

# Session E01

## Funding for Habitat Purchase and Restoration

Derek Johnson – The Nature Conservancy

Frank Casey/Aimee Delach – Defenders of Wildlife

Bruce Taylor – Defenders of Wildlife

# Hungry? How bout some Alphabet Soup?

- WRP?
  - Wetland Reserve Program
- GRP?
  - Grasslands Reserve Program
- USFWS?
  - US Fish and Wildlife Service
- CELCP?
  - Coastal and Estuarine and Land Conservation Program
- NAWCA?
  - North American Wetland Conservation Act
- ASD?
  - Appraisal Services Directorate
- ARRTS?
  - Appraisal Request and Review Tracking System
- WHIP?
  - Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program

# 2002 Farm Bill

- Single largest Federal funding source for private lands conservation
- Average \$3 Billion/year
- Reauthorized Every 5 Years
- Nearly ½ of Landowners Turned Away

# Farm Bill Programs

- “Reserve” Programs
  - Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)
  - Wetlands Reserve Program (WRP)
  - Grasslands Reserve Program (GRP)
- Working Lands Programs
  - Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP)
  - Conservation Security Program (CSP)
  - Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program (WHIP)
  - Forestry Programs

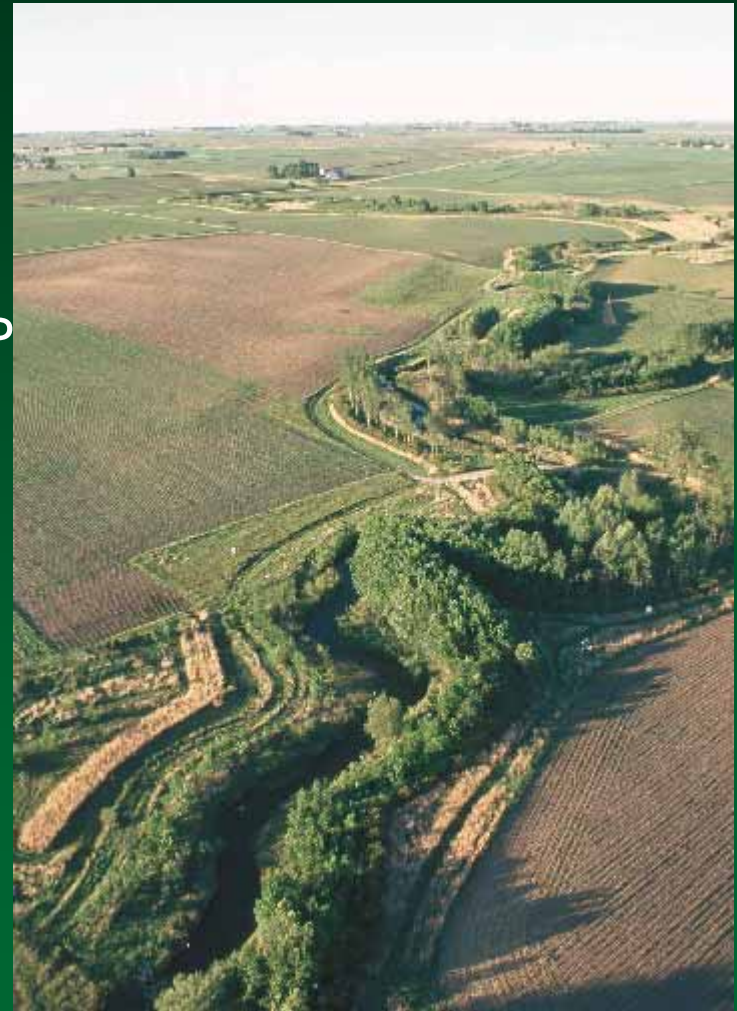


Photo: Lynn Betts, NRCS  
Living Lands Project

# Conservation Reserve Program

- Oldest and largest conservation program
- Targets highly erodible cropped land
- General Enrollment
  - Periodic signups for whole fields
  - Conversion to resource conserving crops
  - Cost-share assistance and rental payment
- Continuous Enrollment
  - Buffer strip practices
  - Larger cost share available

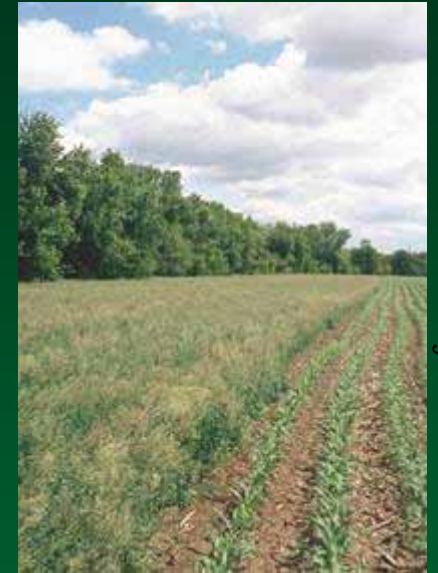
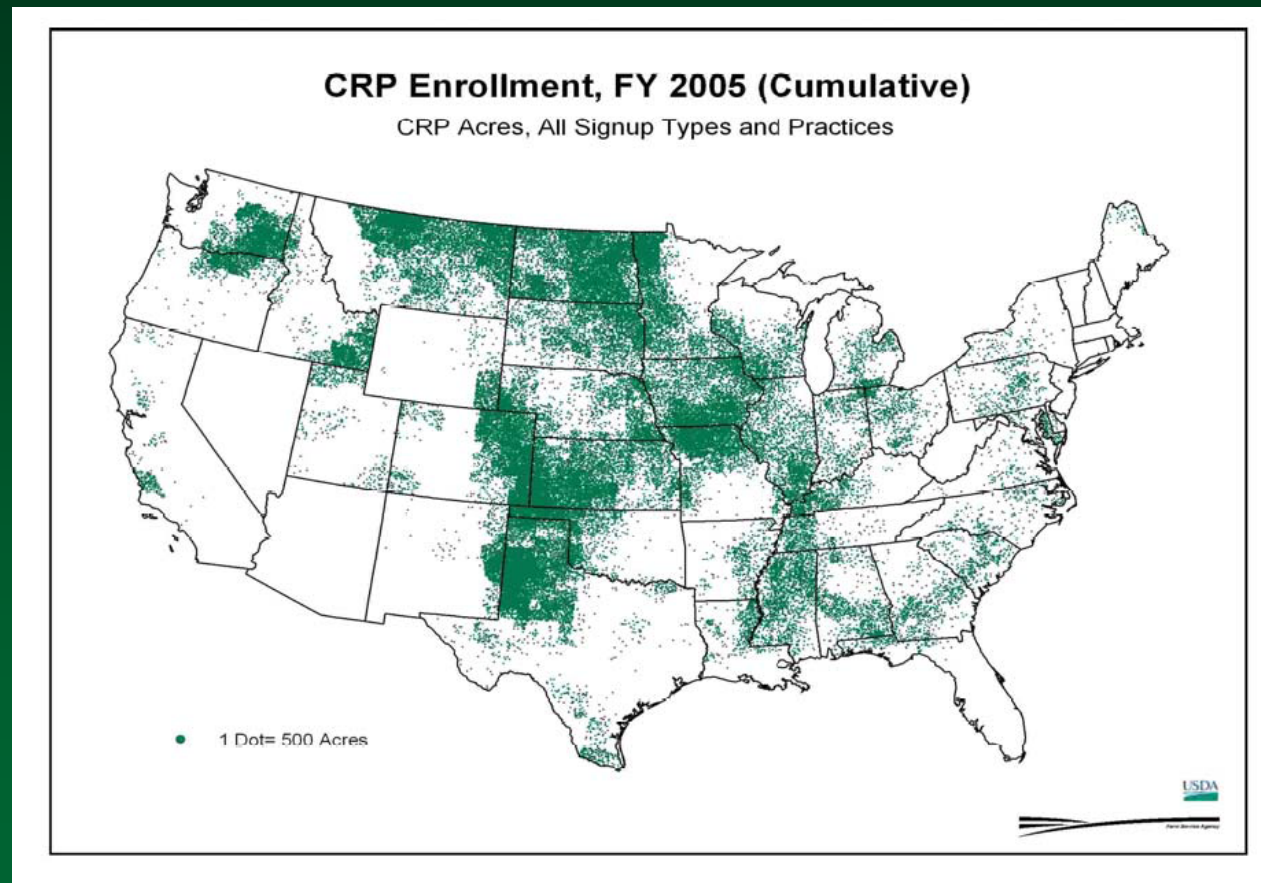


Photo: NRCS, Lynn Betts



Photo: Wisconsin NRCS  
Living Lands Project

# CRP Acreage Distribution



Map source: [http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA\\_File/fy2005.pdf](http://www.fsa.usda.gov/Internet/FSA_File/fy2005.pdf)

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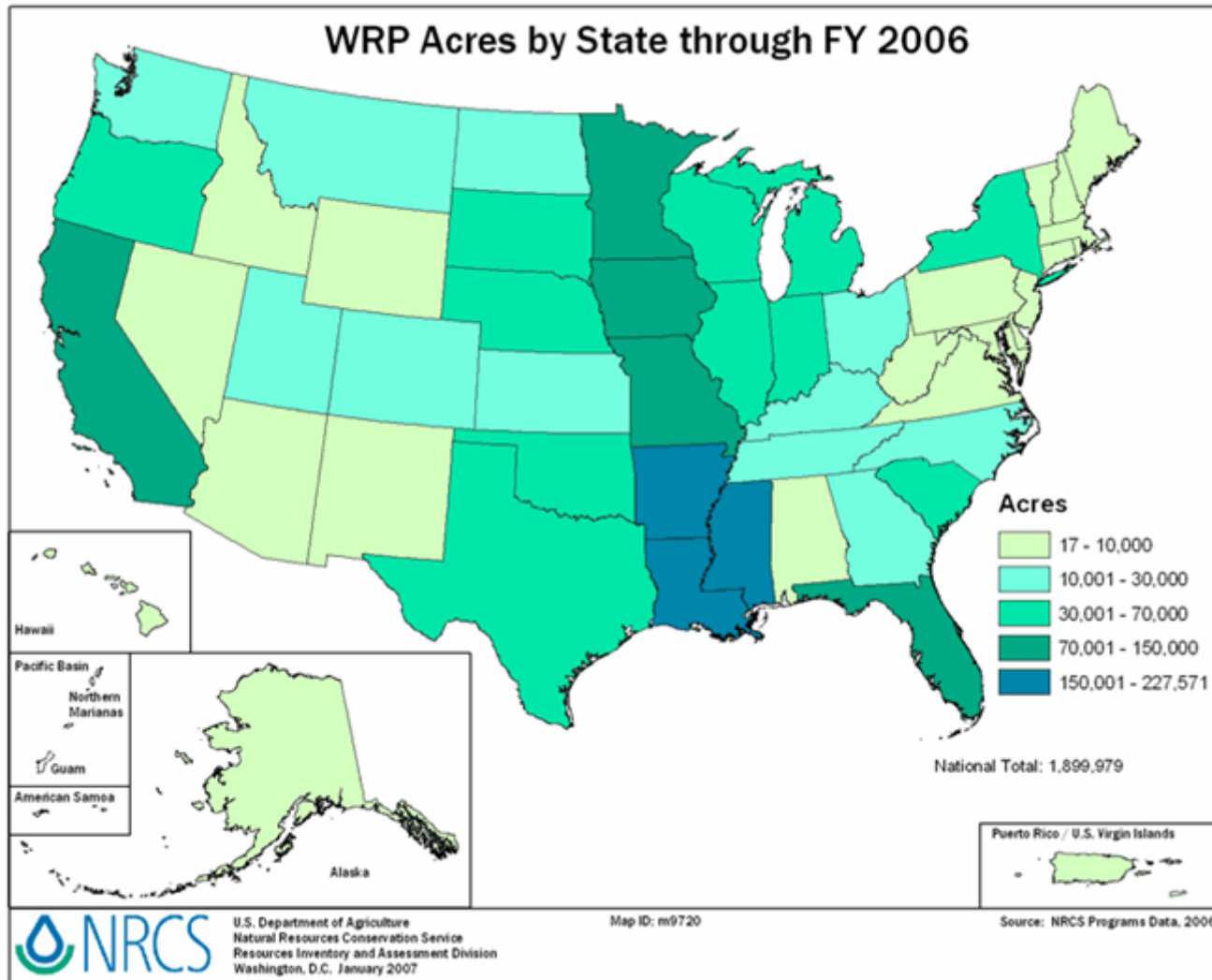
# Wetlands Reserve Program

- Technical & financial assistance for wetland protection
- Restoration cost-share, permanent and 30-year easements



Photo: NRCS, Lynn Betts

# WRP Acreage Distribution





# Grasslands Reserve Program

Photos: Gary Kramer, NRCS



- 2 million acres of grassland, rangeland, pastureland and shrub land
- Rental agreement or easement option + cost share
- Enrollment priorities
  - Working lands, threat of conversion, biodiversity

# Environmental Quality Incentives Program

- Cost share and incentives to address broad array of national goals
  - Water quality
  - Air quality
  - Erosion & Sedimentation
  - At-risk species habitat
- 60% to livestock



Photo: Lynn Betts, NRCS

# Conservation Security Program

- New program in 2002 farm bill
- Rewards most comprehensive conservation



Photo: Lynn Betts, NRCS

Living Lands Project

# Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program

- Voluntary program to protect & enhance wildlife habitat
- Small but particularly flexible program
- Prioritizes lands for declining species, practices that might not be funded otherwise, and priority habitats



# Resources for Further Info

- Farm Bill Conservation programs:  
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/programs/farmbill/2002/products.html>
- *Fish and Wildlife Benefits of Farm Bill Conservation Programs*, Technical Review 05-02  
<http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/TECHNICAL/nri/ceap/fwbenefit.html>



# Other federal funding programs

## US Forest Service

- Forest Legacy (via states)

## US Fish and Wildlife Service

### *Direct grants*

- North American Wetlands Conservation Act
- Private Stewardship

### *Grants to states*

- State Wildlife Grants
- Landowners Incentives Program
- Cooperative Endangered Species
- Coastal Wetlands Conservation



# Forest Legacy

- **Grants to states**
- **Fee title and easements**
- **Keep forest lands in forest use**
  - habitat conservation
  - working forests
- **1:1 non-federal match**
- **Long (really long...) lead time**
- **Annual appropriations**



# USFWS: direct grants

## North American Wetlands Conservation Act

- *Wetlands and waterfowl emphasis*
- *2:1 match to be competitive*

Standard grants (up to \$1 million)

- large-scale, not for beginners

Small grants (up to \$75,000)

- good entry level





# USFWS: direct grants



## Private Stewardship Grants

- At-risk species
- 10% match
- Going away?





# USFWS: grants to states

An aerial photograph of a river system winding through a landscape. The river has a large, prominent meander loop in the center. The surrounding land is a mix of dense green forest and brownish, open areas that appear to be wetlands or agricultural fields. In the background, there are rolling hills and mountains under a clear blue sky.

## Cooperative Endangered Species

- 25% match
- Conservation planning
- HCP land acquisition
- Recovery land acquisition

## Coastal Wetlands Conservation

- Up to 75% federal funding
- Acquisition and restoration



# USFWS: grants to states

## State Wildlife Grants

- Implement wildlife action plans
- 50% non-federal match

## Landowner Incentives Program

- at-risk species
- 25% non-federal match
- Going away?

# The Lovely “Yellow Book”

- Uniform Appraisal Standards for Federal Land Acquisition (UASFLA) = **Yellow Book**
- Required for any Dept of Interior funds
  - NAWCA (USFWS)
  - Coastal Wetland (USFWS)
  - Section 6 funds (USFWS)
  - Landowner Incentive Program (USFWS)
- *Currently* required for Farm Bill easement programs
  - FRPP
  - WRP
  - GRP



# What Does Yellow Book Require Above and Beyond USPAP?

Issue	Yellow Book	USPAP
Identification of Larger Parcel	Required	Not addressed
Partial Interest Acquisition	Under Federal Rule, “before and after”	Can appraise part to be acquired
Subject Sales History	10-year or report of last conveyance	3 year sales history
Inspection of Subject & Comparable Sales	Subject inspection required. Agency may require inspection of comps as well.	Not required as well as disclosed
Verification of Sales	With seller, buyer, or agent and recordation by reliable personnel	Not specifically required
Reporting Standards	Essentially “self-contained”	3 reporting options
Treatment of Consultant Reports	Accuracy & reasonableness must be confirmed by Appraiser	No Requirement
Landowner Involvement	LO must be offered chance to accompany appraiser	No Requirement

# Challenges with Yellow Book

- Smaller pool of qualified appraisers
- More work = more time and more \$\$
  - 3-6 months when working with...
- Another dance partner with heavy feet
  - Appraisal Services Directorate (ASD)
  - ARRTS
  - Involved in Statement of Work; choosing the appraiser; and appraisal review
  - Make ASD your friends!

# USFWS: Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Program

- Created 2001; Annual Congressional Appropriation
- For acquisition (fee or easement) of habitat for T&E species
- To State Agency, but can be passed through to land trusts
- Eligibility:
  - Published Recovery Plan
  - Newly listed species (2.5 yrs) w no Plan

# USFWS: Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Program

- How much money?
  - Can provide up to 75% match
  - ~\$14 million nationally
  - Allocated to 8 USFWS Regions (by formula)
  - FY 07, Region:
    - 1: \$3.1m
    - 2: \$1.7m
    - 3: \$730K
    - 4: \$3.6m
    - 5: \$920K
    - 6: \$750K
    - 7: \$196K
    - 8: \$2.92m



# USFWS: Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Program

- The Good:
  - Great for habitat goals
  - No appraisal or Purchase Agreement necessary for application
  - Can ask for extension if funds not spent by end of project cycle
  - Notice of Grant Agreement required

# USFWS: Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Program

- The Bad:
  - Not a ton of money available
    - FY08: Region 1 applications = \$7m (\$3m available)
  - Takes a while
    - Apps due ~end of August
    - Don't find out till Jan-May
  - Can't use \$\$ spent before "project date" as match
  - Gotta deal with the State agency



# USFWS: Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition Program

- The Ugly:
  - Cannot close on property until Grant Awards have at least been announced by national!
- More Information:
  - [www.fws.gov](http://www.fws.gov)



# USFWS: Partners for Fish and Wildlife

## Technical and financial assistance

- Private lands
- 10-year agreement

## Benefit habitat for trust species

*Migratory birds, inter-jurisdictional fish, Federally-listed endangered, threatened or other declining or imperiled species*



# Partners for Fish and Wildlife

## Why land trusts:

- Technical assistance
- Help with partners, funding, permits
- Potential ESA coverage

## What it doesn't provide:

- Much money

## Where to start:

- FWS state office or [fws.gov/partners](https://www.fws.gov/partners)



# Background

## Partners for Fish and Wildlife

- Started 1987, small group of biologists doing wetland restoration
- Expanded biodiversity focus
- Congressional authorization 2006
- \$42 million in FY 07
- Program shared between Refuges and Ecological Services



# Projects



## Wide range of projects

- Wetland restoration
- Fish passage
- Vegetation management
- Birds, butterflies, plants, fish

## Why they will want to work with you

- Good landowner; long-term conservation value



# Green Island

## McKenzie River Trust

Eugene, Ore.

- 5+ FTE
- 863-acre fee acquisition (2003)
- Confluence of Willamette and McKenzie rivers





# *The Green Island Project*

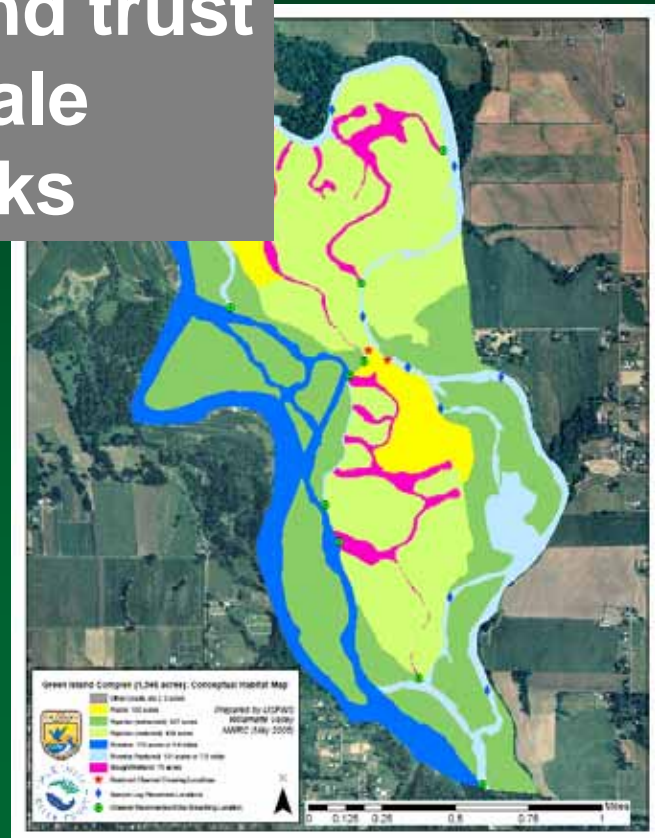
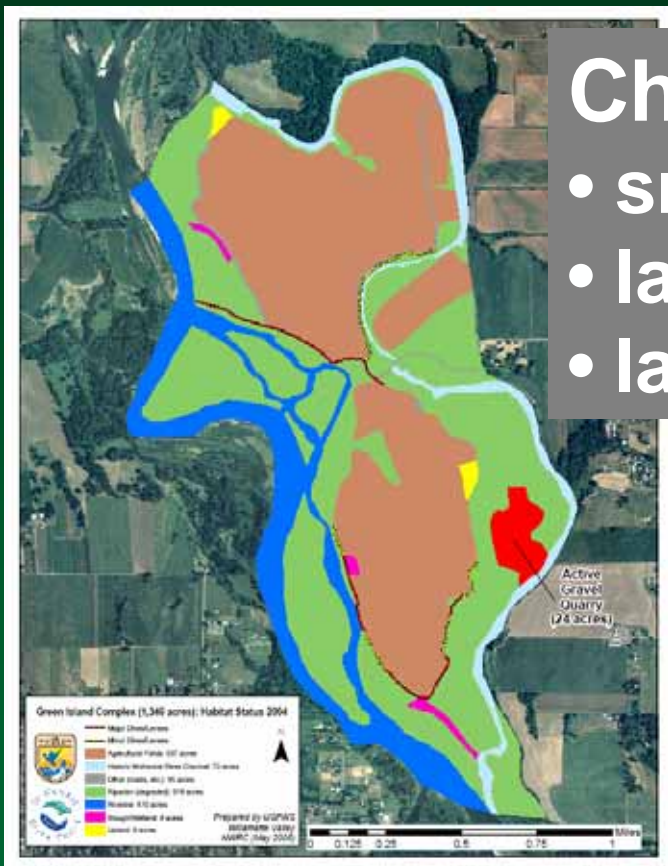
GREEN ISLAND PROJECT AREA



# Floodplain restoration

## Challenges

- small land trust
- large scale
- large risks





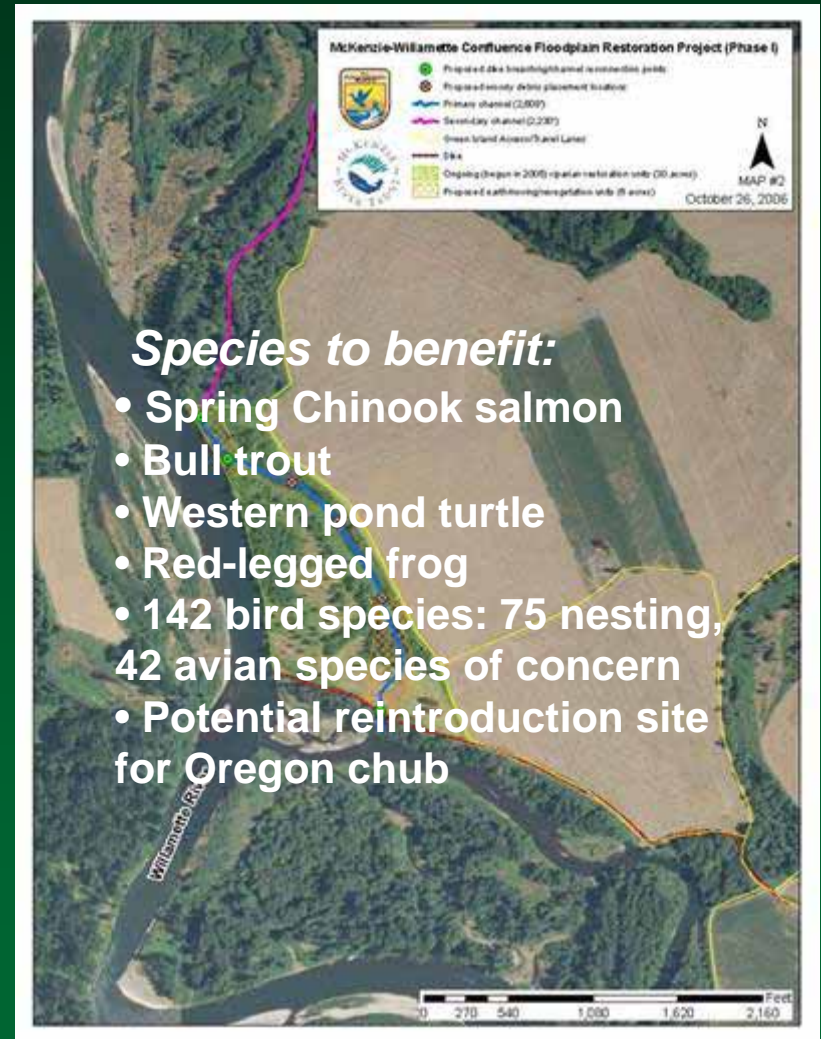
# Partners for Fish and Wildlife

## Green Island:

- Planning and design
- Permits and ESA clearance
- Partnerships
- Implementation
- Monitoring
- **Potential future refuge**

“Everything from mapping and GIS work to heavy equipment and reality checks...”

– Joe Moll, McKenzie River Trust



# Partners for Fish and Wildlife: Key points

## Opportunity to tap outside technical expertise

- expand land trust capacity
- Help navigate processes

## Relationships are key

- not a grant program
- Start early, clarify roles up-front
- develop long-term partnership

# USDA: Wetlands Reserve Program

Natural Resources Conservation  
Service

**\$450 million per year (Farm Bill)**

Purchases conservation easements

- Perpetual
- 30-year

Funds habitat restoration

- On WRP easements
- Restoration cost-share





# WRP\* basics

## Eligibility:

- Private lands
- History of agricultural use
- Potential for wetland restoration
- Ownership >1 year

## Priority:

- Ecological benefits
- Costs
- Partners

\* Get used to the acronyms;  
this is the NRCS



# WRP easements

NRCS purchases most rights

## *Permanent easement*

- Fair market value
- up to 100% of restoration

## *30-year easement*

- 75% of fair market value
- Up to 75% of restoration

## Appraisals

- Before vs. after (Yellow Book)



# WRP restoration

*Goal:* achieve the greatest wetland functions and values, along with optimum wildlife habitat, on every acre enrolled in the program.

- Strong emphasis on migratory birds.

**Restoration  
cost-share  
agreements**

- no easement
- up to 75% cost-share



# WRP and land trusts



## Limited experience

- TNC an exception

## Why land trusts should consider

- Money (lots) and technical assistance (some)

## Where to start

- NRCS state office

# Alder Creek Farm

## Lower Nehalem Community Trust

Nehalem, Ore.

- **1 FTE staff**
- **54-acre fee title acquisition (2005)**
- **Former dairy**
- **Diked former tidelands**





# Alder Creek Farm acquisition

**Purchased by  
trust's founders  
in 2003**

- 5 individuals

**Land Trust acquired  
in 2005**

- \$50,000 state
- \$50,000 small NAWCA
- \$72,000 WRP
- \$60,000 private donations



# Alder Creek Farm and WRP

## Simultaneous closing

- WRP easement
- land trust acquisition

## Easement boundary

- Reduced to be more competitive

## WRP restoration funding

- \$44,000
- Technical assistance
- Riparian planting
- Tidegate removal
- Seasonal wetlands

## Challenges

- Complexity of multiple easements
- First local WRP for NRCS





# WRP: key points

## Easements

- Recover acquisition costs or generate revenue

## Restoration

- Funding and technical assistance

## Partners

- more competitive

## Patience

- Moves slowly

## Caution

- Partners forever

# Good and “*Maybe*” Ugly

- Some Policy News
- Funding ?????
- Rush to Conversion
- Alternative Easement and Management Funding Sources



# Some Policy Highlights and Concerns

- Conservation Reserve Program
  - Steady at 39.2 Million Acres
  - County CRP and Easement Caps lifted for CREP
  - Grazing allowed for invasive species control
  - Marginal hay and pasture land eligible if it furthers fish and wildlife conservation objectives
  - County CRP and Easement Caps lifted for CREP
- Concerns
  - Rush to biofuels
  - Early outs
  - CREP Rental Rates







# Some Policy Highlights and Concerns

- Wetland Reserve Program
  - 250,000 Acres/year
  - Adds Floodplain Easements: 10,000 Acre Cap
  - Adds “riparian areas”
  - Adds “safe harbor”
  - Adds Wetland Reserve Enhancement Program:  
Priority to protect and enhance migratory bird habitat
- Distribution of Acreage



# Some Policy Highlights and Concerns

- Grassland Reserve Program
  - Allows max of 10% roll over from CRP acres/year
  - Emphasis on long term and permanent easements
  - Includes Safe Harbor
  - Sod Saver Provision
  - Creation of GREP: Non-profits can hold and enforce conservation easements
- Concerns
  - Only 1.34 Million Acres (House) or \$382 Million (Senate)



# Working Lands Programs

- Environmental Quality Incentives Program
  - New Regional Water Enhancement Program \$60 million/year; Cooperative Agreement approach; includes incentives and easements
- Conservation Security Incentives Program (Senate side): Combines EQIP and CSP
- Wildlife Habitat Incentives Program
  - \$85/year million 2008-2012
- Chesapeake Bay Program: Water Quality and Wildlife Habitat
  - \$10-\$55 million from 2008 to 2012



# Some Interesting Conservation Ideas

- Cooperative Conservation Partnership Initiative
  - 10%/year set aside from CSP, EQIP, FRPP, RWEPP, and WHIP for special regional projects
  - Grants to states, Tribes, Conservation NGO's, and in some way relates to agricultural conservation. Easements would seem to be allowed
  - Senate: Evaluation criteria includes priorities for plans, including state wildlife action plans
- Concern: Need to follow-through

# Some Interesting Conservation Ideas

- Market-based Approaches to Conservation: Ecosystem Service Payments
  - Emerging markets public non-market ecosystem services
- Concern: Several uncoordinated service standards and criteria being developed= confusion: e.g. carbon credits

# Overall Concerns Past and Present

- Enough funding to meet demand
- Adequate Technical Assistance
- How to Decrease Transactions Costs of Easement Programs



# Living Lands:

Helping Land Trusts  
Conserve Biodiversity

