

Working Lands for Wildlife



2012 State Technical Committee Briefing

Overview

Working Lands for Wildlife is a partnership between NRCS and USFWS that will demonstrate that productive working lands are compatible with the needs of at-risk wildlife species.

WLFW – State Briefing

Objectives

- Restore populations of declining wildlife species.
- Provide farmers, ranchers, and forest managers regulatory predictability – They will not incur a regulatory burden as a result of implementing conservation.
- Restore and protect the productive capacity of working lands.

WLFW – State Briefing

WHIP Funding

- \$33M FA Nationwide

WORKING LANDS FOR WILDLIFE -- Species

Species	Status	Focal Area Locations
Gopher Tortoise <i>Western Population:</i> <i>Eastern Population:</i>	Threatened Candidate	Louisiana, Mississippi Alabama, Florida, Georgia, South Carolina
Bog Turtle	Threatened	Connecticut, Delaware, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania
Golden-Winged Warbler	At-Risk	Georgia, Kentucky, Maryland, New Jersey, New York, North Carolina, Pennsylvania, Tennessee, Virginia, West Virginia
Greater Sage Grouse	Candidate	California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, North Dakota, South Dakota, Oregon, Utah, Washington, Wyoming
Lesser Prairie Chicken	Candidate	Colorado, Kansas, Oklahoma, New Mexico, Texas
New England Cottontail	Candidate	Connecticut, Maine, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New York, Rhode Island
Southwestern Willow Flycatcher	Endangered	Arizona, California, Colorado, Nevada, New Mexico, Utah

FY2012 Focal Areas

Rangewide
Distribution for
Species of Interest

DRAFT

Species Ranges

- New England Cottontail
- Gopher Tortoise
- Lesser Prairie-Chicken
- Southwestern Willow Flycatcher
- Golden-Winged Warbler (Appalachia)
- Bog Turtle
- Greater Sage-Grouse

Species Selection Criteria

- Viable core habitat areas remain.
- Conservation on private lands has potential to influence outcomes.
- Species management needs are compatible with sustainable agricultural and forestry practices.
- Existing partnerships with Federal, State, and private partners are in place.
- ESA predictability tools in place or underway.
- Species serves as an umbrella / indicator.

Gopher Tortoise Focal Area



Conservation Practices

NRCS worked with USFWS to identify conservation practices needed to provide habitat benefit.

Gopher Tortoise

Core Practices
643 - Restoration & Management of Rare & Declining Habitats
645 - Upland Wildlife Habitat Management
647 - Early Successional Habitat Development/Management

Gopher Tortoise

Supporting Practices

314 - Brush Management

315 - Herbaceous Weed Control

327 - Conservation Cover

338 - Prescribed Burning

394 - Fire Break

422 - Hedgerow planting

490 - Tree / Shrub Site Preparation

512 - Forage & Biomass Planting

528 - Prescribed Grazing

550 - Range Planting

612 - Tree / Shrub Establishment

655 - Forest Trails and Landings

666 - Forest Stand Improvement

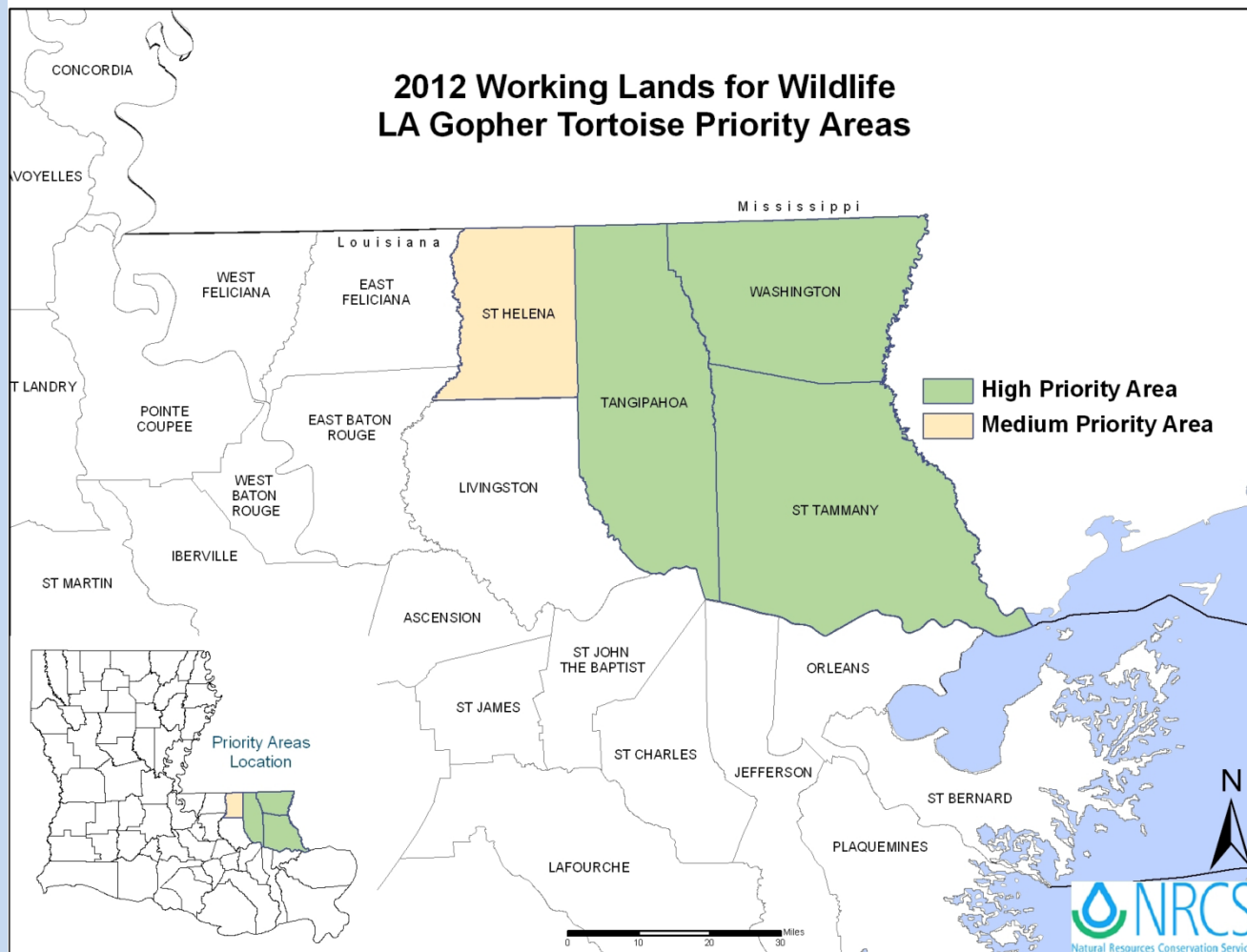
Screening

Screening Criteria

- High: Applications in the Focal Areas.
- Medium: Outside the Focal Area – Provide probable benefit to the species
- Low:
 - No Core Practice planned
 - Any other application

Screening – High and Medium Priority

- The green area is the “Focal Area” and is pre-screened High priority.
- The tan area would be considered Medium priority.



Ranking Criteria

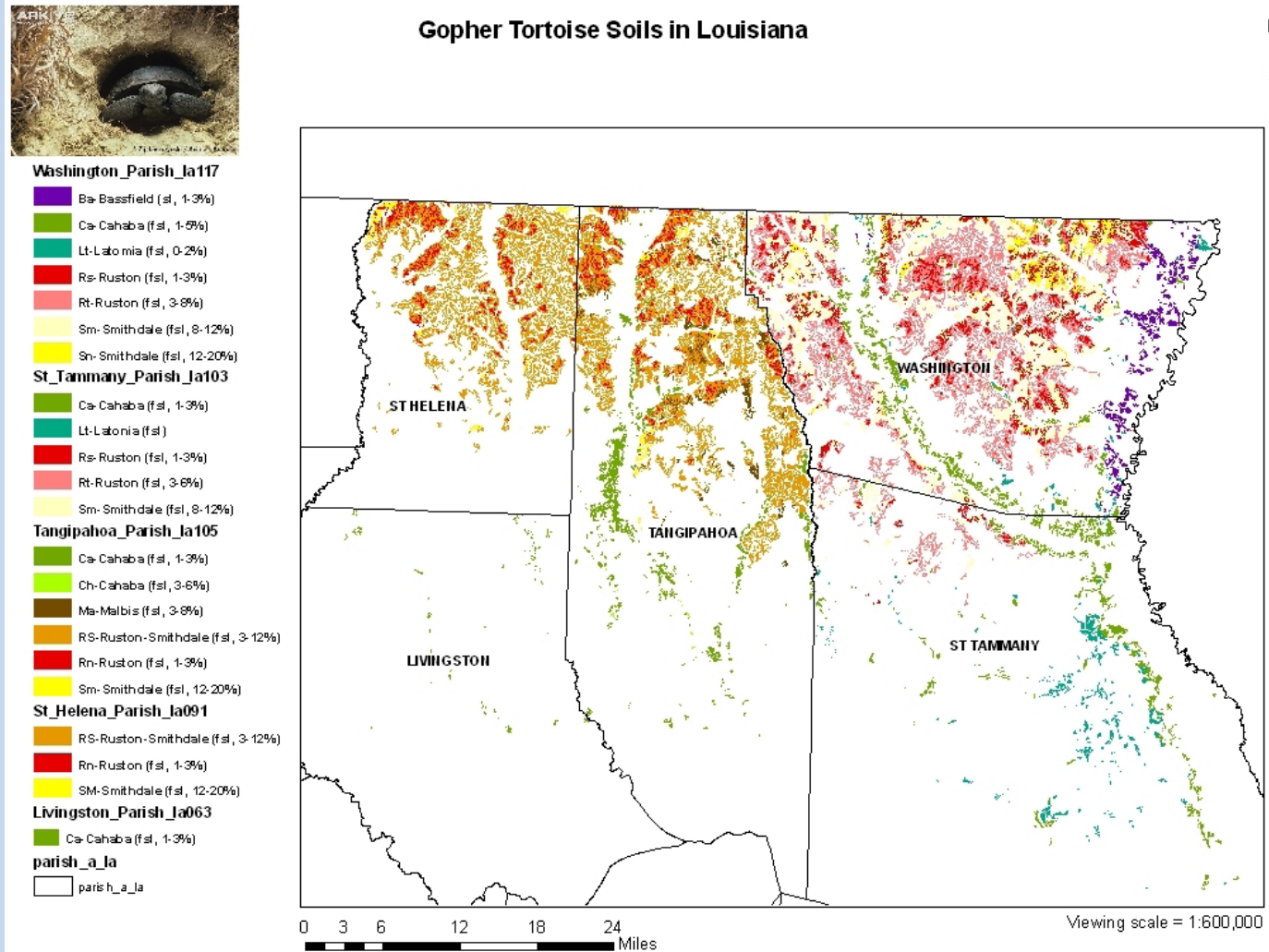
Ranking Criteria

- State consistent criteria established for each species by National biologist in consultation with USFWS
- Local criteria established by the States in consultation with State Wildlife Agency, USFWS, with concurrence of State Technical Committee

Ranking Criteria

State Collaboration

Points may be assigned to give priority to species presence, proximity, site suitability, habitat establishment, management, etc.



Monitoring and Evaluation

- Wildlife Key Performance Measures (KPM) will capture acres and location of habitat meeting quality criteria (core practices applied)
- USFWS and partners may contribute to additional monitoring efforts

Certainty

- Lessens confusion and conflict around a species with legal protection.
- Increases landowner confidence that implementation of conservation benefiting targeted species will not incur a regulatory burden.

Expected Outcomes

- More conservation on private lands
- Increased habitat for targeted species
- Increased habitat for non-targeted species
- Certainty agreements
- Environmental services provided

Application Periods

- **Period 1 – April 30, 2012**
 - All eligible applications received by the application cutoff date of **April 30, 2012** will be assigned a priority and ranked as needed.
- **Period 2 – May 30, 2012**
 - If funds are available and if NHQ determines that a second application cutoff date is needed, the second ranking cut-off date will be **May 30, 2012**.

Working Lands for Wildlife

- Review of Ranking Criteria
- Questions and Discussion