

PARTNERING MODULE

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1.0 ROLE OF PARTNERS

Americans have long understood the importance of conserving open spaces for the benefit of all citizens. In order to protect the ecosystems, watersheds, and wildlife that comprise open spaces, conservation must take place across large landscapes. This requires collaboration among landowners, public land agencies, and local communities. In support of initiatives such as America's Great Outdoors, the DOI Natural Resources Damage Assessment and Restoration Program embodies this ethic by working to align, target, and better leverage federal agency trustee resources and work with a variety of partners to leverage additional, non-federal resources for conservation.

Including various partners in restoration efforts is an effective way of implementing restoration, building public support for restoration projects, and, probably most importantly, adding funding or in-kind services that increase the scale of a project beyond the capabilities of what the restoration settlement may have initially allowed. Funds or in-kind services from partners should contribute to a project in ways that enable the project to exceed restoration requirements of settlements, rather than make up for shortcomings when settlements did not recover enough to meet restoration goals. Partners have undertaken many roles, such as: (1) providing labor for planting efforts; (2) allowing the use of lands they control for restoration projects; (3) providing matching funds; (4) identifying and planning the implementation of priority projects that are consistent with or included in existing conservation plans; and (5) monitoring the results of projects. Partnering in some cases has resulted in the doubling or tripling of the amount of restoration that could have been accomplished with the initial settlement and in the completion of projects that are consistent with community priorities. It is DOI policy that NRDAR settlement funds from joint settlements jointly controlled with state and tribal trustee agencies can be considered as the non-federal matching funds for federal grant programs such as the Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection and Restoration Act if such funds are transferred from the DOI NRDAR Fund directly to the State co-trustee (see Assistant Solicitor memorandum dated July 29, 1999 at the following web site: restoration.doi.gov/pdf/7jointrecoveries.pdf).

2.0 DOI RESTORATION PROGRAMS

2.1 Coastal Program

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Coastal Program (www.fws.gov/coastal) is the cornerstone of the agency's efforts to conserve coastal watersheds and their associated fish and wildlife resources. Through the program, FWS works with partners to conserve coastal habitats for the benefit of fish, wildlife, and people. Coastal Program partnerships protect coastal habitats through conservation easements and acquisitions; restore coastal habitats such as wetlands, uplands, and riparian areas; open access to coastal streams for anadromous fish; and control and monitor invasive species that can have disastrous effects on coastal ecosystems. At present, there are 23 Coastal Program offices located throughout the United States.

An important aspect of the Coastal Program is providing restoration expertise and financial assistance to private landowners, local and tribal governments, businesses, state agencies, conservation organizations, and other groups such as local conservation districts and watershed councils. The program focuses on projects that will achieve demonstrable results on both public and private lands in priority coastal watersheds. Efforts to conserve such habitats provide people with more open space, enhanced water quality, more productive fisheries, increased tourism, healthier economies, and a higher quality of life. Since 1985, this voluntary program has restored over 251,000 acres of coastal wetlands and coastal upland habitat, permanently protected nearly 2 million acres of coastal habitat, and restored 1,700 miles of riparian and in-stream habitat.

The Coastal Program is built on a framework of four major program functions:

- Integrating FWS activities in high-priority coastal watersheds to identify the most important natural resource problems and solutions.
- Bringing FWS biological expertise to the planning and decision-making processes of other federal, state, and local agencies.
- Forming partnerships to implement on-the-ground projects.
- Using focused outreach to instill a stewardship ethic and catalyze the American public to help solve problems, change behaviors, and promote ecologically sound decisions for the benefit of federal trust species.

In pursuing these goals, the Coastal Program often seeks the expertise and involvement of other FWS programs. Coastal Program offices often maintain lists of priority projects that do not currently have funding; thus, they may be a good source of potential projects when off-site restoration of coastal habitats is needed to address site injuries. In addition, the Coastal Program jointly administers the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program with the Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program, which provides matching grants for the acquisition, restoration, management, or enhancement of coastal wetlands. For more information see the National Coastal Wetlands Conservation Grant Program web site: wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/CW/CW.htm

2.2 Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program (hereafter, Partners Program; www.fws.gov/partners) is a voluntary habitat restoration program administered by the FWS. It provides financial and technical assistance to private landowners, tribes, and other conservation partners who want to restore and protect wetland, riparian, and other wildlife habitat on their lands. The program helps private landowners conserve the Nation's biological diversity and habitat integrity by reducing habitat fragmentation, improving habitat for various plant and animal species, and supporting threatened natural communities.

The Partners Program is guided by a national policy that has identified the following objectives: (1) promote and implement habitat improvement projects that benefit federal trust species; (2) provide conservation leadership and promote partnerships; (3) encourage public understanding and participation; and (4) work with the U.S. Department of Agriculture to implement conservation programs. The Partners

Program focuses on ecosystems or watersheds where restoration will achieve the greatest benefit, and national priority ranking factors are used to assign funding priority status to proposed projects that meet the following conditions:

- Improve habitat for federal trust species, including migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, inter-jurisdictional fish, marine mammals, and other declining species.
- Complement activities on National Wildlife Refuge System lands, or contribute to the resolution of problems on refuges that are caused by off-refuge practices.
- Address species and habitat priorities that have been identified through FWS planning teams (with partners), or in collaboration with state fish and wildlife agencies.
- Reduce habitat fragmentation or serve as buffers for other important federal or state conservation lands.
- Result in self-sustaining systems that are not dependent on artificial structures.

If other considerations are generally equal, then priority is given to projects that link private lands to important federal lands (such as National Wildlife Refuges), have cooperative agreements of longer duration, multiple partners, cost sharing, and the greatest overall cost effectiveness. The overall goal of Partners projects is to return sites to the ecological conditions that likely existed prior to loss or degradation.

2.3 Challenge Cost Share Program

The objective of the Challenge Cost Share Program is to encourage partnerships with non-Federal governments, private individuals and organizations, educational institutions, and business to support the missions of the FWS and Bureau of Land Management (BLM). The Challenge Cost Share program allows the FWS and BLM to provide matching funds for projects that support the management, restoration and protection of natural resources on more than 550 National Wildlife Refuges and millions of acres of BLM lands across the nation.

The Challenge Cost Share program provides funds to manage, restore, and enhance natural and cultural resources on National Wildlife Refuge System lands, BLM lands, or on nearby areas in direct support of these lands. The program encourages the mutual shared interest and participation of the people who are the real beneficiaries of the wildlife programs.

The FWS and BLM provide up to 50 percent of the total project cost. Partners and cooperators provide no less than 50 percent of the project cost. The partner may contribute cash, material, equipment, land, water, or other in-kind services. A Challenge Cost Share agreement defines the purpose and scope of the project, assigns partner responsibilities, and certifies the contribution. Challenge Cost Share grant opportunities for FWS and BLM can be found at www.grants.gov.

2.4 North American Wetlands Conservation Act

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act was signed into law in December 1989. This Act has facilitated the acquisition and restoration of habitats needed to maintain healthy populations of wetland plant and animal life. The focus of the Act is on long-term actions and cooperation between public and private interests. By authorizing Federal funding, the Act has encouraged private citizens, organizations, and governments to form partnerships and initiate wetland conservation projects across the continent.

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act is comprised of two distinct grant programs. The Standard Grants Program supports projects in Canada, the United States, and Mexico that involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated upland habitats. In Mexico, partners may also implement projects involving technical training, environmental education and outreach, organizational infrastructure development, and sustainable use studies. The Act's Small Grants Program operates only in the United States, but it supports the same type of projects and adheres to the same selection criteria and administrative guidelines as the U.S. Standard Grants Program. However, project activities are usually smaller in scope and involve fewer project dollars. Grant requests may not exceed \$75,000, and funding priority is given to grantees or partners new to the Act's Grants Program.

Partners of the North American Wetlands Conservation Act have carried out the hands-on work of restoring wetlands and have assisted farmers, ranchers, and other landowners in integrating wetland conservation into their management practices. Through March 2011, the Act used over \$1.1 billion in federal funds to stimulate the involvement of more than 4,500 distinct partners in 2,067 projects. Partners have contributed another \$2.32 billion in matching funds to affect 26.5 million acres of habitat and \$1.21 billion in nonmatching funds to affect 234,820 acres of habitat.

So far, the 2,067 wetland projects funded by the Act have benefited hundreds of plant, mammal, bird, fish, and other wildlife species, from the endangered whooping crane to the common white-tailed deer. The following projects are just a few examples of how, with appropriate funding, cooperation, and expertise, the North American wildlife heritage can be protected.

- An NRDA settlement with General Motors for PCB contamination in the Saginaw River and Saginaw Bay in Michigan provided an opportunity for natural resource trustees to secure a \$1 million North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant. Using a \$2.3 million portion of the total \$28.2 million settlement as a match, the \$1 million grant was used to implement conservation activities on 3,000 acres of habitat in 22 counties of the Saginaw Bay watershed. A total of 15 partners, including state and federal agencies, private conservation organizations, and the Saginaw Chippewa Indian Tribe of Michigan contributed an additional \$845,500 to this landmark partnership to restore wetland habitat in the lower peninsula of Michigan.
- A \$1 million North American Wetlands Conservation Act grant was matched with a \$1,312,000 NRDA settlement for the 1990 Apex Barges oil spill to conserve 1,500 acres of coastal habitat in Galveston County, Texas. Conservation actions included land acquisition,

protection of coastal tallgrass prairie, construction of marsh terraces, and emergent marsh restoration.

- The North American Wetlands Conservation Act provided an \$80,000 incentive, matching \$128,000 in NRDA settlement funds, to acquire two wetland parcels totaling 50 acres in Door County, Wisconsin. The wetlands are a complex of boreal rich fern, wet mesic forest, and emergent aquatic marsh that provide habitat for many rare plant species and neotropical migratory birds. The parcels were an addition to the Little and Big Marsh State Natural Area owned by the Wisconsin Department of Natural Resources.

The North American Wetlands Conservation Act has been integral to implementing wetland habitat recovery plans, including the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and agreements set forth in migratory bird treaties and conventions. The North American Waterfowl Management Plan is a landscape-level strategy to increase continental waterfowl populations to mid-1970s levels by restoring and protecting wetland and upland habitat for breeding and wintering waterfowl. The Plan is innovative because its perspective is international in scope, but its implementation functions at the regional level. Its success is dependent upon the strength of partnerships called joint ventures, which involve federal, state, provincial, tribal, and local governments, businesses, conservation organizations, and individual citizens. Joint ventures develop implementation plans focusing on areas of concern identified in the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, and these implementation plans can serve as useful catalogs for potential NRDA restoration projects.

To date, North American Waterfowl Management Plan joint ventures have invested more than \$4.5 billion to protect, restore, and/or enhance more than 15.7 million acres of habitat. The North American Wetlands Conservation Act has done far more than provide a much needed funding mechanism for the Plan. The Act is also relied upon to support other bird conservation plans including the North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, Partners in Flight, and the United States Shorebird Conservation Plan, all of which are enhanced through cooperative efforts put forward through the North American Bird Conservation Initiative.

For more information on the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and related conservation plans, please see the following web sites:

www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtm

www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/NAWMP/index.shtm

www.nabci-us.org/

2.5 Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program

The goal of the FWS Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration Program (WSFR) is to strengthen the ability of state and territorial fish and wildlife agencies to effectively meet the consumptive and nonconsumptive

needs of the public for fish and wildlife resources. The WSFR provides oversight and/or administrative support for the following grant programs:

- Boating Infrastructure Grant Program
- Clean Vessel Act Program
- Coastal Impact Assistance Program
- Coastal Wetlands Act
- Landowner Incentive Grant Program
- Multistate Conservation Grant Program
- Sport Fish Restoration Program
- State Wildlife Grant Program
- Tribal Wildlife Grants
- Tribal Landowner Incentive Program
- Wildlife Restoration Program

These programs are partnerships between individual states and the FWS, with FWS providing funding for states that wish to participate. Not all states participate in all of these programs, and it is advisable to check with your state co-trustees to determine if a given WSFR program is available in your work area.

The Boating Infrastructure Grant Program provides funding for grants to the states and territories, local governments, and private marinas to install, renovate, and maintain tie-up facilities for nontrailerable (26 feet or more in length) recreational boats. Grants of up to \$100,000 are provided annually on a noncompetitive basis to all states and territories; additional funds are made available through a national competition to all states and territories. One of the 10 ranking criteria for the competitive grants is that projects provide for public/private and public/public partnership efforts to develop, renovate, and maintain tie-up facilities. The Sport Fishing and Boating Partnership Council annually recommends projects to receive competitive grants to the FWS. For more information see the Boating Infrastructure Grant Program web site: wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/BIG/BIG.htm.

The goal of the Clean Vessel Act is to help reduce pollution from vessel sewage discharges. Grants are available to states on a competitive basis for the construction and/or renovation, operation, and maintenance of pumpout and portable toilet dump stations. Federal funds can cover up to 75 percent of all approved project costs with the remaining funds provided by states or marinas. For more information see the Clean Vessel Act web site: wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/CVA/CVA.htm

The Coastal Impact Assistance Program (CIAP) provides federal grant funds derived from federal offshore lease revenues to oil producing states for conservation, protection, or restoration of coastal areas including wetlands; mitigation of damage to fish, wildlife, or natural resources; planning assistance and the administrative costs of complying with these objectives; implementation of a federally-approved marine, coastal, or comprehensive conservation management plan; and mitigation of the impact of outer Continental Shelf activities through funding of onshore infrastructure projects and public service needs. States eligible for CIAP funding are Alabama, Alaska, California, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Texas. A total of 67 political subdivisions within the six states are also eligible to apply and receive CIAP funds, and

the grant funds must be used to directly benefit an authorized use to conserve, restore, enhance, and protect renewable natural resources. Non-federal matching funds are not required for approved grant projects associated with CIAP. For more information see the CIAP web site:

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/CIAP/CIAP.htm

The Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) provides federal grant funds to states to protect and restore habitat on private lands to benefit federally-listed, proposed or candidate species, and other species determined to be at-risk. The program is funded by revenues collected from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas royalties, which are deposited into the Land and Water Conservation Fund and appropriated annually by Congress to LIP. Grant funds must be used to establish or supplement state landowner incentive programs to benefit species identified in each state's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy. The LIP Program includes two funding tiers, Tier One (non-competitive) and Tier Two (nationally competitive). Under Tier One each state may receive funding for eligible projects up to \$200,000; if adequate funding exists in the fiscal year appropriation, Tier Two grants are evaluated by the WSFR and awarded through a national competition. For more information see the LIP web site:

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/LIP/LIP.htm.

The Multistate Conservation Grant Program (MSCGP) provides funding for wildlife and sport fish restoration projects identified as priorities by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA). A total of \$6 million annually is provided for the MSCGP, with \$3 million coming from the Sport Fish Restoration Boating and Trust Fund and \$3 million coming from the Wildlife Restoration Account. High priority projects address problems affecting states on a regional or national basis, and usually address biological research, species population status determinations, outreach, surveys of hunter and angler participation, hunter and angler education, economic analyses of the value of hunting and fishing, and regional or multistate habitat needs assessments. For more information see the MSCGP website:

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/MultiState/MS.htm.

The Sport Fish Restoration Program (SFR) provides funds to States for the management, conservation, and restoration of fishery resources. The SFR is authorized by the Sport Fish Restoration Act (commonly referred to as the Dingell-Johnson Act) of 1950. The source of funding is excise taxes on fishing equipment, motorboat and small engine fuels, import duties, and interest. It is a cost-reimbursement program, where the state covers the full amount of an approved project, then applies for reimbursement through FWS for up to 75 percent of the project expenses. State partners must provide at least 25 percent of the project costs from a non-Federal source. For more information see the SFR web site:

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SFR/SFR.htm.

The State Wildlife Grants Program provides federal grant funds for developing and implementing programs that benefit wildlife and their habitats, including species not hunted or fished. Priority is placed on projects that benefit species of greatest conservation concern, and grant funds must be used to address conservation needs such as research, surveys, species and habitat management, and monitoring. The conservation needs must be identified within a state's Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy, and may also be used to update a state's Strategy. The source of funding is revenues collected from Outer Continental Shelf oil and gas royalties, which are deposited in the Land and Water Conservation Fund and apportioned annually based on a formula incorporating land area and population. For more information

see the State Wildlife Grants Program web site:

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/SWG/SWG.htm.

The Tribal Wildlife and Tribal Landowner Incentive Grant Programs are administered to federally-recognized tribal governments through a competitive grant program. The source of funding is annual appropriations from the Land and Water Conservation Fund, and matching funds and partnerships are not required. Funds may be used for projects that provide for the protection, restoration, and management of habitat to benefit species at risk, including federally-listed endangered or candidate species, as well as proposed or candidate species. For more information see the Tribal Wildlife and Tribal Landowner Incentive Grant Program web sites:

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/TWG/TWG.htm

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/TLIP/TLIP.htm

The Wildlife Restoration Program (WR) provides grant funds to states for projects to restore, conserve, manage and enhance wild birds and mammals and their habitat. Projects also include providing public use and access to wildlife resources, hunter education, and development and management of shooting ranges. The WR Program is authorized the Wildlife Restoration Act (commonly referred to as the Pittman-Robertson Act) of 1937. The source of funding is excise taxes on firearms, ammunition, archery equipment and arrow components, and funds are apportioned to states based on a formula incorporating land area and number of licensed hunters. Grant funds are disbursed to states for approved grants on a reimbursement basis for up to 75% of project costs. For more information see the WR Program web site:

wsfrprograms.fws.gov/Subpages/GrantPrograms/WR/WR.htm.

2.6 National Fish Passage Program

The National Fish Passage Program (NFPP; www.fws.gov/fisheries/fwco/fishpassage/) works to restore native fish and other aquatic species to self-sustaining levels by reconnecting habitat that has been fragmented by artificial barriers. The program operates on a voluntary basis to implement cooperative and environmentally sound fish passage projects with federal, state, local, and tribal agencies, as well as private partners and stakeholders. Fish passage projects restore natural flows and fish migration by removing artificial barriers or providing ways for aquatic species to bypass them. By restoring access to historic habitats, interjurisdictional fish populations benefit as do migratory birds, threatened and endangered species, and some marine mammals.

Appropriations for the NFPP support regional and national fish passage coordinators, in-water fish passage projects, and the Fish Passage Decision Support System (FPDSS) database. Projects that show demonstrable ecological benefits for federal trust species, exhibit permanence of fish passage benefits, and include the greatest number of partners, among other factors, are selected for funding under the NFPP. Funds used to implement projects must secure at least 50 percent of the total cost from partners, via in-kind services or cash; this applies to the overall regional program and need not be achieved in every project. Of these funds, 70 percent must be used for in-the-water project costs, with no more than 30 percent allocated to cover expenses related to planning, evaluation, and other indirect costs associated with the project.

2.7 Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act

The Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Act (GLFWRA) was passed in 1990 and reauthorized in 1998 and 2006 in recognition of the fact that the Great Lakes contain 20 percent of the world's fresh water, and support commerce and recreation for 25 percent of the population of Canada and 10 percent of the population of the United States. The Great Lakes Fishery Resources Restoration Study was completed in 1995 and found that additional actions and better coordination were needed to protect and effectively manage fisheries resources within the Great Lakes Basin. State fisheries agencies and Indian tribes are eligible to submit proposals, but may do so in cooperation or partnership with other interested entities. To initiate a proposal, a letter of intent is submitted by a research institution, management agency, or Indian tribe. The Great Lakes Fish and Wildlife Restoration Proposal Review Committee reviews letters of intent to recommend proposals for the restoration of fish and wildlife resources in the basin for financial support under the Act. The review committee provides recommendations to the Director of the FWS, who ultimately makes the final selection.

During the evaluation process, there are several criteria that must be met prior to making a recommendation for project funding. For instance, all proposals must be consistent with the goals of the Great Lakes Water Quality Agreement, the Convention on Great Lakes Fisheries, the 1980 Joint Strategic Plan for the Management of Great Lakes Fisheries, the Nonindigenous Aquatic Nuisance Prevention and Control Act of 1990, and the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The review committee may recommend, for funding only, proposals that are consistent with fish community objectives and related rehabilitation and assessment plans. If selected, at least 25 percent of the cost of implementing the project proposal may be paid in cash or in-kind contributions by non-federal sources. Federal funds received by a state or local government may not be considered as a non-federal source.

To date, more than \$5.6 million in federal funds, matched by over \$3.6 million in non-federal funds, have supported 97 separate projects. These projects were selected from a total of 301 project pre-proposals submitted, with accompanying requests of more than \$27.8 million. Future projects will continue to encourage cooperative conservation, restoration, and management of fish and wildlife and their habitats and address impacts associated with climate change, population growth, demand for water, pollution and contamination, habitat alteration and destruction, fish and wildlife diseases, and invasive species.

2.8 Circle of Flight Program

The Bureau of Indian Affairs (BIA) administers the Circle of Flight program, which is available to federally-recognized tribes located in BIA's Midwest Region. The Circle of Flight program is a tribal wetland and waterfowl enhancement initiative that has been implemented on 30 reservations in Michigan, Minnesota, and Wisconsin. The program has helped conserve over 100,000 acres of wetland habitat, and is a cost-share assistance program that seeks to leverage funds from other sources such as tribal NRDA settlement funds. For more information on Circle of Flight, see the following web sites:

www.bia.gov/WhoWeAre/RegionalOffices/Midwest/index.htm

<http://www.glifwc.org/publications/pdf/CircleOfFlight2010.pdf>

3.0 OTHER FEDERAL RESTORATION PROGRAMS

Many federal agencies administer grant programs that can be used for “value-added” habitat restoration in conjunction with NRDAR restoration activities, and the following programs are by no means a complete listing of all federal programs that can be used in partnerships to accomplish habitat restoration. For more information please consult www.grants.gov for a more complete listing of federal grant opportunities.

3.1 U.S. Department of Agriculture

The U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), through its Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) and Farm Service Agency (FSA), offer a number of conservation programs that can be incorporated into NRDAR restoration activities. While most USDA conservation programs are geared toward individual landowners, programs such as the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, Mississippi River Basin Healthy Watersheds Initiative, and Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative are partnerships among agricultural producers, tribes, states, other federal agencies, and private groups that help protect environmentally sensitive lands, decrease erosion, restore wildlife habitat, and protect ground and surface water at the watershed scale. For information on these and other USDA conservation programs, see the following web site: www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/

3.2 U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) administers several watershed-based funding programs, including Clean Water Act Section 319 grants, Wetlands Program Development grants, Five Star Restoration grants, the State Revolving Fund Program, Beach Act grants, and Environmental Education grants. The EPA also administers the National Estuary Program (NEP), an ecosystem-based management program which focuses on water quality improvement and habitat restoration and protection in 28 study areas nationwide. Many NEPs keep extensive lists of potential restoration projects within their study area boundaries, and can be excellent sources for potential NRDAR restoration projects. For more information on these and other EPA grant programs, see the following web sites: water.epa.gov/grants_funding/shedfund/watershedfunding.cfm
water.epa.gov/type/oceb/nep/index.cfm

In addition to grant programs and watershed management initiatives, the EPA also provides guidance for Supplemental Environmental Projects (SEPs), which can provide additional opportunities for accomplishing restoration in conjunction with environmental enforcement actions taken by the EPA or by states with similar environmental enforcement authorities. Supplemental Environmental Projects are a discretionary enforcement option for EPA and some states and, typically, are environmentally beneficial projects undertaken by a defendant in lieu of paying monetary penalties. The natural resource trustees, working closely and cooperatively with the enforcing regulatory authority in a global settlement context, can design, apply and use SEPs to achieve restoration which might not otherwise occur. For a more thorough discussion of SEPs, see the Final Supplemental Environmental Projects Policy issued by EPA at www.epa.gov/compliance/resources/policies/civil/seps/fnlsup-hermn-mem.pdf.

3.3 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

The National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), in addition to its NRDAR responsibilities under the Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP), administers the Community-Based Restoration Program that awards and leverages funds for habitat restoration projects and encourages community involvement and stewardship. For information on these and other NOAA habitat restoration partnership opportunities, please see the following web site: <http://www.habitat.noaa.gov/restoration/index.html>

3.4 Water Resources Development Act

The Water Resources Development Act (WRDA) was first passed by Congress in 1986, and most recently reauthorized in 2007. The WRDA is administered by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (USACE), and provided a mechanism whereby the federal government, states, communities, and other nonfederal interests jointly administered and funded water resource planning projects. The WRDA also emphasized environmental considerations as an intrinsic component of water resources planning, and many wetland and riparian restoration projects have resulted from the reforms initiated by the passage of this law. Several large-scale WRDA projects have been identified in USACE districts across the nation, including the Everglades and South Florida Ecosystem Restoration Program, the Chesapeake Bay Environmental Restoration and Protection Program, and the Hudson River Habitat Restoration Program. Many WRDA projects, such as the Grand Calumet River Restoration Program, are associated with NRDAR sites, and specific restoration practices identified within WRDA projects are often “adopted” as NRDAR restoration projects. Advantages of co-developing NRDAR restorations with WRDA projects include leveraging opportunities and economies of scale, as WRDA projects typically adhere to a 75% federal/25% non-federal cost-share ratio. For more information on the WRDA, contact your local USACE district office.

3.5 Great Lakes Restoration Initiative

The Great Lakes Restoration Initiative (GLRI) is large-scale, multi-agency effort devoted to the restoration of watersheds in the Great Lakes region of the United States. It encompasses portions of Illinois, Michigan, Minnesota, New York, Ohio, Pennsylvania, and Wisconsin, and addresses five urgent issues:

- Cleaning up toxics and areas of concern
- Combating invasive species
- Promoting nearshore health by protecting watersheds from polluted runoff
- Restoring wetlands and other habitats
- Tracking progress and working with strategic partners

The GLRI is administered by a task force consisting of the Council on Environmental Quality, the EPA, and the Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, Health and Human Services, Homeland Security, Housing and Urban Development, Interior, State, and Transportation. Beginning in 2010, projects have been funded on an annual basis to address the urgent issues listed above, and to date \$255

million in EPA funds have been disbursed to federal agencies and \$163 million have been granted to local governments, state governments, non-profit organizations, universities, and tribes. For more information see the GLRI web site at greatlakesrestoration.us/index.html.

3.6 Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act

The Coastal Wetlands Planning, Protection, and Restoration Act (CWPPRA) was enacted in 1990 and is designed to identify, prepare, and fund construction of coastal wetlands restoration projects. Managing agencies of CWPPRA are the state of Louisiana, USACE, EPA, FWS, USDA-NRCS, and NOAA. Since its passage, 151 coastal restoration and protection projects have been authorized, benefiting over 110,000 acres of coastal habitat in Louisiana. Funding levels have fluctuated from \$30 million to \$80 million per year since 1990, and funded projects provide for long-term conservation of wetlands and fish and wildlife populations through the implementation of cost-effective plans that restore, protect, or enhance coastal wetlands. Techniques utilized by CWPPRA project managers, scientists, and engineers to repair wetlands include:

- Marsh creation and restoration
- Shoreline protection
- Hydrologic restoration
- Beneficial use of dredged material
- Terracing
- Sediment trapping
- Vegetative planting
- Barrier island restoration
- Bank stabilization

For more information about CWPPRA and the projects funded under its authority, see the following web site: www.lacoast.gov/new/About/Default.aspx

4.0 STATE RESTORATION PROGRAMS

Many states and territories administer their own cost-share habitat restoration programs or land acquisition initiatives, and DOI NRDAR practitioners should consult with their state counterparts to identify possible partnering opportunities. For example, many states use lottery revenues to fund land acquisition, habitat restoration, and other conservation projects, and these funds can be leveraged against federal NRDAR settlements. Other state programs such as conservation license plates can provide additional partnership funding, and effective communication between state and federal trustees is key to taking advantage of these opportunities.

5.0 NON-GOVERNMENTAL RESTORATION PROGRAMS

Several non-governmental organizations (NGOs) administer grant or cost-share programs that can be combined with NRDAR restoration efforts. In addition to funding, NGOs can help trustees develop ideas for restoration projects, assist with land acquisition, provide long-term protection through the use of conservation easements and purchase of development rights, and provide biological monitoring. They can also provide volunteers, including youth groups, to take part in the on-the-ground restoration efforts and to monitor the effects of the restoration over time. Groups such as the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, Ducks Unlimited, and the Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation have grant programs that can help restore and/or acquire habitat, while others such as The Nature Conservancy and The Conservation Fund or local land trusts can help acquire habitat or administer conservation easements. While DOI does not endorse specific NGOs for use in restoration projects, they are in many instances important partners in NRDAR restoration programs. Some examples of effective federal, state, and NGO partnerships include the following:

- The Lone Mountain Coal Slurry Spill in Virginia resulted in injury to fish, federally-listed mussels, and critical habitat for two federally-listed fishes in the Powell River watershed. A collaborative partnership between FWS, The Nature Conservancy (TNC), and the Virginia Land Conservation Foundation resulted in the acquisition or protection of 463 acres of riparian buffer area habitat by TNC, who in turn transferred the properties to the Virginia Natural Area Preserve System. This land acquisition and protection program helped sustain water quality and ensure the success of the restored aquatic system.
- Ducks Unlimited provided \$100,000 and Pheasants Forever provided \$50,000 for multi-partner, \$1.5 million wetland restoration in Winnebago County, Wisconsin. The funds were combined with a NRDA settlement and other funding sources to restore Rush Lake, a 3,000 acre prairie pothole. Funding was used for land acquisition, restoration of historic hydrological regimes, and to enable water level management to benefit migratory birds, fisheries, and water quality.

6.0 FOSTERING PUBLIC PARTICIPATION

Initial agency, industry, or public participation should be sought during the scoping of potential restoration projects and can be facilitated by the use of public notices or meetings. As an example, when restoration planning was proceeding for the use of settlement funds from a settlement at the Cleveland Mill NPL Site in New Mexico, agencies identified during the scoping process a community group that was working on flood control by reconstructing riparian habitat and a Youth Conservation Corps unit that provided labor at a reasonable cost that was used for planting riparian species of trees. Another example is the Apex Barges/Galveston Bay Oil Spill, where groups including the Galveston Bay Foundation, Galveston/Houston Scenic Corridor, and the Nature Conservancy provided project ideas during the restoration scoping process. Volunteers organized by the Galveston Bay Foundation provided the labor for

planting salt marsh plants as one of the selected projects. The Galveston/Houston Scenic Corridor provided matching funds for removal of illegal fill and marsh construction, and additional funding was provided by CWPPRA as matching funds to money provided by the trustee council. Local companies may also be looking for public service opportunities for their employees to give something back to the community and may be able to provide labor or in-kind services to restoration projects.