Western Big Game Migration Fund

NFWF CONTACTS

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PARTNERS

- Bureau of Land Management
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- Bezos Earth Fund
- BNSF Railways
- ConocoPhillips
- Microsoft
- Taco Bell
- Native Americans in Philanthropy
- Cargill

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 $12 billion.

Learn more at **www.nfwf.org**

Elk herd

BACKGROUND

The Western Big Game Seasonal Habitat and Migration Corridors Fund is dedicated to conserving habitat and migration corridors to maintain healthy populations of migratory animals including pronghorn, elk and mule deer, and implementing strategies that have positive effects on a wide diversity of other species to increase habitat connectivity. The program was launched to help private landowners, community-based nonprofits, Tribal entities and state agencies efficiently work together to conserve priority habitat corridors and big game herds.

The Western Big Game Seasonal Habitat and Migration Corridors Fund is a result of Interior Secretarial Order 3362 and a partnership with the U.S. Department of Interior's Bureau of Land Management, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, U.S. Forest Service, USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service, Bezos Earth Fund, BNSF Railways, ConocoPhillips, Microsoft, Taco Bell, Native Americans in Philanthropy and Cargill.

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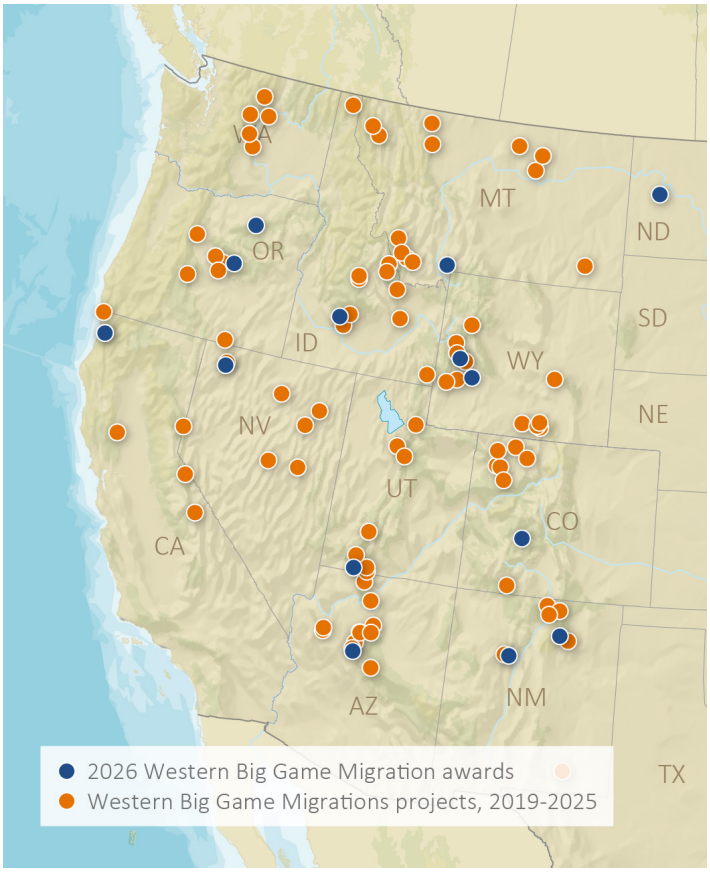
GOALS AND OBJECTIVES

There are significant threats to these incredible migrations throughout the West. Habitat fragmentation often limits the availability of high-quality forage and cover, and poor habitat condition limits the health and reproductive success of migratory big-game species. Modern improvements in wildlife science such as global positioning collars and remote sensing technologies provide the ability to learn and adapt management efforts with precision. Utilization of technology and the priorities of state game and fish agencies narrow the geographic scope of projects while increasing project efficiency and return on investment.

This program aims to conserve habitat and migration corridors through:

- Restoring degraded priority winter range, stopover areas and migration corridors as identified by Tribal entities and State Action Plans by removing encroaching trees from sagebrush ecosystems, rehabilitating areas damaged by fire or treating exotic/invasive vegetation to improve the quality and value of these areas to big game and other wildlife
- Working cooperatively with private landowners, Tribes and state highway departments to achieve permissive fencing measures, including potentially modifying, removing, installing or seasonally adapting fencing if proven to impede movement of big game through priority migration corridors
- Establishing voluntary conservation easements, management agreements or other actions to protect bottlenecks within corridors, other areas within priority winter range, and stopover areas threatened by fragmentation
- Utilizing other proven actions necessary to improve the habitat quality or restore priority big-game winter range, stopover areas or migration corridors across the West



Pronghorn

There have been eight rounds of grants announced under this program since 2019, which cumulatively awarded $32.7 million across 97 projects, leveraging $97.5 million in matching contributions to generate a total conservation impact of more than $130.2 million. **The projects collectively will:**

- **Protect** 109,776 acres of private land from fragmentation through conservation easements
- **Restore** 300,240 acres of public, private and tribal land through efforts like invasive weed and conifer removal treatments
- **Improved management** on 1,221,482 acres of public, private and tribal land through efforts like grazing and wildlife management plans
- **Remove or improve** 1,813 miles of fencing to be more wildlife friendly, reducing direct mortality and increasing landscape connectivity