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TYPES OF LANDS THAT QUALIFY
Cropland, grassland, wetland, forestland

TYPE OF PROGRAM
Restoration

MONETARY BENEFIT
Direct payment

Partners for Fish and Wildlife

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (Partners Program) is a voluntary, federal program that provides landowners free technical and financial assistance to restore habitat on privately owned land. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) manages the program; it partners with other federal agencies, state agencies, and non-governmental organizations to deliver it.

The Partners Program aims to restore and enhance habitat for federal trust resources, including important and imperiled habitat types and their associated species of concern. The program emphasizes restoring degraded wetlands, native grasslands, streams, riparian areas, longleaf and bottomland hardwood forests, and other habitats to their original condition.

Priority is given to projects that provide habitat for rare, threatened, and endangered species.

■ HOW IT WORKS

Usually, a dollar-for-dollar cost-share is achieved by working with landowners and a host of nationally based and local entities (e.g., federal, state, and local agencies, soil and water conservation districts, and private conservation organizations).

Landowners commit to restoring the habitat for the life of the agreement (at least 10 years) and otherwise retain complete control of the land.

■ QUALIFYING PRACTICES

Upland Wildlife Habitat

Practices include

- planting field borders and filter strips to grass/legume mixtures
- establishing openings; planting, fertilizing, and seedbed preparation for food, cover, and nesting
- establishing native prairie and grassland; brush management and rangeland seeding
- fencing for habitat protection; prescribed burning, strip disking, and mowing; flushing bars
- restoration of wildlife habitat and corridors
- forest stand improvement to include site preparation, tree planting, direct seeding, firebreaks, release, and site preparation for natural regeneration

Wetland Wildlife Habitat

Practices include

- installation of water control structures in agricultural fields, moist-soil areas, and forested wetlands to provide beneficial habitat for wetland wildlife
- installation of nesting structures; restoration of hydrology
- restoration of wildlife habitat and corridors; fencing for habitat protection
- forest stand improvement to include site preparation, tree planting, direct seeding, firebreaks, release, and site preparation for natural regeneration
- strip disking and mowing
- establishing openings; planting, fertilizing, and seedbed preparation for food, cover, and nesting

Threatened and Endangered Species Habitat

Practices include

- removal of barriers for aquatic species
- establishment, management, maintenance, enhancement, and restoration of grassed waterways and riparian areas
- fencing for habitat protection
- stream bank stabilization
- installation of instream deflectors
- restoration of threatened and endangered species habitat and corridors
- placement of fish screens
- control or eradication of invasive exotic or competing animal and plant species

Fisheries Habitat

Practices include

- the restoration of rivers and streams
- development and placement of fish structure and gravel spawning beds
- removal of fish barriers
- placement of fish screens
- establishment, management, maintenance, enhancement, and restoration of grassed waterways and riparian areas
- stream bank stabilization
- installation of low-water weirs and instream deflectors
- fencing for habitat protection; augmentation of flows

■ HOW TO APPLY

The FWS accepts applications for enrollment in Partners for Fish and Wildlife at an FWS Office.

Landowners interested in applying for funding should contact their FWS Office to begin the application process. Applications are accepted throughout the year.

■ PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE EXAMPLES

A landowner has 37.5 acres in the Black Belt Prairie where she would like to establish native warm-season grasses (NWSG) to improve wildlife habitat, soil and water conservation, and livestock forage. The Partners Program has agreed to pay for 50% of the cost of establishing NWSG, which includes seed and planting costs. The landowner is responsible for the balance of the costs, which is also 50%. It can be cash or 'in-kind,' meaning she can provide an equivalent value of labor and services such as performing the burning and/or herbicide application.

Example #1

Costs

- NWSG Seed: \$150.28/acre
- NWSG Planting: \$45.00/acre

Sample Calculation

NWSG Seed: $\$150.28/\text{acre} \times 37.5 \text{ acres} = \$5,635.50$

NWSG Planting: $\$45.00/\text{acre} \times 37.5 \text{ acres} = \$1,687.50$

Total Planting Cost: \$7,323.00

Partners Program: 50%, or \$3,661.50

Landowner Costs: 50%, or \$3,661.50

Example #2

A landowner has 44 acres of native herbaceous vegetation that would benefit from woody brush control by herbicide application. This application will improve nesting and brood rearing habitat for grassland birds. The Partners Program will provide 50% of the costs as a reimbursement for the herbicide and its application.

Costs

- Herbicide and Application: \$75.00/acre

Sample Calculation

Herbicide and Application:

$\$75.00/\text{acre} \times 44 \text{ acres} = \$3,300.00$

Total Cost: \$3,300.00

Partners Program: 50%, or \$1,650.00

Landowner Costs: 50%, or \$1,650.00

■ HOW ARE PARTNERS PROGRAMS PAYMENTS TAXED?

Partners Program payments are taxed at the ordinary income rate; however, if the expenses equal or exceed the revenue from the program, no tax is paid.



The Mississippi Land Trust works with willing private landowners and government agencies to protect fish and wildlife habitat in Mississippi.

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The Mississippi River Trust works with willing private landowners and government agencies to protect fish and wildlife habitat in the Lower Mississippi River region.

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Wildlife Mississippi works with willing private landowners and government agencies to conserve fish and wildlife habitat in Mississippi.

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