

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Purpose and Scope

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act ([Act, or NAWCA](#)) of 1989 provides matching grants to organizations and individuals who have developed partnerships to carry out wetlands conservation.

There is a Standard and a Small Grants Program. Both are competitive grants programs and require that grant requests be matched by partner contributions at no less than a 1-to-1 ratio. Funds from U.S. Federal sources may contribute towards a project, but are not eligible as match.

The [Standard Grants Program](#) supports projects in Canada, the United States, and Mexico that involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats. In Mexico, partners may also conduct projects involving technical training, environmental education and outreach, organizational infrastructure development, and sustainable-use studies.

The [Small Grants Program](#) operates only in the United States; it supports the same type of projects and adheres to the same selection criteria and administrative guidelines as the U.S. Standard Grants Program. Grant requests may not exceed \$75,000, and funding priority is given to grantees or partners new to the Act's Grants Program.

Current Funding

The Congressional appropriation to fund the Act's Grants Program in FY 2010 is \$47,647,000. Additional program funding comes from fines, penalties, and forfeitures collected under the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918; from Federal fuel excise taxes on small gasoline engines, as directed by amendments to the Federal Aid in Sport Fish Restoration Act of 1950, to benefit coastal ecosystem projects; and from interest accrued on the fund established under the Federal Aid in Wildlife Restoration Act of 1937. In FY2010 these sources provided almost \$42 million in additional grant funds.

The Process

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Division of Bird Habitat Conservation (Division) is responsible for facilitating the Act's Grants Program.

Standard Grants Program: The process for receiving and preliminarily reviewing project proposals is handled slightly differently for each country and enjoys the active participation of each federal government.

Once a slate of eligible proposals has been determined per each country-program's process, the proposals are further reviewed and ranked by the [North American Wetlands Conservation Council](#). The Council then recommends projects to the [Migratory Bird Conservation Commission](#), a seven-member commission authorized by the Act to give final funding approval to projects. The Division administers the grants for all approved Standard Grants Program projects.

Small Grants Program: The process follows that of the U.S. Standard Grants Program, except for the timing of the final funding approval. Each year, the Commission pre-approves the total amount of funding to be distributed to projects in the next fiscal year. Final project-selection authority is delegated to the Council, which then reports its selections back to the Commission. The Division administers the grants for all approved Small Grants Program projects.

U.S. Standard Grants Deadline: July 30, 2010. U.S. Small Grants Deadlines: October 28, 2010.

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Grants:

This table shows the different grant programs funded through the Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund, with the funding levels for this fiscal year. Eligibility criteria and the application process for each grant program is different. To learn more about each program, please contact the [Fish and Wildlife Service Endangered Species grants specialist in your region](#).

You can also view information about [other USFWS grant programs](#) available.

Grant Program	Purpose	Species Benefiting	Applicants	Competition	Financial Match Requirement*
Conservation Grants	implementation of conservation projects	federally listed threatened or endangered species	States or Territories that have entered into cooperative agreements with the Service for endangered and threatened species conservation	formula	25% of estimated project cost; or 10% when two or more States or Territories implement a joint project
Recovery Land Acquisition	acquisition of habitat in support of approved recovery goals or objectives	federally listed threatened or endangered species	States or Territories that have entered into cooperative agreements with the Service for endangered and threatened species conservation	regional competition	25% of estimated project cost; or 10% when two or more States or Territories implement a joint project
Habitat Conservation Planning Assistance	support development of Habitat Conservation Plans (HCPs)	federally listed threatened or endangered species, proposed and candidate species, and	States or Territories that have entered into cooperative agreements with the Service for endangered and threatened species	national competition	25% of estimated project cost; or 10% when two or more States or Territories implement a joint project

		unlisted species proposed to be covered by the HCP**	conservation		
Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Land Acquisition	acquisition of land associated with approved HCPs	federally listed threatened or endangered species, unlisted (including State-listed species), proposed and candidate species covered by the HCP**	States or Territories that have entered into cooperative agreements with the Service for endangered and threatened species conservation	national competition	25% of estimated project cost; or 10% when two or more States or Territories implement a joint project

*As required under Section 6 of the Endangered Species Act, grants to states and territories must include a minimum contribution by the project's non-Federal partners. These contributions can be in-kind, through staff time or use of non-Federal equipment, or financial assistance.

**A species covered by the HCP is any species (listed or unlisted) that is included in the section 10(a)(1)(B) permit, thus receiving incidental take authorization.

