



NFWF

Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative 2019 Grant Slate

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FUNDING PARTNERS

- Anadarko
- Apache Corporation
- Chevron
- Marathon Oil Corporation
- Noble Energy
- Occidental Petroleum
- Shell Oil Company
- XTO Energy
- U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service - New Mexico
- U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service - Texas

ABOUT NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation's fish and wildlife and their habitats. Created by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private funds.

Learn more at www.nfwf.org

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Chestnut-collared longspur | Credit: Rick Bohn, USFWS

OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF), Anadarko, Apache Corporation, Chevron, Marathon Oil Corporation, Noble Energy, Occidental Petroleum, Shell Oil Company, XTO Energy and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service for the states of New Mexico and Texas announced a second-year round of funding for Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative projects. NFWF awarded 11 new habitat conservation and species research grants totaling \$2.16 million, leveraging \$2.87 million in matching contributions from grantees and generating a total conservation impact of \$5.03 million.

In November 2017, the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative was launched to fund projects that will have the greatest positive return on investments for the unique wildlife species, habitats and local communities of the Pecos River Watershed, a riparian corridor in the Chihuahuan Desert home to many species found nowhere else in the world.

The Initiative's long-term goals include strengthening the health of existing habitats along the Pecos River and its tributaries, improving the management and function of native grasslands, addressing water quality and scarcity concerns for wildlife and agricultural uses, and identifying opportunities to re-establish species to areas of their range where they have been lost or to bolster small remnant populations.

(continued)



Pecos River | Credit: Daniel Rodriguez

Grassland Restoration for Improved Soil and Water Quality in the Delaware Basin Watershed (NM)

Grantee: New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts
 Grant Award:..... \$485,000
 Matching Funds: \$912,982
Total Amount:..... \$1,397,982

Improve aquatic health and function in the Black and Delaware rivers by restoring upland grasslands and revegetating riparian zones with native species. Project will benefit water quality and maintain and enhance habitat for Texas hornshell mussel, Bell’s vireo and wintering grassland birds such as Sprague’s pipit and chestnut-collared longspur.

New Mexico Southeast Plains Pronghorn Grassland Habitat Restoration

Grantee: New Mexico Association of Conservation Districts
 Grant Award:..... \$200,000
 Matching Funds:\$ 324,256
Total Amount:..... \$524,256

Enhance more than 500,000 acres of habitat for use by pronghorn in Chaves and Eddy counties, New Mexico through restoration of Chihuahuan Desert grassland and livestock fence modifications to facilitate pronghorn migration across ranches and pastures. Project will restore 5,930 acres of grassland habitat through mesquite brush

control and install 15 miles of pronghorn-friendly fencing.

Genomics and Ecology of Desert Massasauga in the Pecos River Watershed (NM, TX)

Grantee: Texas A&M AgriLife Research
 Grant Award:..... \$121,599
 Matching Funds: \$121,599
Total Amount:..... \$243,198

Evaluate the genetic relationships among populations of desert massasauga, a rattlesnake species, which has been petitioned for listing under the Endangered Species Act, and prairie massasauga, which has no federal listing status, in the Pecos River watershed. Project will conduct research to determine the taxonomic identity of desert massasauga populations in the Pecos River watershed to inform future conservation actions.

Riparian Restoration on the Rio Hondo and Pecos River, Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge (NM)

Grantee: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge
 Grant Award:..... \$173,693
 Matching Funds: \$300,000
Total Amount:..... \$473,693

Remove invasives and restore riparian habitat on the Rio



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Hondo and Pecos River on Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Project will restore more than 20 miles of riparian habitat to benefit numerous native aquatic species, including Pecos gambusia, Pecos pupfish and Rio Grande cooter.

Native Seeds Development and Outreach for Grassland Restoration in the Trans-Pecos Region (NM, TX)

Grantee: Texas A&M University-Kingsville
 Grant Award:..... \$186,538
 Matching Funds: \$216,577
Total Amount:..... \$403,115

Develop ecotypic native seed sources for the Pecos River watershed and West Texas region to support successful grassland restoration. Project will address limitations to native grassland habitat restoration through outreach and technical assistance to landowners, energy operators and related contractors reseeding in the watershed, by expanding an established native seed research and development program, and by collaborating with the commercial seed trade to expand seed source availability.

Monitoring Wintering Grassland Birds in the Chihuahuan Desert, Phase 3 (NM, TX)

Grantee: Bird Conservancy of the Rockies
 Grant Award:..... \$374,512
 Matching Funds: \$300,000
Total Amount:..... \$674,512

Apply a rigorous sampling protocol to estimate the density and/or occupancy of wintering grassland birds in the Chihuahuan Desert, including Sprague’s pipit and chestnut-collared longspur. Project will implement a monitoring program developed in phases 1 and 2 over two winter seasons (2019-2020 and 2020-2021) in order to produce robust baseline estimates of wintering bird populations and evaluate the impact of ongoing grassland restoration investments.

Surveying Occupancy and Habitat Use of Rio Grande Cooter within the Pecos River Watershed (NM, TX)

Grantee: Eastern New Mexico University
 Grant Award:..... \$150,000
 Matching Funds: \$150,709
Total Amount:..... \$300,709

Describe the occupancy and habitat use of Rio Grande cooter in the Pecos River and tributaries to support future conservation planning. Project will survey 32 sites over two years at previously unexplored but assumed regions of species range to shed light on the occupancy and distribution of this poorly understood native aquatic species.

Marfa and Marathon Grassland Habitat Enhancement for Migratory Birds and Pronghorn, Phase 2 (TX)

Grantee: Borderlands Research Institute-Sul Ross State University
 Grant Award:..... \$244,695
 Matching Funds: \$244,696
Total Amount:..... \$489,391

Conduct brush management activities in the Marfa and Marathon grasslands of West Texas to improve grassland health and habitat for pronghorn and migratory grassland birds. Project will conduct brush management on 5,000 acres of brush-invaded grassland, monitor pronghorn and grassland bird response to treatments and create region-specific, science-driven, resource management recommendations.

Grassland Restoration on Working Lands in the Big Bend Soil and Water Conservation District (TX)

Grantee: Big Bend Soil and Water Conservation District
 Grant Award:..... \$100,000
 Matching Funds: \$100,000
Total Amount:..... \$200,000

Restore native grassland habitat for use by pronghorn and migratory grassland birds in Brewster and Jeff Davis counties, Texas. Project will work with producers and landowners to install pronghorn-friendly fence and conduct brush management to control brush encroachment and conserve quality native grassland habitat.

Highland Soil and Water Conservation District Grassland Restoration Program (TX)

Grantee: Highland Soil and Water Conservation District
 Grant Award:..... \$100,000
 Matching Funds: \$100,000
Total Amount:..... \$200,000

Restore native grassland habitat for use by pronghorn and migratory grassland birds in Presidio and Jeff Davis counties, Texas. Project will work with producers and landowners to conduct brush management to control brush encroachment and conserve quality native grassland habitat.

Central Trans-Pecos Native Grassland Restoration and Management Program (TX)

Grantee: Toyah Limpia Soil and Water Conservation District
 Grant Award:..... \$100,000
 Matching Funds: \$100,000
Total Amount:..... \$200,000

Restore native grassland habitat for use by pronghorn and migratory grassland birds in Reeves, Jeff Davis, Culberson and Pecos counties, Texas. Project will work with producers and landowners to conduct brush management to control brush encroachment and conserve quality native grassland habitat.