

News Release



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Secretary Salazar Announces Presidential Migratory Bird Federal Stewardship Award to Bureau of Land Management

Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar announced today that Interior's Bureau of Land Management is the recipient of the Presidential Migratory Bird Federal Stewardship Award, in recognition of the agency's Restore New Mexico initiative.

Led by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Council for the Conservation of Migratory Birds, composed of many federal agencies with migratory bird responsibilities, chose the winner of the Presidential award. The award will be presented to BLM at Environment for the Americas' International Migratory Bird Day recognition event tonight at the Mexican Cultural Institute in Washington, DC.

"I congratulate the Bureau of Land Management for its leadership in bringing together diverse partners to make a difference for migratory birds and other wildlife," said Secretary Salazar. "From the many partners and ranchers who work with the BLM to restore degraded grasslands, to the energy companies implementing voluntary conservation measures, BLM's Restore New Mexico's effort to improve habitat conditions on public and private lands across New Mexico serves as a model for how we can accomplish large scale restoration efforts."

Initiated in 2005, Restore New Mexico goal is to restore degraded and fragmented habitats, impaired watersheds and native vegetation on a landscape basis through an aggressive partnership approach for wildlife and other benefits. What began as a concept expanded into a significant and regionally important restoration and reclamation program involving numerous Federal and State agencies, conservation organizations, industry groups, and private landowners – over 300 different partners have participated in the effort.

"Collaboration is one of the cornerstones of the BLM's work. From grassroots organizations to national groups, the BLM depends on its many conservation partnerships," said Mike Pool, BLM Deputy Director. "Unprecedented community support and collaboration with private landowners, industry groups, and conservation organizations have made Restore New Mexico a resounding success."

Landscape restoration in Restore New Mexico is focused on controlling invasive brush species. BLM and partners have treated over 1.8 million acres of impaired habitat, beginning the shift to healthy ecological conditions. As a southern border state, many of New Mexico's migratory birds winter in Mexico or beyond, returning to New Mexico for their breeding season. Other migratory birds use the newly restored grasslands in southern New Mexico for their wintering grounds when their northern breeding grounds are under snow. Restore New Mexico is providing better habitat conditions and fewer disturbances for a wide variety of migratory birds visiting New Mexico from elsewhere, including beyond the borders of the United States.

“The presentation of the 2012 Presidential Migratory Bird Federal Stewardship Award at the International Migratory Bird Day celebration and recognition event in the nation's capital calls attention to the key role partners and landowners can play in helping to ensure healthy habitats for migratory birds.” said Susan Bonfield, executive director of Environment for the Americas.

The Council for the Conservation of Migratory Birds, which is supported by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, includes representation from the Departments of the Interior, State, Commerce, Agriculture, Transportation, Energy, Defense, and the Environmental Protection Agency and is open to all Federal agencies whose activities may directly or indirectly affect migratory bird populations. Website link here to council and award information. The award was created to recognize significant contributions to the implementation of Presidential Executive Order 13186. The Presidential Order created the Council for the Conservation of Migratory Birds.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals, and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/usfws, follow our tweets at www.twitter.com/usfwshq, watch our YouTube Channel at <http://www.youtube.com/usfws> and download photos from our Flickr page at <http://www.flickr.com/photos/usfwshq>.

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