



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

### **Fish and Wildlife Service**

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### **NINETEEN COASTAL WETLANDS CONSERVATION PROJECTS FUNDED BY U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**

Pacific salmon, bald eagles, and waterfowl are just a few of the species that will benefit from \$7.6 million the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is providing for coastal wetlands conservation projects in 10 states and one U.S. territory this year.

The Service makes annual grants to states for projects involving the restoration, protection, or acquisition of coastal wetlands under its National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program. Funding for this program is generated from deposits into the Sport Fish Restoration Account of the Aquatic Resources Trust Fund (Wallop-Breaux), including excise taxes from fishing equipment and motorboat and small engine fuels.

This year's 19 projects involve the acquisition or restoration of about 19,000 acres of coastal wetlands. Many of the projects will complement previous conservation efforts and complete protection of some of this Nation's premier coastal wetland areas.

States receiving funding for this year include Alabama, California, Florida, Mississippi, New Hampshire, Oregon, Texas, Virginia, Washington, and Wisconsin. The U.S. Virgin Islands also will receive a grant.

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In announcing the recipients, Service Director Mollie Beattie said, "These grants help conserve vital coastal wetlands, which not only provide habitat for many wildlife species but in many ways support our livelihood."

Coastal wetlands are an essential habitat for a broad diversity of plants, fish, waterfowl, shorebirds, and mammals, including nearly half of the Nation's endangered and threatened species.

Coastal areas also accommodate the Nation's major ports, commercial and industrial centers, and nearly half of the U.S. population. Coastal resources generate billions of dollars annually through such industries as tourism, transport, and commercial fishing.

Threats to coastal resources include development, agricultural and urban runoff, shoreline modification, municipal waste disposal, oil spills, and over-harvesting of those resources.

Under the Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program, federal matching funds are made available to all coastal states and U.S. territories through a competitive process (except Louisiana, which has its own program). Priority consideration is given to projects involving maritime forests on coastal barrier islands. A total of 26 projects were considered for funding in 1994.

The Service is authorized to fund state coastal wetlands projects under the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act of 1990.

A list of the project sites, descriptions, and cost-sharing amounts is attached.



FISH & WILDLIFE SERVICE

# Facts

U.S. Department of the Interior

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## 1994 Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grants

### ALABAMA

**Gulf Shores:** The Alabama Department of Economic and Community Affairs Programs will acquire 66 acres in the City of Gulf Shores to be included in the Gulf State Park System. The area comprises habitat for endangered and threatened species including the red-cockaded woodpecker and Gulf sturgeon, as well as migratory waterfowl. The project is a cooperative effort among The Alabama Nature Conservancy, the Marine Environmental Sciences Consortium, the City of Gulf Shores, and the Alabama Coastal Foundation.

State Share: \$114,000

Federal Share: \$339,000

### CALIFORNIA

**Camp Three Island:** The California Coastal Conservancy, in cooperation with state, county, and private organizations, will acquire a 1,450-acre diked tidal marsh on Camp Three Island in San Pablo Bay. One of the most important areas of the Pacific Flyway for migratory waterfowl, the area also supports a number of endangered species such as the brown pelican and the California clapper rail. Habitat for estuarine fish, including salmon, will be improved.

State Share: \$500,000

Federal Share: \$500,000

**Eel River Wildlife Area:** The California Department of Fish and Game will acquire 400-acre Cock Robin Island within a coastal barrier for inclusion in its Eel River Wildlife Area. The island represents a vital link in the Pacific Flyway as well as habitat for chinook and coho salmon, steelhead trout, and endangered species such as the brown pelican and peregrine falcon. This is a cooperative project with the Trust for Public Land and others.

State Share: \$347,500

Federal Share: \$347,500

**Napa Marsh:** The California Department of Fish and Game, through a multi-agency acquisition, will manage 10,000 acres of wetlands as part of the Napa Marsh Wildlife Area. It is an important stopover for large numbers of birds migrating along the

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Pacific Flyway, including two-thirds of the West Coast population of canvasback ducks. Endangered and threatened species using the area include the California Clapper rail and the Western snowy plover.

State Share: \$750,000

Federal Share: \$750,000

### **FLORIDA**

**Apalachicola Bay:** The Florida Department of Environmental Protection will acquire Nick's Hole, 17 acres of upland maritime forest on a barrier island, for inclusion in the Apalachicola National Estuarine Research Reserve. The area is a major spawning and nursery ground for shrimp, oysters, finfish, and blue crabs. Its seagrass beds have the highest densities of bottom-living organisms of any coastal area in the continental United States. Nick's Hole is also inhabited by such endangered species as the piping plover and least tern.

State Share: \$200,000

Federal Share: \$600,000

**Bear Point:** The Florida Department of Environmental Protection will acquire and restore 330-acre Bear Point, the largest of a series of nearly contiguous barrier island mangrove swamps. Bear Point comprises habitat for endangered and threatened species, including the wood stork and the West Indian manatee. The project is a cooperative effort among the department, the Florida Communities Trust, the St. Lucie County Mosquito Control District, the South Florida Water Management District, and the Indian River Land Trust.

State Share: \$168,750

Federal Share: \$168,750

### **MISSISSIPPI**

**Hancock County Marshes:** The Mississippi Department of Wildlife, Fisheries and Parks, in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, will acquire 2,500 acres of estuarine wetlands adjacent to Mississippi Sound. Known as the Hancock County Marshes, the area includes a diversity of coastal habitats which support endangered species such as bald eagles and peregrine falcons. It is also a critical stopover for neotropical migrant birds.

State Share: \$500,000

Federal Share: \$625,000

### **NEW HAMPSHIRE**

**Sandy Point:** The New Hampshire Office of State Planning will restore 4.5-acre Sandy Point saltmarsh, located in Great Bay near

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the Squamscott River. The project involves restoring traditional drainage and maintaining bald eagle habitat. It is a cooperative effort with the New Hampshire Department of Fish and Game and Department of Environmental Services, the University of New Hampshire, and the Great Bay Estuarine System Conservation Trust.

State Share: \$8,600

Federal Share: \$8,600

### OREGON

**South Slough:** The Oregon Division of State Lands will restore habitat at four sites within the South Slough National Estuarine Research Reserve. The South Slough estuary provides habitat for endangered species such as the bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and brown pelican, as well as for waterfowl, shorebirds, salmon, and sea-run cutthroat trout.

State Share: \$277,400

Federal Share: \$277,400

### TEXAS

**Boca Chica State Park and Wildlife Management Area:** The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, in cooperation with the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Texas Nature Conservancy, and the Texas General Land Office, will acquire 384 acres of the 12,500-acre Playa del Rio area to be managed as part of the Boca Chica State Park and Wildlife Management Area. The area encompasses a diversity of habitats and supports endangered species including ocelots, piping plovers, and Kemp's ridley sea turtles. The area also provides habitat for a large number of neotropical migrant and subtropical birds as well as waterfowl.

State Share: \$96,000

Federal Share: \$288,000

**Guadalupe Delta Wildlife Management Area:** The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, in partnership with the Fish and Wildlife Service, the Texas General Land Office, and Ducks Unlimited, Inc., will acquire 630 acres for inclusion in the Guadalupe Delta Wildlife Management Area. The delta's diverse habitats support migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, endangered species such as the bald eagle and peregrine falcon, neotropical migrant birds, and various sport finfish and commercial marine invertebrates.

State Share: \$78,750

Federal Share: \$236,250

### VIRGINIA

**Hughlett Point:** The Virginia Department of Conservation and Recreation will acquire 215 acres on the Chesapeake Bay to be

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included in the Virginia Natural Area Preserve System. The area includes habitat of endangered species such as the bald eagle and least tern. It also supports osprey, wintering waterfowl such as black ducks, neotropical migrant birds, and striped bass. The project is a cooperative effort among the Dividing Creek Association, The Nature Conservancy, and the National Audubon Society.

State Share: \$218,075

Federal Share: \$654,225

### **WASHINGTON**

**Bone River Natural Area Preserve:** The Washington Department of Natural Resources will acquire remaining parcels of land within a State Natural Area Preserve which represent one of the most pristine coastal areas in the state. Part of the Pacific Flyway, the area provides habitat for migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as for coho and chum salmon and endangered species such as the bald eagle and brown pelican. This is a cooperative project with The Nature Conservancy and others.

State Share: \$500,000

Federal Share: \$500,000

**Kindred Island:** The Washington Department of Wildlife, in cooperation with the Trust for Public Lands and Ducks Unlimited, Inc., will acquire and restore 300 acres of coastal wetlands in Willapa Bay. The area supports endangered bald eagles and peregrine falcons as well as waterfowl, shorebirds, and anadromous fish.

State Share: \$430,000

Federal Share: \$430,000

**Niawiakum River Natural Area Preserve:** The Washington Department of Natural Resources, in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, will acquire more than 500 acres in the 1,340-acre Niawiakum River Natural Area Preserve in Willapa Bay. The area contains diverse estuarine wetlands and, as part of the Pacific Flyway, provides important habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds. It also supports the endangered bald eagle and brown pelican, and coho and chum salmon.

State Share: \$500,000

Federal Share: \$500,000

**North Bay Natural Area Preserve:** The Washington Department of Natural Resources will acquire up to 500 acres within the 900-acre North Bay Natural Area Preserve in Grays Harbor. As part of the Pacific Flyway, the area supports migratory waterfowl and shorebirds, as well as endangered peregrine falcons and

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threatened Western snowy plovers. It is also important habitat for juvenile salmon.

State Share: \$250,000

Federal Share: \$250,000

**Snohomish River Diking District #6:** The Washington Department of Ecology and Snohomish County will restore a 453-acre wetland in the Snohomish River estuary area. About 170 acres of brackish marsh will be restored. The area supports waterfowl; arctic terns; steelhead and cutthroat trout; and chinook, coho, chum, and pink salmon. Endangered species using the area include bald eagles and peregrine falcons.

State Share: \$425,000

Federal Share: \$425,000

### WISCONSIN

**Cana Wetlands:** The Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and private parties, will acquire 220 acres along the Lake Michigan shoreline to be designated as state natural areas. Wisconsin's largest tract of undeveloped Lake Michigan shoreline, the Cana Coastal Wetlands comprise habitat for large populations of migratory waterfowl, neotropical migrant birds, and shorebirds, as well as virtually all of the spawning habitat for whitefish in Lake Michigan.

State Share: \$535,000

Federal Share: \$535,000

### U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS

**Salt River Bay:** The Government of the U.S. Virgin Islands, in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy, the National Park Service, and the Fish and Wildlife Service, will acquire 4 acres of maritime forest within the Salt River Bay National Historical Park and Ecological Preserve at St. Croix. As the largest system of mangroves in the territory, the area serves as essential nesting habitat for 26 species of birds, including neotropical migrants. Endangered and threatened species such as the roseate tern and green and hawksbill sea turtles also inhabit the area. The mangroves provide productive nursery areas for recreationally and commercially important finfish and crustaceans.

U.S. Territory Share: \$0

Federal Share: \$166,375