



Northern Great Plains Program

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PARTNERS

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- Avangrid
- Arthur Vining Davis Foundation

ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 5,000 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of \$6.1 billion.

Learn more at www.nfwf.org

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Cattle ranch in the Nebraska Sandhill grasslands

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), in partnership with Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies, Arthur Vining Davis Foundation, Avangrid Foundation, United States Department of Agriculture (NRCS), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and U.S. Forest Service, announced the 2021 round of funding for Northern Great Plains Program projects. The fifteen awards announced were awarded for \$4.1 million which will be further leveraged by \$10.9 million in grantee matching contributions for a total on-the-ground impact of \$15 million.

The following fifteen projects address all eight strategies for the Northern Great Plains program which include: 1) permanently protect important grasslands with conservation easements and other tools to maintain large blocks of habitat; 2) restore grasslands for the benefit of grassland wildlife and agricultural operations/ranching; 3) facilitate management of grasslands for the benefit of grasslands wildlife and agricultural operations/ranching; 4) implement grassland bird monitoring; 5) implement sylvatic plague treatment; 6) conserve pronghorn; 7) conserve sage grouse; and 8) build capacity of partners to address the other strategies.

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These 15 grants will contribute to the goals of the Northern Great Plains Business Plan by:

- Placing 74,000 acres under conservation easement
- Improving management on 270,000 acres of working lands
- Restoring 54,000 acres of upland and grassland habitat
- Restoring 155 acres of riparian and mesic wet meadow habitat
- Removing or improving 83.5 miles of fencing to wildlife-friendly specifications
- Conserving and protecting 6 greater sage-grouse leks

Enhancing Habitat and Connectivity for Pronghorn and Sage Grouse by Improving Fences (AB, MT)

Alberta Conservation Association

Grant Amount: \$150,000
 Matching Funds: \$228,165
 Total Project Amount: \$378,165

Enhance sage grouse critical habitat by assessing range condition and signing habitat conservation strategy letters with private landowners. Project will improve 40,000 acres of habitat by removing 5 miles of page wire fencing and converting it to a wildlife friendly fencing to enhance sage grouse habitat, and retrofitting 50 miles of existing fencing to facilitate easier pronghorn movement

Increasing Technical Assistance Capacity for Grassland Conservation Easements (SD)

South Dakota Agricultural Land Trust

Grant Amount: \$393,282
 Matching Funds: \$394,000
 Total Project Amount: \$787,282

Significantly increase capacity to engage with private landowners and secure conservation easements in South Dakota. Project will place at least 2,000 acres of priority grassland habitat on private lands under conservation easement.

Restoring and Enhancing Mesic and Wet Meadow Habitat in the Lower Missouri Watershed (MT)

Montana Conservation Corps

Grant Amount: \$330,036
 Matching Funds: \$332,928
 Total Project Amount: \$662,964

Restore and enhance wet meadows and mesic areas throughout the Lower Missouri Watershed in Montana and improve habitat for sage grouse and pronghorn. Project will restore and enhance 300 acres of habitat and build local capacity to promote a more sustainable model for improving mesic and wet meadow areas throughout the region.

Improving MOTUS Infrastructure and Capacity to Benefit Migratory Grassland Bird Conservation (MT)

Smithsonian Institution

Grant Amount: \$146,163
 Matching Funds: \$182,235
 Total Project Amount: \$328,398



Chestnut-collared longspur

Build MOTUS infrastructure in the Northern Great Plains to increase the quality and quantity of grassland bird migratory and demographic data that can be leveraged for conservation action. Project will fill key data gaps concerning migratory bird ecology by growing the infrastructure and capacity of the MOTUS network.

Improving Grazing Management with Improved Infrastructure, Management Tools, and Education (MT, SD)

World Wildlife Fund

Grant Amount: \$451,155
 Matching Funds: \$451,155
 Total Project Amount: \$902,310

Improve grassland habitat on working lands by utilizing management agreements, prescribed grazing, and changes in infrastructure to facilitate management in the Missouri-Milk River and Dakota Grasslands. Project will improve management on 90,000 acres to conserve grassland habitat and improve population trends for priority grassland songbirds, greater sage-grouse, and pronghorn.

Community-Led Conservation of Grassland Habitat on Private Working Lands (MT, NE, SD, WY)

Rocky Mountain Bird Observatory

Grant Amount: \$214,192
 Matching Funds: \$214,192
 Total Project Amount: \$428,384

Maintain grassland connectivity through community-led conservation efforts, supported by sound science from diverse knowledge sources, and facilitated through habitat enhancement and restoration by qualified Private Lands

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Eastern Montana plains

Wildlife Biologists. Project will provide and deliver technical support for fish and wildlife habitat conservation, restoration, and improved management on 5,000 acres of private lands.

Restoring Former Grazing and Cropland to Ecologically Functional Grassland (MT)

Ranchers Stewardship Alliance

Grant Amount: \$296,970
 Matching Funds: \$345,000
 Total Project Amount: \$641,970

Enhance core grazing lands and restore former cropland to working, ecologically functional grassland in northeast Montana by pushing local managers towards innovative practices that restore ecological integrity, soil health, productivity and function to our grazing landscape, rural communities and family ranches. Project will restore 1,000 acres and improve management on 9,000 acres of grassland habitat.

Using Decision-Support Tools to Strategically Deliver Grassland Bird Conservation (MT, SD, WY)

Pheasants Forever

Grant Amount: \$421,561
 Matching Funds: \$502,613
 Total Project Amount: \$924,174

Collaboratively implement a tract-prioritization protocol based on grassland habitat decision-support tools to identify tracts on private land in western South Dakota, eastern Montana, and eastern Wyoming with the highest value to grassland nesting passerines. Project will enroll 10,000 acres in grazing systems,

integrate 50 ranchers with local stewardship resources, restore 5,000 acres of grassland habitat, improve 13 miles of fencing and restore 15 acres of riparian and wetland habitat.

Restoring Sandhills Grassland Habitat by Treating Invasive Eastern Red Cedar (NE)

Nebraska Community Foundation FBO Rainwater Basin Joint Venture

Grant Amount: \$215,250
 Matching Funds: \$216,165
 Total Project Amount: \$431,415

Restore and enhance grassland habitat in the Nebraska Sandhills through the mechanical removal of Eastern red cedar and using two mobile burn units to support prescribed fire on private lands. Project will promote healthy, resilient grasslands that support profitable private working ranches, bringing 9,500 acres under improved management.

Conserving Greater Sage-Grouse Habitat on Fauth Ranch through a Perpetual Conservation Easement (MT)

Montana Land Reliance

Grant Amount: \$300,000
 Matching Funds: \$2,118,405
 Total Project Amount: \$2,418,405

Conserve a multi-generation ranching operation, Fauth Ranch, located in Golden Valley and Musselshell counties, Montana to benefit the greater sage-grouse and to ensure the ranch remains intact and passed on to the next generation. Project will place 8,086 acres under a perpetual conservation easement.

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Conserving McIntyre Ranch to Protect Contiguous Habitat for Migratory Birds and Pronghorn (Alberta)

Nature Conservancy of Canada

Grant Amount: \$300,000
 Matching Funds: \$5,000,000
 Total Project Amount: \$5,300,000

Conserve one of the largest private ranches in Canada, the McIntyre Ranch, protecting high priority grassland habitat to benefit migratory grassland birds and pronghorn while allowing the ranch to continue functioning under range management best practices. Project will place 54,894 under conservation easement.

Restoring and Enhancing Grassland and Wet Meadow Habitat in the Musselshell Plains (MT)

Winnett ACES

Grant Amount: \$220,788
 Matching Funds: \$231,716
 Total Project Amount: \$452,504

Facilitate grassland management for the benefit of grassland wildlife and agricultural operations within the Musselshell Plains of central Montana. Project will result in 10,000 acres under improved management, 20 acres of wet meadow restoration, 10 miles of fence modifications for pronghorn, and further development of the grassbank strategy.

Improving Habitat Connectivity for Pronghorn and Mule Deer by Modifying Fences - Phase II (MT)

Bureau of Land Management - Miles City Field Office

Grant Amount: \$50,000
 Matching Funds: \$50,000
 Total Project Amount: \$100,000

Build off previously successful work to facilitate pronghorn and mule deer movement across the landscape and reduce neonatal mortality on Bureau of Land Management lands throughout eastern Montana. Project will replace 12 miles of woven wire fence in big game winter ranges to wildlife friendly specifications.

Providing Technical Assistance for Conservation Management on Private Working Lands (MT, ND, SD, WY)

American Bird Conservancy

Grant Amount: \$345,588
 Matching Funds: \$345,588
 Total Project Amount: \$691,176

Provide technical assistance to promote healthy grassland conservation to benefit grassland birds while meeting the economic bottom line for private landowners. Project will result in improved management on 6,500 acres through improved grazing rotations and fencing and water infrastructure, and restore 350 acres by re-seeding annual cropland with native perennial grasses and forbs and 1,920 acres by removing of windmills.



Pronghorn

Providing Capacity to Implement Community-Based Grassland Conservation on Private Lands (NE)

Pheasants Forever

Grant Amount: \$237,814
 Matching Funds: \$247,470
 Total Project Amount: \$485,284

Continue support for two positions that provide capacity for Eastern red cedar control, prescribed fire, and grazing management through the Working Lands For Wildlife program and other opportunities in the Nebraska Sandhills. Project will implement innovative community-based grassland management to restore and enhance 90,000 acres on private lands.

Reintroducing Dakota Skippers in North Dakota to Bolster Native Populations (ND)

North Dakota Natural Resources Trust

Grant Amount: \$50,000
 Matching Funds: \$60,000
 Total Project Amount: \$110,000

Increase Dakota skipper populations by reintroducing individuals in North Dakota from populations in the Minnesota Zoo. Project will collect female Dakota skippers to create the world's first insurance population for North Dakota-derived Dakota skippers for reintroduction.