

# The Land and Water Conservation Fund

2008



# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Blackfoot River

Special Recreation Management Area (BLM)

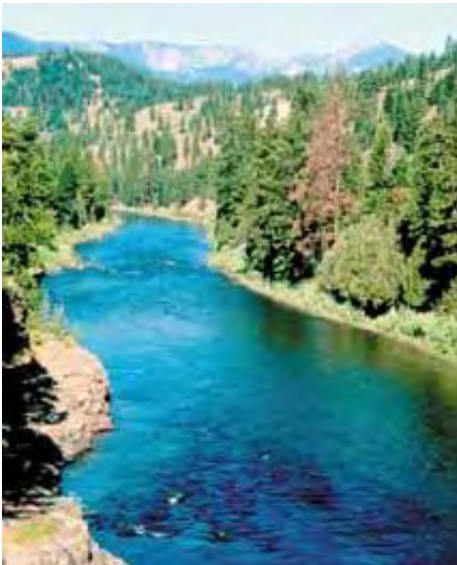
Montana

## FY 2008 Project

1,280 acres

\$1 million

This project supports Montana's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



The Blackfoot River



Threatened bull trout

## Importance

The Blackfoot River SRMA includes nearly 15,000 acres along the Blackfoot River and is used for non-motorized boating, fishing, rock climbing, hiking, camping, picnicking and hunting. Diverse wildlife, including big game as well as threatened and endangered species, thrive in the wetland, riparian, grassland, and forested ecosystems. Current management is focused on increasing threatened bull trout populations by restoring important habitat within the management area.

The Blackfoot River watershed is located within the Northern Continental Divide Ecosystem and serves as a "southern bookend" for the Yellowstone Conservation Initiative. The watershed is a key buffer and linkage area for wildlife moving to and from the Bob Marshall/Scapegoat Wilderness Complex, along the Continental Divide and between the Clark Fork River drainage and Garnet Range.



Threatened gray wolf



Columbian sharp-tailed grouse

### Public Use Opportunities

The Blackfoot River SRMA includes 14,720 acres along the Blackfoot River and is used for non-motorized boating, fishing, rock climbing, hiking, camping, picnicking and hunting.



Bobcat

### Defenders of Wildlife

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Long-billed curlew

### Threat

Acquisition of the proposed area will preserve existing natural resources, improve connectivity between vital ecosystems, and protect river quality from the threat of development and associated fragmentation of private lands.

### Support

This acquisition plan is strongly supported by the 'Blackfoot Challenge', a nonprofit organization of agencies, conservation groups, and private landowners that work to protect the area. Other cooperators and supporters include the Montana Land Reliance, Five Valleys Land Trust, and the Montana Department of Fish, Wildlife, and Parks.



For more information

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## FY 2008 Project

1000 acres (est.)

\$2 million



Threatened bald eagle

The Refuge was established in 1933 as a haven for ducks and geese migrating along the Atlantic Flyway. It now supports over 280 species of birds, 35 species of reptiles and amphibians, and large mammals such as white-tailed deer, foxes, and otters.



**Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge** is currently over 27,000 acres. The mix of fresh and saltwater make Blackwater one of the most productive marshes on the east coast.

# Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge

Maryland



Endangered Delmarva fox squirrel

## Importance

The Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge is located along the Chesapeake Bay in Maryland. Blackwater is a bald eagle magnet, concentrating over 200 bald eagles at a time (the largest population on the Atlantic coast north of Florida) and is home to over 60,000 ducks and geese each winter and the endangered Delmarva fox squirrel. Chesapeake Bay was designated a “Wetlands Complex of International Importance” by the RAMSAR convention, and Blackwater NWR, an Important Bird Area by American Bird Conservancy.

The primary goals of Blackwater NWR are to protect habitat for endangered species, to support healthy populations of fish, wintering waterfowl, and migratory birds, and to maintain a healthy and diverse ecosystem with a full range of natural processes and vegetation communities. Another priority is to support waterfowl population numbers sufficient to meet the objectives of several conservation plans, including the North American Waterfowl Management plan and the Management Plan for Canada Geese in Maryland.



Indigo bunting

### Public Use Opportunities

include birdwatching, hiking, biking, fishing, crabbing, trapping, hunting, boating, environmental education, and nature photography.



### Habitat

The plant communities in the Refuge include forested wetlands, swamps, hardwood, loblolly pine, Atlantic white cedar forests, freshwater ponds, and grasslands. Blackwater NWR alone accounts for one-third of all Maryland's tidal wetlands.

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Canada geese

### Threat

Intense development pressures surround the Refuge, including a 3,200-home and golf course construction project. This land conversion is threatening the ability of the Refuge to protect the diverse habitats that sustain wildlife, maintain water quality, provide flood and erosion control and groundwater recharge. Loss of suitable woodland habitat is the major factor in the decline of the Delmarva fox squirrel, a species now severely restricted and isolated to 10% of its former range in Maryland. Land acquisition and forest management programs at the Refuge are essential to the recovery of this endangered species.

### Support

The current land acquisition project will contribute to the goals of several large-scale conservation plans: the Nanticoke River BioReserve Strategic Plan, Maryland Rural Legacy Plan, Chesapeake Bay Waterfowl Policy and Management Plan, Smith Island Environmental Restoration and Protection Plan, Marsh Restoration, Harriet Tubman Special Resources Study Act, and the Dorchester County Comprehensive Management Plan.



For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Cape May National Wildlife Refuge

New Jersey

## FY 2008 Project

450 acres

\$1.5 million

This project supports  
New Jersey's  
State Wildlife Action Plan

Virtually the entire North American Red knot population gathers along the Delaware Bay each May to rest and fuel up on horseshoe crab eggs before continuing their migration to Arctic breeding grounds. Red knots rely on horseshoe crab spawning season coinciding with this stopover since they, incredibly, only stop once along their long migration route. In recent times, human overfishing has caused horseshoe crab egg numbers to crash, causing a similar precipitous decline in Red knots.



juvenile Little blue heron



Red knot with ruddy turnstones

## Importance

A variety of habitats are found within Cape May National Wildlife Refuge, including salt marsh, forested upland, forested wetland, vernal pools, hardwood swamp, maritime forest, tidal ponds, Atlantic Ocean beachfront, bog, shrub/scrub, and grasslands. The 5 miles of Delaware Bay shoreline is incredibly valuable for countless migratory birds, including red knots, plovers, sandpipers, herons, terns, songbirds, and hawks, eagles, and falcons. Cape May is internationally known for its unparalleled concentrations of migratory birds each fall. Visitors from across the globe come to witness the spectacle. However, many of these same birds rest and feed on the Cape May peninsula each spring during their northbound migration to Canada or the Arctic.

Because nearly 80 percent of some bird species populations rely on it, the Delaware Bay shoreline is recognized internationally as a major shorebird staging area in North America, second only to the Copper River Delta in Alaska. In 1992, the Delaware Bay Estuary was designated a Wetland of International Importance under the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, otherwise known as the Ramsar Convention.



Federally-threatened piping plover

The refuge is home to a variety of New Jersey state-listed species including ospreys, short-eared owls, barred owls, red-shouldered hawks, grasshopper sparrows, little blue herons, red-headed woodpeckers, sedge wrens, yellow-crowned night-herons, northern harriers, black rails, southern gray tree frogs, Eastern tiger and mud salamanders, corn snakes and northern pine snakes. Federally listed wildlife includes bald eagles, peregrine falcons, piping plovers, and swamp pink, a unique lily.



Delaware Bay

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Horseshoe crab

### **Threats**

Sprawl and continuing development, including roads, strip malls, and housing threaten habitat all along the Jersey Shore. The majority of the refuge is surrounded by forests and emergent wetlands that are considered top priorities by New Jersey's State Wildlife Action Plan.

Connecting intact habitat, especially wetlands that are important to migratory birds, through land acquisition is essential to sustaining healthy wildlife populations for years to come. Acquisition of this parcel will achieve greater connectivity and unite the refuge with state lands, allowing wildlife to migrate between protected habitats.



For more information

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# Land & Water

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FY 2008

# Carrizo Plains National Monument (BLM)

California

## FY 2008 Project

**320 acres**

**\$500,000**

**This project supports  
California's State Wildlife  
Action Plan**



Endangered California jewelflower

The Carrizo Plains National Monument is home to at least 13 plant and animal species that are state or federally listed as endangered. Tule deer and pronghorn, previously hunted to near extinction, have been reintroduced and are thriving once again in their native habitat.



Sandhill crane

## **Importance**

The Carrizo Plains National Monument is a 250,000-acre grassland and scenic mountain preserve that contains the last remaining undeveloped remnant of the San Joaquin Valley ecosystem. The Carrizo Plain is culturally important to Native Americans and provides critical habitat for one of the largest assemblages of threatened and endangered species surviving on any public lands in the United States, and includes the blunt-nosed leopard lizard, San Joaquin kit fox, giant kangaroo rat, Kern primrose sphinx moth, longhorn fairy shrimp, vernal pool fairy shrimp, California jewelflower, San Joaquin woolly threads, and the San Joaquin antelope squirrel. Soda Lake, the largest alkali wetland remaining in Southern California, provides important habitat for migratory birds, including shorebirds, waterfowl and a quarter of the state's wintering Sandhill crane population.

The Monument was identified as a Threatened and Endangered Species Management Area due to the large expanse of intact habitat and the large number of state and federally listed plant and animal species present.





Courtesy of Paul Opler

Endangered Kern primrose sphinx moth

### Public Use Opportunities

The Monument's diversity and proximity to over 20 million people living in Southern and Central California attracts thousands of people every year that enjoy wildlife observation, hiking, biking, horseback riding, hunting, camping, and fishing.



Endangered bluntnose leopard lizard

In addition to providing habitat for a large concentration of endangered species, the Monument also boasts dramatic geology and a rich cultural past: Native American cultural sites and rock art that is thousands of years old.

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Endangered San Joaquin kit fox

### Threat

Despite past human use, the size, isolation, and relatively undeveloped nature of the area make it ideal for long-term conservation of the dwindling flora and fauna characteristic of the San Joaquin Valley region.

The San Joaquin Valley's grasslands have been almost completely eliminated by agricultural, urban, and industrial development, and the Monument represents what little is remaining of this biologically productive ecosystem. Today it is threatened by oil and gas development, urban and agricultural development, and incompatible uses on the inholdings within the Monument. The acquisition of inholdings and adjacent lands, and subsequent habitat restoration, is essential to the sustainability of the Monument as an ecosystem. The primary reason for the decline of the Monument's endangered species is habitat loss, particularly for the San Joaquin kit fox. The native vegetation supports the fox's prey, provides protection from predators and essential habitat for denning. Without adding additional habitat through land acquisition and restoration, the kit fox has very little chance of recovering.



For more information

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# Land & Water

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# Cascade Checkerboard

Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest

Washington

## FY 2008 Project

1,600 acres

\$2 million

This project supports  
Washington's State Wildlife  
Action Plan



Threatened Northern spotted owl

The proposed lands include the headwaters of the Green River, which provides habitat for both migrating salmon and steelhead.



Marmot

Acquisition of these lands will also provide permanent protection for segments of the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail.



Mt. Baker

## Importance

The Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest is located in northwestern Washington, extending more than 140 miles along the Cascade Mountains from the Canadian border to Mt. Ranier National Park. The three proposed land parcels are along the crest of the Cascade Mountains in the National Forest. One of the most visited national forests in the country, the forest provides important habitat for many endangered, threatened, and sensitive species such as the northern spotted owl, marbled murrelet, grizzly bear, steelhead, salmon, bull trout, and mountain lion. The rich biodiversity is supported by diverse habitats, including glaciers, tundra, alpine lakes, old-growth forests, volcanoes, wild and scenic rivers, and mountain meadows.

In addition to providing valuable habitat for fish and wildlife, the proposed lands create vital connectivity within a "checkerboard" pattern of protected lands. Not only do wildlife suffer from fragmented habitat, but fragmented forestlands are more difficult and expensive to manage with respect to fire suppression, invasive species control, public access, and protection of natural resources and wildlife. Thus, acquisition of the current project areas have long been a Forest Service priority.



Endangered marbled murrelet

### Public Use Opportunities

include wildlife observation, rafting, horseback riding, mountain climbing, hiking, hunting, camping, and fishing.



Bobcat

While public support for the National Forests is a definite positive, the roads and highways that provide access to enthusiasts are also significant barriers to wildlife passage and migration, and are therefore sites of frequent road-kills. Additional fragmentation of the area must be avoided.

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Mountain lion

### Threat

The project areas lie within Kittitas and King counties, the latter being the 12<sup>th</sup> most populous U.S. county with 1.7 million people. It is also within a 70- mile drive for 3.5 million residents, or 62% of the state's population. An additional 1.5 million residents of Vancouver, British Columbia also have easy access to the National Forest. Explosive population growth over the last 20 years has created high demand for the beautifully forested areas of the Cascade Mountains. If not acquired by the Forest Service, the proposed lands will be subdivided and developed, which will further fragment forest lands and wildlife habitat. Private development of these lands will also place people and private property at risk from catastrophic wildfires, which will be more challenging and expensive to suppress. Acquisition of these lands will also provide protection for large areas of valuable old-growth forests and watersheds that supply drinking water to millions of people.



For more information

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# Cascade Siskiyou National Monument (BLM)

Oregon

## FY 2008 Project

**1,990 acres**

**\$1.8 million**

This project supports Oregon's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



Peregrine falcon

This 53,000 acre national monument provides an incredibly diverse array of habitats for the wildlife dependent on this relatively intact area.



Mountain lion



Cascade mountain range, Oregon

## Importance

The 53,000 acre Cascade Siskiyou National Monument was established in 2000 to protect one of the most diverse ecosystems in North America: where the Cascade, Siskiyou and Klamath mountain ranges converge. Habitats composed of fir forests, oak groves, wildflower meadows, and steep canyons are homes to a rare diversity of butterflies, unique fish and mollusks, kangaroo rats, pygmy nuthatches, mountain lions, rough-skinned newts, Cascade frogs, and many uncommon plants. Over 200 species of birds, including Northern spotted owls, great gray owls, peregrine falcons and willow flycatchers are also found here. The survival of this region's incredible biodiversity depends upon maintaining the ecological integrity and connectivity of the areas within and surrounding the park.



Rough-skinned newt

### Public Use Opportunities

The Cascade Siskiyou National Monument is available for climbing, hiking, biking, boating, camping, and wildlife observation.



Willow flycatcher

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Threatened Northern spotted owl

### Threat

Approximately 32,000 acres of private land are interspersed within the Monument lands, creating a checkerboard pattern of private and public lands and potentially complex boundary management issues.

Roads, jeep trails, boundary adjustments, cattle grazing, logging, and insufficient funds to acquire privately inholdings from willing sellers all threaten the biological integrity of the Cascade Siskiyou NM. The purchase of vulnerable public lands within the Monument lands would help protect important ecosystems from further development while securing essential biological corridors for wildlife and plants.

For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge

Iowa

## FY 2008 Project

250 acres

\$500,000

This project supports Iowa's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



Courtesy of Gary Tonhouse

Threatened Northern monkshood

Driftless Area NWR was established in 1989 to support the recovery of the endangered Iowa Pleistocene snail and the northern monkshood flower. At least eight other snail species, considered relics from the last glacial period, are also protected on the Refuge.



American woodcock



Endangered Iowa Pleistocene snail

## Importance

The Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge consists of scattered tracts of land in northeast Iowa that include upland hardwood forests, grasslands, stream and riparian habitats, and extremely unique algific talus (cold air, loose rock) slopes. This habitat is rare and dates back to the end of the last glacial period. The refuge was established to protect and recover the endangered Iowa Pleistocene snail and the threatened northern monkshood (a delicate violet wildflower), which both make their living on the talus slopes. Thought to be extinct until re-discovered in 1955, the Iowa Pleistocene snail occurs nowhere else in the world except in 37 algific talus slopes in Iowa and Illinois.

When the proposed acquisition is completed, at least 70 percent of the known northern monkshood population and 75 percent of the known population of the Iowa Pleistocene snail will be protected. Protection of algific talus slopes may help prevent the need to list other rare wildlife and plants of the area as threatened or endangered.



White-tailed deer

**Habitat**

Algific slopes support Iowa Pleistocene snails, the northern monkshood, and other unusual species. These steep slopes are comprised of talus at the base and are connected to upslope sinkhole drainage systems.



Algific talus slopes

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Wild turkey

**Threat**

The physical and biological composition of the algific talus slopes creates a very specific microclimate that both the endangered snail and flower depend on. This very rare habitat cannot be restored once lost, therefore protecting the remaining habitat is essential to the recovery of these species. The most immediate habitat threats include logging, livestock grazing and trampling, quarrying, road building, sinkhole filling and contamination, human foot traffic, and misapplication of pesticides. Critical areas are sometimes being fenced to prevent grazing and human foot traffic.

Additional habitat and fencing is needed, as well as continued monitoring to determine population status and extent of threats. Refuge expansion would also provide protection for at least eight other rare snail species and three rare plant species that depend on the algific talus slopes found on Driftless Area National Wildlife Refuge.

For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Eastern Shore of Virginia National Wildlife Refuge

Virginia

## FY 2008 Project

30 acres

\$2.1 million

This project supports Virginia's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



Monarch butterfly

The refuge and the surrounding area provides a rich diversity of habitats that are vitally important to a large number of wildlife species, including migratory butterflies, songbirds, and hawks, eagles, and falcons.



Yellow warbler



Migrating snow geese

## Importance

The Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR is located at the tip of one of the most heavily trafficked 'migration highways' in North America, the Delmarva Peninsula. Millions of birds funnel together at the end of the Peninsula each fall. The refuge includes maritime forest, myrtle and bayberry thickets, extensive grasslands, croplands, tidal marsh, and fresh and brackish ponds that are important to a great diversity of wildlife species. Each fall, thousands of raptors and millions of songbirds and monarch butterflies visit the refuge to rest and feed until favorable wind and weather conditions permit them to continue their southward journey.

Management efforts are focused on protecting, restoring, and enhancing habitat for forest and shrub-dependent migratory birds. The best way to protect and enhance the migration corridor is by preserving, acquiring, and restoring native vegetation to the area. Increasing the amount of hardwoods, shrublands, and grasslands through this acquisition will provide additional sources of essential high-quality food and cover for birds and other wildlife.





American kestrel

### **Wildlife on The Refuge**

A great diversity of species, including clouds of monarch butterflies, bald eagles, brown pelicans, peregrine falcons, American kestrels, and Northern diamond-backed terrapins inhabit the refuge's vital landscapes.



Loblolly pine

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Brown pelican

### **Threats**

The Eastern Shore of Virginia NWR lies within a high-priority area as designated by the Virginia State Wildlife Action Plan.

Development continues to threaten the areas surrounding the refuge that provides critical stopover areas for migrating wildlife. The acquisition parcel includes part of the peninsula's lower tip, which will connect the refuge to state property to the north and protect critical ecosystems such as forested and shrubland wildlife habitat. Acquisition of the parcel of land between the Chesapeake Bay and Route 13 would eliminate the risk of fragmentation since it joins the western and eastern sides of the refuge.



For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund  
FY 2008

# Flathead National Forest

Montana

## FY 2008 Project

**9000 acres**

**\$6 million**



Threatened bull trout

Flathead NF currently includes over one million acres of designated Wilderness including the Swan River, which supports one of the very few stable populations remaining of the threatened bull trout.



Grizzly bear

The current project areas lie within the grizzly bear linkage zones established by the Swan Valley Conservation Agreement.



## Importance

The Flathead National Forest in northwestern Montana is currently over 2.3 million acres and extends south from the international border approximately 120 miles. Wetlands and mountain ranges sculpted by ancient glaciers and now covered with a healthy, diverse forest provide habitat for approximately 250 species of wildlife and 22 species of fish. This includes the threatened Canada lynx, bald eagle, bull trout, gray wolf, and the grizzly bear. In fact, the Swan River Valley is one of the largest and best strongholds for grizzly bears and Canada lynx in the entire nation.

The long-term viability of wildlife populations in the Flathead NF depends on the formation of habitat corridors to connect the fragmented lands within the Forest. The now checkerboard-patterned land ownership of the Swan River Valley is a high-priority target for land acquisition, because public ownership will create and protect corridors linking the Bob Marshall and Mission Mountain wilderness areas. Critical to grizzly bears, moose, elk, deer, black bears, mountain lions, and many other wildlife species, the publicly-owned corridors will greatly enhance coordinated resource management and recreational access in the Flathead NF.



Threatened Canada lynx

**Public Use Opportunities:**

Wildlife observation and photography, river rafting, skiing, hiking, hunting, camping, and fishing



One of Montana's most productive forested valleys, the Swan River Valley contains an extensive system of high-quality wetland habitats.

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Wolverine

**Threat**

Located in one of the fastest growing counties in Montana, the highly scenic area of the Swan River Valley is under intense pressure for residential development. Public ownership of land in the Swan River Valley is essential to the long-term sustainability of many of the area's federally endangered and threatened species, in addition to maintaining the views and "wilderness feel" that many people moving to the area are in search of. Development of these lands would not only destroy and fragment much needed habitat for vulnerable species, but it would also significantly reduce recreational opportunities in the Forest, and set the stage for potentially dangerous conflicts between humans and wildlife. Public ownership of these lands will also allow the Forest Service to manage the forest and its resources in a more efficient and cost-effective manner. This acquisition plan involves strong local, state, and national support for both funding and implementation.



For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Leslie Canyon National Wildlife Refuge

Arizona

## FY 2008 Project

**10,000 acres**

**\$1.7 million**

This project supports Arizona's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



Endangered Yaqui chub

In the late 1800's, farming, mining, and livestock production out competed eight native fishes for the area's limited water. As a result, the water table lowered, ecosystems were severely changed, and many local species went extinct. Leslie Canyon NWR protects the remaining habitat from further destruction.



Gray fox



## Importance

The Leslie Canyon National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1988 to protect water resources and provide habitat for endangered fish. The refuge also preserves a rare velvet ash-cottonwood-black willow forest and contains rough mountainous terrain dominated by shrubs and desert grasses. Especially important is Leslie Creek, which provides a dependable water source in the middle of the refuge's arid environment, and the unique and valuable riparian forest associated with the creek. The refuge is extremely important to endangered fishes, including Yaqui chub and Yaqui topminnow, and imperiled birds, including Southwest willow flycatchers, golden eagles, and countless migratory songbirds.

The proposed acquisition includes a riparian area in the southeast corner of Arizona and happens to be the last piece of the planned acquisition. The land would become the northern part of the refuge.



Jackrabbit

### Public Use Opportunities

Leslie Canyon NWR is one of the best bird watching areas in the nation. Visitors can also participate in hunting, nature photography, and wildlife observation and study.



Southwest willow flycatcher

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Mule deer

### Threat

In the late 1800's, farming, mining, and livestock production competed with eight native fishes for the area's limited and precious water. As a result, the water table lowered, springs dried up, ecosystems were severely changed, and many local species went extinct. Yaqui topminnows were restored to Leslie Creek in the 1970's and the population is now one of only eight in the entire United States. Leslie Canyon NWR protects what valuable habitat remains from further destruction.

The current threats to the Yaqui topminnow and Yaqui chub include habitat loss due to human alteration of aquatic habitat, including water source manipulation and groundwater pumping that alter spring and stream flows. The acquisition would benefit these endangered fish by protecting key streams, riparian forests and other habitats, from further destruction.



For more information

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# Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Texas

## FY 2008 Project

**600 acres**

**\$3.5 million**

This project supports Texas's  
State Wildlife Action Plan

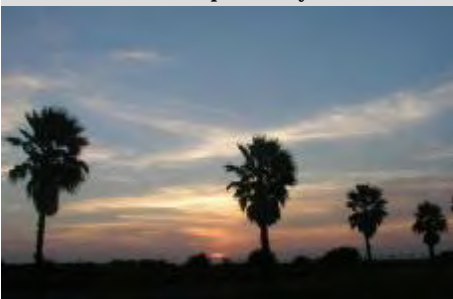


Endangered ocelot



Endangered Northern aplomado falcon

**Endangered & Threatened Species**  
at the Refuge include the ocelot,  
jaguarundi, piping plover, Northern  
aplomado falcon, peregrine falcon,  
Wilson's plover, reddish egret, loggerhead  
sea turtle, and Kemp's Ridley sea turtle.



The Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR is  
located in south Texas. It currently  
consists of 90,000 acres following the last  
275 river miles of the Rio Grande River.  
The Refuge hopes to eventually acquire  
over 132,000 acres.

## Importance

The Lower Rio Grande Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex, including the Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR, Laguna Atascosa NWR and Santa Ana NWR, contains some of the most biologically diverse ecosystems in the continental United States. In fact, the Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR alone comprises 11 distinct biotic communities that are host or home to 1,100 types of plants, 700 vertebrate species (including 484 bird species, the largest number documented for any national wildlife refuge) and over 300 species of butterflies. Two major migratory bird flyways merge at the Refuge, resulting in one of the premier birding refuges in the nation. In addition, at least 17 federally endangered and threatened species occur here.

Because 95% of the vegetation in the Valley has been cleared or dramatically altered, the Refuge Complex is a crucial link in the effort to protect the region's unparalleled biodiversity. The Refuge Complex now exists as scattered fragments of habitat, and acquisition of property to connect these fragments is essential to protect the biological diversity not only in south Texas, but throughout the Americas, given the area's vital role in migration.



Texas Parks and Wildlife Department 2006

Green Jay



Great kiskadee

### Public Use Opportunities

include wildlife observation, nature photography, hiking, canoeing, fishing, and hunting.



### Habitat

Coastal barrier islands, oxbow lakes, desert-like brushlands, riverside woodlands, and caliche hillsides play host to a variety of plant and animal life. Native vegetation includes mesquite, sabal palm, Texas ebony, prickly pear cactus, and Montezuma bald cypress.

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Web: [www.defenders.org](http://www.defenders.org)

### Threat

The cities along the international border in South Texas are booming: McAllen, located at the center of the Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR acquisition boundary, was the 4th fastest growing city in the U.S. during the 1990-2000 census period. This explosive growth is quickly converting ever-dwindling natural habitat and agricultural areas into housing and commercial developments. As surrounding areas succumb to sprawl, endangered species living in the Complex, such as the Northern Aplomado falcon and the ocelot will likely suffer further decline.

### Support

Partners in the corridor project that are actively acquiring or protecting land and habitat by fee simple purchase or easement include Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, National Audubon Society, The Conservation Fund, and the Valley Land Fund. The Lower Rio Grande Valley NWR will be a major partner in the new World Birding Center Complex developed in the area by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department and local communities.



For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Pacific Crest Trail Tejon Ranch

California

## FY 2008 Project

10,000 acres

\$12 million

This project supports California's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



Endangered San Joaquin kit fox

### State and Federally Listed Endangered and Threatened Species In Area

California condor, California spotted owl, San Joaquin kit fox, Mohave ground squirrel, blunt-nosed leopard lizard, California red-legged frog, striped adobe lily, Bakersfield cactus, and Mexican flannelbush



Threatened California red-legged frog



Endangered California condor

## Importance

The Pacific Crest Trail spans 2,650 miles through three western states between Mexico and Canada and is visited by thousands of hikers and equestrians every year. The trail transverses 3 national monuments, 7 national parks, 24 national forests and 33 federally mandated wildernesses, and protects important Western U.S. habitats, including desert, glacier-flanked mountains, meadows, and forests.

The acquisition parcel known as Tejon Ranch, California's largest contiguous private landholding, spans two counties and is adjacent to Angeles National Forest, Sequoia National Forest, Los Padres National Forest, and Windwolves Preserve. The acquisition would protect some of the most environmentally sensitive lands in California, including a unique area where the Mojave Desert, Central Valley, Transversal Mountain Range and Sierra Nevada Range converge.

Acquisition of the ranch is important to protect low-elevation grasslands, oak woodlands and more than 20 state and federally listed threatened and endangered species, including California condors, San Joaquin kit foxes, and California red-legged frogs, the largest native frog in the western United States.





Endangered Bakersfield cactus

### Public Use Opportunities

Currently, the Pacific Crest Trail runs through desert in this area of California since the land with the prime “crest” corridor is privately owned. Acquisition would increase intact habitat, provide connectivity between federal lands, and establish a unique “crest corridor”/ non-desert section to the Pacific Crest Trail that will benefit hikers and equestrians.



Threatened Mohave ground squirrel

### ***Defenders of Wildlife***

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Spotted owl

### **Threat**

The California Wilderness Coalition designated the Teton Ranch as one of California’s top 10 most threatened wild places in 2004. Recently, several sprawling industrial and residential projects have been proposed or approved within the ranch, threatening and fragmenting irreplaceable wildlife habitat that cannot be restored once lost. The acquisition would ensure a continuous corridor between southern California’s Sierras and other mountains as well as preserve the integrity of undeveloped lands and critical habitat for imperiled species.

The connectivity values to wildlife are immense. Acquisition of the property would also reduce current troubling management issues, such as complex boundary management.



For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Pinhook Swamp Wildlife Corridor

Florida

## FY 2008 Project

831 acres

\$1.5 million

This project supports Florida's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



American alligator

The project area will unite the Osceola National Forest and Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge, creating one of the largest protected areas in the eastern United States.



Endangered Florida panther



Threatened Florida black bear

## Importance

The Suwannee River Wildlife Corridor, or Pinhook Swamp, bridges the gap between Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge and the Osceola National Forest, creating one of the largest forested wetland habitat corridors east of the Mississippi River. The ecosystem is a critical stopover for neotropical migrant birds and is home to many endangered plants and federally listed species such as the wood stork, red-cockaded woodpecker, bald eagle, gray bat, indigo snake, and gopher tortoise. It is critical to the state-listed Florida black bear, and is a potential reestablishment area for the critically endangered Florida panther. This wetland ecosystem supports globally significant populations of pond cypress trees, little blue herons, American alligators, Florida sandhill cranes, carpenter frogs, and canebrake rattlesnakes. Protecting sensitive lands in this unique corridor, by including the Pinhook Swamp area as part of the Osceola National Forest, is critical to ensuring the long-term viability of this wetland ecosystem.

The Pinhook Swamp also provides watershed protection for two major rivers, the Suwannee and St. Mary's, that supply water for more than 13 million Floridians and 6.5 million Georgians.



The project area is an irreplaceable ecological treasure that is also a potentially valuable natural recreation area for the 2.6 million people who live within a 2-hour drive.



Endangered Red-cockaded woodpecker

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Sandhill cranes

### **Threat**

With over 1,000 new residents moving to Florida every day, habitat loss and fragmentation are, by far, the greatest threats facing the Florida black bear and many other native species. Without sufficient habitat, bears are not able to find mates, adequate food or denning sites, and may suffer genetic problems associated with inbreeding. Habitat fragmentation caused by highways and development also threatens the future of the black bear, as vehicle-caused mortality is the leading direct cause of death. Connecting the protected areas in northeast Florida and southern Georgia will help not only the Florida black bear, but may create a potentially viable reintroduction site for the critically endangered Florida panther, which now numbers less than 100 individuals in rapidly-growing southern Florida. Additional development on the proposed acquisition site will cause still more habitat destruction and fragmentation, severely hindering recovery efforts for Florida's imperiled species. There is also a potential for mining, logging, and swamp draining that would threaten both the area's ecological integrity and the water quality for millions of people.



For more information

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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund  
FY 2008

# Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge Louisiana

## FY 2008 Project

2,500 acres

\$500,000

This project supports Louisiana's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



White-tailed deer



Threatened Louisiana black bear



River otters

## Importance

The Tensas River National Wildlife Refuge is in the upper basin of the Tensas River in northeast Louisiana and consists of open water, oxbow lakes, woodlands, reforested former agricultural fields, cooperatively farmed croplands, and bottomland cypress and hardwood forests. Over 400 wildlife species call the refuge home, including migratory waterfowl, wading birds, raptors, shorebirds, neotropical songbirds, reptiles, and mammals. Visitors frequently spot American alligators, barred owls, river otters, pileated woodpeckers, and white-tailed deer.

The refuge currently provides habitat for the largest white-tailed deer population in Louisiana, and one of three known populations of the Louisiana black bear, a federally threatened species. The refuge is also important to American history because the "Teddy Bear" was introduced in 1907 after Teddy Roosevelt hunted bear just north of the current refuge boundary.



American alligator

### **Public Use Opportunities**

Visitors can participate in fishing, hunting, wildlife observation, and photography. Numerous trails and two observation towers are present.



Barred owl

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### **Threat**

Loss of millions of acres of bottomland hardwood habitat eliminated the red wolf and Florida panther from the area and, in fact, Tensas River NWR was the last documented home of the Ivory-billed woodpecker until its recently rediscovery at a refuge in eastern Arkansas.

The main threats to the sensitive species remaining on or near the refuge are habitat loss, pollution, urbanization and invasive species. The future of Louisiana black bears in the Tensas River NWR will be largely determined by future management of the Tensas basin and its hardwood forests. The proposed acquisition will bolster the bear population since it will enhance connectivity between protected ecosystems.

Additionally, the refuge is now working on a bottomland hardwood reforestation and carbon sequestration project.



For more information

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Land  
&  
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Conservation Fund

FY 2008

# Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge

Oregon

## FY 2008 Project

625 acres

\$5 million

This project supports Oregon's  
State Wildlife Action Plan



Rainbow trout



Tundra swan



Wapato Lake area

## Importance

The proposed Wapato Lake Unit lies within the lower-middle section of the Tualatin River basin at the northern end of the Willamette Valley. It is separated from the current boundaries of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, located northwest of the Tualatin River and west of Portland. The Wapato Lake area includes rare habitats such as emergent and scrub-shrub wetlands and Oregon ash riparian hardwood forests. These wetland and upland ecosystems are important for migrating and wintering waterfowl, wading birds, shorebirds, breeding neotropical songbirds, raptors, mammals, anadromous fish, reptiles, amphibians and countless invertebrates.

Preserving Wapato Lake habitat will improve watershed health, restore rare native habitats, restore floodplain benefits, enhance the biological diversity of the area, and protect habitat for anadromous fish, including threatened upper Willamette winter run steelhead, coho salmon, and coastal cutthroat trout.



Western pond turtle, species of concern

Acquisition of the proposed Wapato Lake Unit will protect, restore, and develop habitats for federally-listed threatened and endangered species, and may help prevent the listing of existing and future candidate species.



Threatened Northern red-legged frog

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Northern pintails

### **Threat**

The unique wildlife residing within the Wapato Lake Unit share the Willamette Valley, the fastest growing area in Oregon, with more than 70 percent of Oregon's population, the majority of its industry, and almost half of the state's farmland. Wetlands within the Willamette Valley metropolitan areas continue to be lost as the human population increases, compromising not only native plant and animal communities, but water and air quality as well. The acquisition of the historic lake bed area will help reduce further wetland losses, protect unique Oregon ash-hardwood forests, facilitate high quality wildlife-dependent public uses, and improve watershed health and function.

The proposed area is in close proximity to urban environments and acquisition would help increase people's awareness about the importance of local wetlands.



For more information  
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# Land & Water

Conservation Fund

FY 2008

## FY 2008 Project

530 acres

\$1.5 million

This project supports Idaho's  
State Wildlife Action Plan

## Public Use Opportunities

Each year, more than 335,000 visitors enjoy diverse recreational opportunities such as boating, fishing, camping, hiking, hunting, photography and wildlife viewing.



Yellow-billed cuckoo

# Upper Snake River

Area of Critical Environmental Concern (BLM)

Idaho



Threatened bald eagle

## Importance

The Upper Snake ACEC consists of mountains, canyons, meadows, agricultural lands within the Snake River plains, and cottonwood-lined riparian areas with lush understory. It supports a variety of wildlife and has been rated the “most valuable, biodiverse, and unique ecosystem in Idaho” by U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. In fact, the area supports a Federally- endangered snail, the majority of Idaho's bald eagle population, one-third of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem's bald eagle population, and is the only home in Idaho for the Federally-threatened Ute-ladies'-tresses orchid. More than 125 bird species utilize the area, including great blue herons, yellow-billed cuckoos, and threatened bald eagles. The river provides a world famous blue ribbon fishery that supports the largest Yellowstone cutthroat trout population outside of Yellowstone National Park.





Threatened Ute-ladies'-tresses orchid



Yellowstone cutthroat trout



Snake River, Idaho

## **Threat**

Land in the surrounding area is threatened by wildfire, grazing, off-road vehicles, and fragmentation caused by residential and resort development on adjacent private lands. When landscapes are highly fragmented, effective and meaningful habitat protection and restoration is severely compromised. The acquisition of the Upper Snake River ACEC will preserve the integrity and ecological value of the river by increasing connectivity with the Greater Yellowstone ecosystem and by protecting the area from imminent development, while continuing to sustain historic family farming operations.

## **Supporters/Cooperators/Partners**

Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Shoshone- Bannock Tribes, Ducks Unlimited, Trout Unlimited, Greater Yellowstone Coalition, Henrys Fork Foundation, The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Teton Regional Land Trust, Defenders of Wildlife



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