



# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

## news release

### **Fish and Wildlife Service**

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Janet Tennyson 202-208-5634

#### **NONGAME WILDLIFE WINS UNDER NEW PARTNERSHIPS FOR WILDLIFE GRANT PROGRAM**

State efforts to conserve wildlife will get a boost from a new cooperative grant program aimed at funding nongame wildlife conservation projects. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies today announced the selection of 58 wildlife projects nationwide to receive \$2.9 million this year under the newly established Partnerships for Wildlife Grant Program.

This is the Service's first grant program to focus primarily on nongame wildlife (species not generally hunted or fished) that are not protected under the Endangered Species Act. It also has a unique funding source comprised of an equal combination of Federal, state, and private monies.

"The new partnerships formed by this program represent a real breakthrough in supporting grass-roots projects to benefit nongame wildlife conservation," said Service Director Mollie Beattie. "For decades we've had successful programs to restore game species, supported by hunting and fishing license fees and special taxes on gear. Then came the Endangered Species Act to help those in danger of extinction. Partnerships for Wildlife focuses on the 90 percent of America's wildlife not targeted by these other efforts."

Under the new program, priority consideration is given to projects involving species considered at risk of becoming

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threatened or endangered. Other activities eligible for funding include surveying and monitoring declining wildlife populations, habitat improvement projects, educational efforts to increase public awareness of wildlife or habitat values, and projects providing opportunities for nonconsumptive wildlife-associated recreation such as nature photography and wildlife viewing.

"This program fills an important niche by enabling us to focus on broader efforts to conserve ecosystems and better marshal our efforts to help specific species and habitats," said Director Beattie.

Under the 1992 Partnerships for Wildlife Act, funding for specific projects is shared equally by Federal appropriations, funding from state agencies, and private contributions channeled through the Foundation. The Act authorizes annual appropriations of up to \$6.25 million for the grant program through 1997.

For this year's total project amount of \$2,880,000, the Service, the state agencies, and private parties each contributed \$960,000. Private sector contributors include The Nature Conservancy, the L.L. Bean Company, and the Virginia Power Company.

"This program is just one example of how bringing together public and private parties can achieve great things for wildlife," said National Fish and Wildlife Foundation Executive Director Amos S. Eno. "The Foundation is proud to be a partner and looks forward to supporting the program in the coming years."

"We've reached a milestone in wildlife management with this program," said Max Peterson, executive vice president of the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies. "Partnerships for Wildlife is an investment in the future of wildlife and the future of wildlife-associated recreation."

The program will provide matching grants annually to all states through a competitive process. A total of 170 projects amounting to \$12 million were considered for funding this year. The Foundation and the International Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, which represents all 50 state wildlife agencies, participated in the project review.

Those interested in contributing to the Partnerships for Wildlife Grant Program may contact their state wildlife agency or the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, 1120 Connecticut Avenue, NW., Suite 900, Washington, DC, 20036, telephone 202-857-0166.

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# Facts

U.S. Department of the Interior

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## 1994 Partnerships for Wildlife Projects

Examples of the 58 Partnerships for Wildlife projects funded in 1994 include:

- o Developing a plan for cooperative management of neotropical migrant songbirds in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Alabama;
- o Common loon monitoring in Minnesota, and developing a strategy for tracking populations of other widely dispersed species;
- o Conducting an inventory of native fishes of the Colorado River System;
- o Urban wildlife demonstration projects in Washington State to provide assistance to public and private landowners in conserving wildlife habitat at urban/suburban sites;
- o Conserving at-risk coastal wildlife in Maine, and providing wildlife viewing areas along the coast;
- o Developing self-guided exhibits and nature trails in Upper Newport Bay, California;
- o Improving habitat of grazed pastures in Wisconsin for declining populations of grassland birds;
- o Studying mammals in the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem, such as the lynx, fisher, and wolverine;
- o Surveying and monitoring of the Sonoran Desert population of the desert tortoise;
- o Studying migration patterns of migratory birds through river corridors in Pennsylvania;
- o Providing alternative nesting areas for least terns in Maryland, a cooperative project with local schools; and
- o Conducting an inventory of freshwater mussels in southern New Hampshire.

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