland rosemary, both listed plants. Virgin Falls has the only known, newly-discovered occurrence of Virginia spiraea on the Caney Fork River. This acquisition will result in protection of over a mile of suitable habitat for this plant. Acquisition of this site also will protect suitable habitat for Cumberland rosemary, bluemark darter, and the Indiana bat, all federally-listed species.

Acquisition of Pearson Cave for gray and Indiana bats (Hawkins County, Tennessee): \$225,000. This grant will enable the acquisition and protection of 101 acres of habitat encompassing a high priority cave for gray and Indiana bats. This cave is one of the largest hibernation colonies in the country. More than 200,000 gray bats and about 5,000 Indiana bats have been documented using this site. The acquisition of this site is important to the recovery of these bats and will allow for long-term protection of this location from human disturbance.

Texas

Whooping Crane Wintering Habitat (Calhoun County, TX): \$404,750. The project will acquire a conservation easement on 2,035 acres of the J. Cliburn Ranch, an area of coastal marsh that is optimal habitat for the endangered whooping crane and brown pelican, and the threatened piping plover. Increasing commercial and residential development pressures within, and adjacent to, currently used whooping crane habitat in Calhoun County make the need for habitat protection measures paramount for the recovery of these species.

Long Ranch (Bastrop County, TX): \$564,750. Environmental Defense and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department will acquire a conservation easement on approximately 550 acres of designated critical habitat for the Houston toad (Long Ranch) adjacent to Bastrop State Park. This conservation easement will eliminate the threat of subdivision and other detrimental land uses, ensuring landowner commitment to management strategies that will aid in recovery of the Houston toad.

Utah

White Dome Nature Reserve (Washington County, UT): \$400,000. This project builds on two past grant awards permanently protecting an 800 acre ecosystem complex called White Dome in Washington County, Utah. The proposed reserve contains approximately 20 percent of the known populations of the endangered dwarf bear poppy, which is only known from seven populations in Washington County. The project also will protect habitats for Siler pincushion cactus, a rare plant endemic to the Utah/Arizona border area. The habitat for both the dwarf bear poppy and Siler pincushion cactus in Utah is threatened with rapid urbanization. Desert tortoises are also known to be found on the site.

Virginia

Purchase of Lee County Cave Isopod Habitat, Gallohan-Surgener Cave System – Lee County, Virginia – (\$154,000): This grant will contribute towards the purchase of two tracts totaling 290 acres in Lee County, Virginia. The acquisition will permanently protect two significant natural communities and the suite of rare terrestrial, subterranean and aquatic species that occur there, including the endangered Lee County Cave isopod. This acquisition will

contribute to the recovery of the Lee County Cave isopod by protecting the Gallohan-Surgener cave system, which includes one of only four known populations of the species.

Purchase of Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Habitat, Big Woods Conservation Area – Sussex County, Virginia – (\$550,000): This grant will contribute to the purchase of approximately 610 acres and will become part of a new State Wildlife Management Area in Sussex County, Virginia. The property will receive permanent protection, and will be managed to maintain, enhance or restore the pine-savannah natural community, habitat for the endangered red-cockaded woodpecker. This purchase will expand the land actively managed for the woodpecker and will increase the likelihood of achieving the minimum recovery goal of ten active clusters in Virginia.

Wisconsin

***Prairie Bush Clover Recovery Land Acquisition** (Grant County, WI): \$88,355. The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources will use this grant to help acquire 170 acres located in Grant County that will contribute to the recovery of the prairie bush clover. This site contains the second largest prairie bush clover population and the largest amount of existing and potential habitat in Wisconsin. Additionally, the site contains five state-threatened plant species, as well as two species of special concern.

* Indicates partial funding awarded