PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM

FISH AND WILDLIFE HABITAT RESTORATION THROUGH PRIVATE LAND PARTNERSHIPS
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

OUR MISSION IS TO:

WORK WITH OTHERS TO CONSERVE, PROTECT AND ENHANCE FISH, WILDLIFE AND PLANTS AND THEIR HABITATS FOR THE CONTINUING BENEFIT OF THE AMERICAN PEOPLE.
The Partners Program is the Service’s vanguard for non-regulatory, voluntary, citizen and community-based stewardship efforts for fish and wildlife conservation on private lands built on:

- Open communication
- Trust
- Flexibility
- Respect
- Honesty

Photos: USFWS
PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM
Projects Nationwide Over the Last 10 Years
The Partners for Fish And Wildlife Program

• Provides financial and technical assistance to restore habitat on private lands (i.e., any land not in state or federal ownership, lease, or easement)

• Is a cost-share program only (no easements encumber the property) under applicable federal state and local laws (i.e., 404/401 and county permits, etc.)

• Requires a landowner agreement no less than 10 years in length to manage the land in accordance with the habitat restored

• Is Non-Regulatory

• Does not fund mitigation projects
Missouri Private Lands Office
Provides habitat restoration on private lands including:

- Invasive species control
- Wetland design/development
- Missouri source native seed planting
- Native habitat management guidance
- Workshops
Missouri Private Lands Office

- Keep common species common through native habitat restoration and enhancement
- Complement National Wildlife Refuges/other protected lands
- Reduce habitat fragmentation
A BIG FOCUS IN MISSOURI

- CLEAN WATER
- SUSTAINABLE WATER
- DIVERSE/SUSTAINABLE ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS
- SUSTAINABLE WORKING LAND
- FUTURE GENERATIONS
DIVERSE/SUSTAINABLE ECOLOGICAL SYSTEMS
Why We Restore Wetlands

- Wetlands provide water, varieties of habitats, food, and shelter supporting a diversity of innumerable species of plants and animals who depend on them for survival during part or all of their life cycle.

- Wetlands provide important ecological services such as storm protection and flood absorption, bank stabilization, erosion control, groundwater recharge, retention of nutrients, and pollution absorption as well.

- Wetlands are economic drivers providing water supply, fisheries, support for agriculture by replenishing and maintaining water tables, nutrient retention in floodplains, recreation and tourism.

- Wetlands support local social, economic and cultural traditions.
Historically wetlands occupied about 4.8 million acres across Missouri; equating to about 10% of the total land base in native various native wetland habitats which included wet shallow marshes, sloughs, fens, bottomland hardwoods, cypress-tupelo swamps and shrub wetlands.
Of the historic wetland which occurred in Missouri, 87% has been lost including marshes, sloughs, swamps, bottomland hardwoods and wet prairie habitats.
Missouri Private Lands Office

- Works Cooperatively With Others to Build Partnerships:
  - State and Federal government
  - County government
  - Communities
  - Schools
  - Non-government Organizations
Missouri Agricultural Wetland Initiative:
A Conservation Partnership
Sustainable agriculture is vital to Missouri’s Social and economic well-being and brings $88B to the state’s economy.

- 93% of Missouri wetlands have been converted to other uses.
- Restored wetlands provide a natural and economical method for filtering nutrients and protecting water and wildlife.
- 80% of all breeding bird populations in the U.S. along with ½ of the protected migratory birds rely on wetlands at some point in their life cycle.
- Water quality and quantity continue to be a concern in MO.

The Tenets of MAWI’s Strategy Started in 2005.
What is the Missouri Agricultural Wetland Initiative (MAWI)?

- Provides a framework for funding that allows for cost sharing with landowners.
- Provides combined technical expertise to design, develop, and manage wetland restoration projects.
Key Project Considerations

- Managing water as part of an integrated plan

Flood Protection Levee surrounding 200+ acres of cropland

Frequently Flooded
Key Project Considerations

- Managing water as part of an integrated plan
- Providing desirable wetland vegetation and suppressing undesirable plants
Wetland Conservation Considerations

- Managing water as part of an integrated plan
- Providing adequate wetland vegetation and suppressing undesirable plants
- Protecting existing agriculture production
- Coordinating with other wetland restoration efforts within the landscape to build habitat corridors for wetland species
Birds Depend on the Confluence Floodplain

All Bird Migration Routes

Dabbling Duck Migration
The Mississippi River corridor is the longest and most traversed migratory route for birds in the northern hemisphere. During peak migration, ducks, geese, shorebirds, large wading birds, raptors, warblers and other songbirds utilize habitats along the Confluence and the river corridor to rest, refuel and nest.
Helping birds can’t just happen on public land

**One-third of all North American bird species need urgent conservation action**

At Risk Score 4

**All Birds (1,154 species)**
- Low: 14%
- Moderate: 49%
- High: 37%

432 species on the Watch List are most at risk of extinction without significant action.

This mosaic in the Confluence represents historic distribution of wetland habitats including bottomland prairie and marsh, slough wetlands, bottomland forest, and riverfront forest interspersed through the network of river channels that make up the Mississippi River. Work with voluntary landowners helps meet goals to restore habitat as is feasible/sustainable.

From Heitmeyer and Bartletti, 2012
The Opportunity
Key Project Considerations

- Managing water as part of an integrated plan
- Providing adequate wetland vegetation and suppressing undesirable plants
- Protecting and enhancement of existing agriculture production
- Coordinating with other wetland restoration efforts within the landscape to build habitat corridors for wetland species in partnership
LET'S GET TOGETHER AND DEVELOP A CONSERVATION PLAN OF ACTION

I LOOK FORWARD WORKING WITH YOU!

DAN CRIGLER
FISH AND WILDLIFE BIOLOGIST
US FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
MISSOURI PRIVATE LANDS
636-300-1953 EXTENSION 4136
dan_crigler@fws.gov
"Our task is not to fix the blame for the past. . . but to fix the course for the future."

John F. Kennedy