



Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative

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PARTNERS

- Apache Corporation
- Chevron Corporation
- ConocoPhillips
- Occidental
- ExxonMobil
- Bureau of Land Management
- USDA's Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

ABOUT NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) works with partners to foster sustainable and impactful conservation solutions so that people and nature thrive together. Chartered by Congress in 1984, NFWF has grown to become the nation's largest conservation foundation. Since its founding, NFWF has funded more than 23,900 projects that have generated a total conservation impact of more than \$12 billion.

Learn more at www.nfwf.org

OVERVIEW

The Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative (PWCI) is dedicated to restoring and sustaining healthy rivers, streams and grasslands that provide important wildlife habitat in the Pecos River watershed of southeastern New Mexico and West Texas. The fund was launched in 2017 to identify significant conservation opportunities that improve habitat, address water scarcity, improve water quality and engage local communities.

Since its inception, the PWCI has invested a total of \$13.7 million in 63 projects that address three priority strategies: habitat restoration and management of riparian and grassland systems; species intervention; and species information. These projects benefit migratory grassland birds like chestnut-collared longspur and Sprague's pipit as well as pronghorn, and implement aquatic and riparian restoration activities that benefit Pecos pupfish, Pecos gambusia, Texas hornshell and Rio Grande cooter.

Apache Corporation, Chevron, ConocoPhillips, Occidental, ExxonMobil, Bureau of Land Management, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) announced a 2025-year round of funding for PWCI projects. Six new or continuing grants totaling over \$2 million were awarded. The six awards announced leveraged more than \$2.9 million in matching contributions from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of nearly \$4.9 million. Implementation partners include soil and water conservation districts, nonprofit organizations, state wildlife agencies in New Mexico and Texas, federal agencies and universities.

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

The PWCI will:

- Strengthen the health of habitat along the Pecos River and its tributaries in West Texas and southern New Mexico, including some of the last remaining populations of fish and other aquatic species found only in the Chihuahuan Desert
- Improve the management and function of native grasslands, many of which have been negatively impacted by past management and fragmentation
- Address water quality and scarcity concerns for wildlife and agricultural uses
- Identify opportunities to re-establish species to areas of their range where they have been lost or bolster small remnant populations

PWCI investments are targeted primarily to tributary watersheds and grasslands within the region where investments in restoration are expected to realize the greatest return for species. The priority conservation strategies for the region were determined by a team of local partners with on-the-ground knowledge of conservation needs and opportunities and are detailed in NFWF's Southwest Rivers Business Plan.



Pecos pupfish

(continued)

2025 GRANTS

Comprehensive Hydrologic Modeling and Assessment of the Black River Watershed (NM, TX)

Grantee: Center for Environmental Health Monitoring and Management

Grant Amount:\$119,000

Matching Funds:\$119,100

Total Project Amount:\$238,100

Conduct a comprehensive watershed assessment and hydrologic modeling of the Black River watershed in Eddy County, New Mexico, and Culberson County, Texas, to benefit the endangered Texas hornshell mussel and other at-risk species. Project will provide water and land managers in the watershed with fundamental information necessary to promote habitat conservation and resilience against the impacts of water quality degradation.

Expanding Grassland Restoration for Pronghorn and Grassland Birds in Northern Hudspeth County, Texas

Grantee: Parks and Wildlife Foundation of Texas

Grant Amount:\$315,000

Matching Funds:\$325,000

Total Project Amount:\$640,000

Restore brush-invaded grasslands in the dry mixed prairies of northern Hudspeth County, Texas to support pronghorn populations in the Trans-Pecos and provide high-quality habitat for chestnut-collared longspur and Sprague’s pipit. Project will restore 9,000-10,000 acres of grassland habitat.

Grassland Restoration and Fencing Improvements for Pronghorn Conservation in Eddy County (NM)

Grantee: Carlsbad Soil and Water Conservation District

Grant Amount:\$310,600

Matching Funds:\$310,600

Total Project Amount:\$621,200

Expand intact grassland habitats of the Indian Basin region of Eddy County, New Mexico by removing woody mesquite and creosote brush that have invaded historic grasslands, and remove and replace net wire fencing with wildlife-friendly fencing to increase landscape connectivity for pronghorn. Project will restore 6,000 acres of grasslands through aerial treatment of invasive brush and replace 2.5 miles of fencing.

Monitoring Program for Wintering Grassland Birds in the Chihuahuan Desert: 2025-2027 (NM, TX)

Grantee: Bird Conservancy of the Rockies

Grant Amount:\$525,000

Matching Funds:\$525,000

Total Project Amount:\$1,050,000

Implement a rigorous sampling protocol as part of a seven-year monitoring program to estimate the density of wintering grassland birds in the Chihuahuan Desert, including Sprague’s pipit and chestnut-collared longspur, and inform on-the-ground management activities. Project will provide critical data on populations of grasslands birds that winter in the Pecos watershed and have been in marked



Juvenile Rio Grande cooter

decline in recent decades to inform conservation activities to support the species.

Risk-reduction Measures for Threatened and Endangered Species in the Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NM)

Grantee: National Wildlife Refuge Association

Grant Amount:\$415,500

Matching Funds:\$1,295,700

Total Project Amount:\$1,711,200

Install water delivery infrastructure for habitat in times of drought, repair barriers protecting against invasive fish species damaged by flooding, restore native vegetation, and install pronghorn-friendly fencing within New Mexico’s Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Project will support habitat resilience, restore hydrology of five sites, rectify three fish passage barriers, restore 48 riparian acres and 25 grassland acres, improve six miles of fencing, and remove invasive riparian plants from 126 acres.

Restoring Riparian Areas in the Davis Mountains through Process-based Restoration Techniques (TX)

Grantee: American Bird Conservancy

Grant Amount:\$342,700

Matching Funds:\$342,700

Total Project Amount:\$685,400

Restore headwater streams in four locations in the Davis Mountains region of the Pecos River watershed to provide long-term benefits to aquatic species such as the Pecos gambusia and Pecos pupfish, and avian species including the common black hawk, Bell’s vireo, and Montezuma quail. Project will monitor four sites, working with partners to construct rock structures in Davis Mountain State Park to positively impact hydrologic processes.