



2014 State Wildlife Grants

Request for Proposals

Program Overview

As part of the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's State Wildlife Grant (SWG) program, Congress charged each state and territory with developing a state Comprehensive Wildlife Conservation Strategy (CWCS). Arkansas' CWCS (now referred to as the Arkansas Wildlife Action Plan) provides an essential foundation for the future of wildlife conservation and an opportunity for state and federal agencies and other conservation partners to fit together individual and coordinated roles in conservation efforts across the state. As a part of this, the Arkansas Game and Fish Commission is responsible for requesting and administering State Wildlife Grants to support the implementation of the Arkansas Wildlife Action Plan. State Wildlife Grants are distributed specifically for the protection and management of species in greatest need of conservation (SGCN) identified in the Arkansas Wildlife Action Plan. The Action Plan and the most recent federal guidelines (2007) for grants to states are provided online at www.wildlifearkansas.com.

Eligibility. State Wildlife Grants are available to state agencies, nonprofit organizations, citizen groups, and universities. Projects totaling \$10,000 to \$300,000 will be considered for funding.

Duration. The duration period for projects will be approximately October 1, 2014 – September 30, 2016.

Project Evaluation Criteria. Projects will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- is feasible and practical in a 2 year time period
- addresses priority actions of the Arkansas Wildlife Action Plan as outlined in Table 1
- is within the scope of funding priorities as identified in this RFP
- uses funds efficiently and effectively
- is within the qualifications and abilities of the organization(s) and individual(s) involved.

Review Process. Comments on proposed projects will be solicited from the scientific community and will be taken into consideration by the implementation team. The implementation team will review project proposals and request full proposals from selected applicants.

Match Requirement. All applicants will be required to provide matching funds. Matching funds can NOT come from federal funds. Cash match contributions, such as staff time, facilities, equipment or supplies and in-kind contributions, such as volunteer hours, are allowable as match. At this time, Congress has not yet decided the match requirement. We are hopeful that the previous year's non-federal match requirement of 35% will be continued. However, it is

suggested that applicants prepare budgets providing for a 35% and a 50% match requirement.

Proposal Instructions. Project proposals should be submitted as Word or PDF files. Font size should be 12 point and margins should be 1 inch. Proposals should not exceed 5 pages and should adhere to the following layout:

1. Page 1 –single cover page that provides:
 - a. Project Title
 - b. Project Summary (short paragraph highlighting project goals and objectives)
 - c. Project Leader (name, job title, affiliation, and contact information)
 - d. Project Partners (name, affiliation, contact information)
 - e. Project Budget (include SWG amount requested, match amount provided, and total amount of project).
2. Pages 2-4 – Project Statement. This is the principal component of the proposal and should be written as clearly and concisely as possible. Tables, graphs, maps, and photos may be used. Required elements of the project statement are:
 - a. Need – Explain why the project is necessary and list the priorities that your project is addressing.
 - b. Purpose and Objectives - State the purpose and objectives, and base them on the need. The purpose states the desired outcome of the proposed project in general or abstract terms. The objectives state the desired outcome of the proposed project in terms that are specific and quantified.
 - c. Location – Describe where the project will take place (list ecoregion, county, habitats targeted). Provide a map.
 - d. Approach – Describe the methods that will be used to accomplish objectives. Include an expected timeline for accomplishments.
 - e. Expected Results and Benefits – Describe the anticipated benefits to SGCN as a result of your project. Include a list of SGCN that will be affected, indicating which SGCN are known from the project location(s). Proposals that include habitat and/or capital improvements should include a commitment to maintain improvements for a proposed number of years (identify useful life of capital improvements/continued maintenance of habitat).
 - f. Budget – Provide budget elements (salary, equipment, travel, etc.) and sources. Overhead or indirect costs may be included in your budget, but are limited to 10% of total project costs. Anything in excess of 10% must be justified in your proposal. Student tuition is an allowable cost, but the amount applied should be commensurate with the amount of time devoted to the project.
3. Page 5 – Qualifications. Provide a short description of the qualifications/experience of the project leader and project partners involved.

Deadline for Proposals. Project proposals are due *February 7, 2014*.

Proposal Submissions. Proposals should be submitted via email to:

Allison Fowler
Wildlife Diversity Program Coordinator
Wildlife Management Division, AGFC
Email address: atfowler@agfc.state.ar.us

Table 1. 2014 State Wildlife Grant Funding Priorities

Emerging Issues	Action	Comments	Page(s) in Plan
White Nose Syndrome	Actions as proposed.	Emerging issue added at AWAP conference.	Emerging issue approved by USFWS.
Invasive Species	Identify and develop conservation actions.	Emerging issue added at 2010 AWAP conference. Steering committee recommends approval of a task force to identify plant/animal native/exotic invasive species in Arkansas with special emphasis on impacts to Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) with recommendations for developing and prioritizing Conservation Actions to address impacts.	Emerging issue pending approval by USFWS.
Birds			
Lanius ludovicianus migrans, Ammodramus henslowii, Tympanuchus cupido, Circus cyaneus, Empidonax traillii, Cistothorus platensis, Ammodramus savannarum, Asio flammeus, Tyto alba, Vireo bellii, Chondestes grammacus, Calcarious pictus, Ammodramus leconteii, Tryngites subruficollis, Colinus virginianus, Bartramia longicauda	Implementation and/or evaluation of habitat restoration and management for native grasslands.	Over 95% of the state's native grasslands have been converted to other habitat types and uses. Restoration of native grasslands continues to be a high priority for bird conservation because grassland-dependent bird populations continue to decline sharply. Because grassland restoration is labor intensive, seed sources are limited and restoration actions take 4-6 years to reach a stage where it has the habitat structure suitable for grassland birds, this conservation action continues to be the Bird Taxa Team's highest priority. In order to reverse declines of grassland bird species, grassland restoration and associated management in Arkansas must continue to remain a high priority.	241, 121, 326, 183, 218, 186, 127, 138, 328, 335, 179, 150, 123, 322, 195, 141
Rallus elegans, Gallinula chloropus, Porphyrio martinica, Ixobrychus exilis, Botaurus lentiginosus, Podilymbus podiceps	Implementation and/or evaluation of habitat restoration and management for emergent wetlands.	Emergent wetlands are a high priority habitat upon which some of the rarest birds in the state depend, especially the King Rail, which is listed by the USFWS as an "imperiled species". Emergent wetlands are a habitat type which has declined sharply in Arkansas due to drainage, conversion and succession. Robust emergent wetlands were identified by AWAP research and monitoring as a critical habitat and the species which depend on emergent wetlands were found by the AWAP research to be some of the rarest in the state. Emergent wetlands must be managed every 4-5 years to prevent their succession into shrubby or early bottomland hardwood swamp habitat. Therefore restoration and management of emergent wetlands continues to be the Bird Taxa Team's top priority conservation action in order to conserve and reverse declines in marshbirds of Greatest Conservation Need.	297, 223, 291, 238, 147, 289
Picoides borealis, Aimophila aestivalis, Ammodramus henslowii, Pipilo erythrophthalmus, Sitta pusilla, Passerina ciris, Dendroica discolor, Melanerpes erythrocephalus, Colinus virginianus, Coccyzus americanus	Implementation and/or evaluation of habitat restoration and management of pine woodland and savanna.	Pine woodlands and savannas are a conservation priority because of the many bird SGCN supported in these habitats. These habitats are threatened by conversion to pine plantations, the lack of prescribed burning and the suppression of naturally-caused fires.	279, 113, 119, 282, 305, 271, 202, 252, 192, 188
Fish			
Etheostoma fragi	Distribution and abundance surveys, including tributaries.	This species was recently described and more information is needed about its distribution and abundance. This is an Ozark endemic.	443
All aquatic SGCN	Status of habitat connectivity, and identification and mitigation of barriers/impediments to connectivity.	Migration barriers are likely impacting these species of greatest conservation need. Connectivity of habitats is becoming of increasing concern due to habitat fragmentation.	Use page numbers from species accounts.
Noturus taylori, Etheostoma cragini, Etheostoma microperca, Etheostoma pallididorsum, Etheostoma moorei, Noturus lachneri, Percina pantherina, Crystallaria asprella, Ammocrypta clara, and Etheostoma fragi	Maintain, protect, and restore habitat within the Ozark Interior Highlands.	These species are sensitive to land use and habitat conservation will be required to prevent further imperilment.	521, 440, 449, 455, 452, 515, 527, 423, 417, 443
Mussels			
Lampsilis rafinesqueana, Quadrula cylindrica, Villosa lienosa, Toxolasma lividum, Venustaconcha ellipsiformis	Stream Bank/Riparian Corridor Restoration/Cattle Exclusion. Priority will be given to projects adjacent to the Illinois River.	The mussel community is rapidly declining and has been declining for 15+ years. L. rafinesqueana is a candidate for listing (listing priority number was recently elevated). Also, Q. cylindrica is a candidate for listing.	933, 998, 1044, 1016, 1032
Quadrula cylindrica	Stream Bank/Riparian Corridor Restoration.	Middle Fork Little Red River has a failing stream bank immediately upstream of a mussel bed.	998
Epioblasma florentina curtisi, E. triquetra, Leptodea leptodon, Arkansia wheeleri, Simpsonaias ambigua, Margaritifera hembli, Alismidonta viridis, Obovaria retusa, Cyprogenia aberti, C. stegaria and Obovaria sp. cf. jacksoniana (White River Drainage)	Develop DNA Barcode reference library for eDNA detection.	Rapidly developing technique for evaluating rare mussel populations of species that are difficult to detect with conventional techniques. This technique requires development of reference DNA sequences to identify presence of specific taxa.	903, 906, 958, 884, 1009, 966, 874, 895, 969

Crayfish			
Bouchardina robisoni, Fallicambarus gilpini, Fallicambarus petilicarpus, Fallicambarus strawni, Procambarus regalis	Monitor status. Determine habitat characteristics limiting species distributions, use terrestrial habitat characteristics to predict undiscovered localities beyond the known roadside occurrences. Use this data to inform conservation planning.	These burrowing crayfishes have limited ranges and have been included in a petition for ESA listing. Based on limited known information listing seems warranted for several. Because nearly all records are in proximity to roads, AHTD, USFWS, and AGFC have initiated discussion of developing a CCAA. We recommend working with a couple of the rarest to identify best predictive habitat characteristics and test the resulting predicted locations.	363, 378, 387, 390, 402
Orconectes marchandi	Monitor populations and examine genetic isolation of populations in advance of potential invasion of gapped ringed crayfish (Orconectes neglectus chaenodactylus).	The Mammoth Spring Crayfish is one of our most geographically restricted stream crayfish and an introduced species is spreading within the basin where it is found. Conservation of this species hinges on knowing where it is found and understanding genetic structuring between the streams where it is.	346
Insects			
Arkansas's unique biogeography: status of disjunct and relict populations	Obtain baseline distribution and population status on multiple species.	Very little is known about many of Arkansas' insect species. The Steering Committee recommends distribution and population status surveys that will lead to conservation action recommendations.	562-712
Habitats			
Woodlands (to include sandhills, oak woodlands, and pine-oak flatwoods), Savannas, Glades and Barrens	Habitat Management to maintain or increase habitat quality or increase patch size - including forest management for species of greatest conservation need. For example - overstory and mid-story manipulation, cedar removal, prescribed fire, shrub control, invasive species eradication, etc.	Action must be for the benefit of SGCN. Projects will be evaluated on the degree of imperilment and number of imperiled species benefited.	Use page numbers from species accounts.
Prairies and Native Grasslands	Habitat Management to maintain or increase habitat quality or increase patch size - including management for species of greatest conservation need. Management examples - structure manipulation, prescribed fire, cedar removal, shrub control, invasive species eradication, conversion of cool season grasses, etc.	Action must be for the benefit of SGCN. Projects will be evaluated on the degree of imperilment and number of imperiled species benefited.	Use page numbers from species accounts.
Wetlands	Restore, enhance and/or maintain wetland integrity. For example - composition, structure, function.	Action must be for the benefit of SGCN. Projects will be evaluated on the degree of imperilment and number of imperiled species benefited.	Use page numbers from species accounts.
Aquatic Habitat	Determine and validate environmental flows for one or more of the water regions within Arkansas.	Action must be for the benefit of SGCN. Projects will be evaluated on the degree of imperilment and number of imperiled species benefited.	Use page numbers from species accounts.
Aquatic Habitat	Improve aquatic habitat through conservation practices and sustainable design within the Ozark Interior Highlands.	Action must be for the benefit of SGCN. Projects will be evaluated on the degree of imperilment and number of imperiled species benefited.	Use page numbers from species accounts.
Karst Native Terrestrial Habitat	Protect karst openings and recharge zones and maintain groundwater quality for the following priority caves: - Fincher Cave and Granny Dean Cave, Washington County; - Bone Cave and Dozens Den Cave, Independence County; - Hankins Cave, Dodd Cave, Lafferty Spring Cave, Saltpeter Cave, Independence County; - Denny Horsethief Cave, Madison County; -Diamond Cave, Newton County.	Action must be for the benefit of SGCN. Projects will be evaluated on the degree of imperilment and number of imperiled species benefited.	Use page numbers from species accounts.
With the completion of some SWG-supported projects, information gathered leads to Phase Two conservation actions which build upon knowledge gained. An example: Dye-trace mapping defined the recharge of Foushee Cave and identified specific threats to endemic species. A Phase Two Conservation Action might request funding to protect vulnerable species and areas using acquisition or easements. To propose a project under this category, reference to a completed project's results is necessary.			