



THE WILDERNESS SOCIETY

FOREST LEGACY AND LAND & WATER CONSERVATION FUND LAND ACQUISITION PROJECT PRIORITIES FOR FISCAL YEAR 2009

ARIZONA

Las Cienegas National Conservation Area

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management (National Landscape Conservation System)

LWCF Request: \$550,000

The Loving J Ranch is a 185 acre property adjacent to the Las Cienegas National Conservation Area, occupying a prime location in the Las Cienegas Creek watershed and wildlife corridor between mountain ranges. The ranch's resources include open space, rare native grassland and critical wildlife habitat. This part of the Las Cienegas valley is undergoing rapid growth and is threatened by development projects.

CALIFORNIA

California Desert Wilderness:

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management (National Landscape Conservation System)

LWCF Request: \$500,000

The California Desert provides habitat for many threatened and endangered species and provides recreational opportunities for people throughout Southern California and Nevada. The California Desert Protection Act of 1994 designated 69 new wilderness areas, many of which contain inholdings. As those properties become available on the market, funds are needed for their acquisition. There are 800,000 total acres of inholdings in 10-40 acre parcels, and federal funds would help to acquire several of these holdings.

Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management (National Landscape Conservation System)

LWCF Request: \$2.58 million

The Santa Rosa and San Jacinto Mountains National Monument is a critical resource for numerous endangered species and serves as a major recreational resource, featuring the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. More than 25 million people live within 100 miles of the Monument, with 500,000 residing in immediate proximity. There are more than 40,000 acres of inholdings within the Monument. The available acquisitions have outstanding resource values, including habitat for the endangered peninsular bighorn sheep. Currently available are 1,649 acres that offer outstanding wildlife values and/or recreational opportunities. The purchase of these affordable inholdings will also enhance BLM's ability to manage fire by creating an unfragmented natural setting rather than a hazardous urban interface.

GEORGIA

Southlands Research Center

Land Unit: Forest Service

FLP Request: \$4.5 million

The Silver Lake project includes 8,342 acres in Southwest Georgia, and is part of the 16,000 acre Southlands Research Center. This is a vital recreation area and the number one Forest Legacy project in the state

IDAHO

Idaho Wild & Scenic Rivers

Land Unit: Forest Service

LWCF Request: \$2.2 million

The 160 acre Morgan Ranch inholding contains wetland and riparian habitat located near the Middle Fork of the Salmon Wild & Scenic River in Valley County. The property is also within the Frank Church-River of No Return Wilderness, which is home to big game species like moose and mountain goats, along with other wildlife like wolverines and black bears. Moreover, endangered species of steelhead, salmon and trout are dependent on this area.

Upper Snake/South Fork Snake River ACEC/SRMA

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management (adjacent to the National Landscape Conservation System)

LWCF Request: \$300,000

This area supports a blue ribbon trout fishery and provides vital winter range for many game species including elk, moose and deer, as well as the highest density of nesting Bald Eagles in Idaho. This rich riparian area supports endangered species and contains numerous Wilderness and Wilderness Study Areas. Hunters, anglers and families travel from throughout the region to enjoy this area. There are eleven willing sellers that own parcels adjacent to the river. The BLM has been working for over a decade to acquire lands along this river corridor, and funding these acquisitions would support the long-term vision for conserving this important public resource.

MONTANA

Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem: Gallatin and Custer National Forests

Land Unit: Forest Service

LWCF Request: \$4 million

Phase I of a project called Cooke City Mine Claims involves 1,500 acres of patented mining claims. The land is in an alpine environment, surrounded by national forests and wilderness. As part of the Greater Yellowstone Ecosystem (GYE), the parcels contain vital headwater tributaries of the Yellowstone River, which provide habitat for cutthroat trout. Additionally, myriad wildlife will benefit from the acquisition, including big horn sheep, moose, mountain goats, grey wolves and grizzly bears. In fact, GYE houses one of the last viable grizzly populations in the contiguous U.S. Furthermore, recreational opportunities like horseback riding, fly-fishing and skiing will increase.

Upper Missouri National Wild and Scenic River/Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail/Nez Perce National Historic Trail

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management

LWCF Request: \$2 million

The Upper Missouri River Breaks National Monument is a land of exceptional beauty and history tracing the Wild and Scenic Upper Missouri River. Perhaps no single location in the Breaks melds beauty and western history together like Cow Island Landing. This property lies in the Monument, along the Wild and Scenic River, and at the intersection of two National Historic Trails. For centuries, Cow Island was a traditional crossing point of the river favored by Native American tribes. In the mid 1800s, steamboats frequently unloaded cargoes at Cow Island Landing, and along with a military presence, helped make it a storied locale. Cow Island Landing is also one of the half dozen key spots along the Nez Perce National Historic Trail. The 400 acre site, including an abandoned homestead, is a private inholding. Acquisition would ensure that Cow Island Landing, integral to both the National Monument and the National Historic Trails, would remain a protected reminder of our Native and frontier heritage.

NEW HAMPSHIRE

Lake Umbagog NWR

Land Unit: Fish and Wildlife Service

LWCF Request: \$1 million

Lake Umbagog, located along the border of northern New Hampshire and Western Maine in the Mahoosuc Mountains, is the westernmost link in the chain of Rangeley lakes. The area is famed for canoeing, hiking, fishing and hunting. The refuge protects unique habitat for many wetland dependent and migratory species including bald eagle, peregrine falcon, and waterfowl. Lake Umbagog is regarded as the best breeding ground in New Hampshire for both the common loon and osprey. Available for acquisition is the 2,450 acre Mollidgewock-Brook property, providing a critical linkage corridor from the refuge to the Errol Community Forest.

NEW MEXICO

Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management (National Landscape Conservation System)

LWCF Request: \$2 million

Established by Presidential Proclamation in 2001, the Kasha-Katuwe Tent Rocks National Monument consists of 5,402 acres of land. Multiple recreational opportunities within the Monument include hiking, sightseeing, bird watching, photography, and picnicking. The Monument is known for teepee-like conical rock formations that are unique in the Southwest. Landowners are willing to sell 456 acres, or almost 10% of the Monument, and the acquisition project is a major priority for BLM.

NORTH CAROLINA

Pisgah National Forest

Land Unit: Forest Service

LWCF Request: \$1.875 million

The 442 acre Atria tract available for purchase is near the Appalachian Trail and in a historically important area within Pisgah National Forest. During the Revolutionary War, Patriot soldiers utilized the land before recording a major victory over British troops. Ecologically, the area contains the headwaters of an important creek and is home to a variety of hardwood tree species. Such attributes have made it highly desirable for building vacation homes. By acquiring the property, 17,000 acres of protected land will be connected.

OREGON

Cascade Siskiyou National Monument

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management (National Landscape Conservation System)

LWCF Request: \$4 million

The Cascade-Siskiyou National Monument (CSNM) was designated for its extraordinary biological diversity and to protect critical habitat for an array of threatened and endangered plant and animal species. Popular recreational activities include wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, cross country skiing and hiking on trails such as the Pacific Crest National Scenic Trail. The BLM currently owns 60% of the land within the CSNM Planning Boundaries. Acquiring 3,600 acres from willing sellers will increase landscape cohesion and protect resources.

Oregon Wild and Scenic Rivers

Land Unit: Bureau of Land Management (National Landscape Conservation System)

LWCF Request: \$5.8 million

a) Sandy River/Oregon National Historic Trail

LWCF Request: \$3.35 million

The lower Sandy River flows through a deep forested gorge known for its spawning fish runs, botanical diversity, recreational boating, and beautiful parks. The river abuts the Oregon National Historic Trail corridor and provides recreation, wildlife habitat and historic resources. Multiple threatened fish species spawn here. Within commuting distance of Portland, 350 acres of land face an immediate threat from development.

b) Crooked River

LWCF Request: \$800,000

The Crooked River runs through the high desert in central Oregon and provides stunning views and remote recreational opportunities like fishing and whitewater boating. Near one of the fastest growing areas in the United States, BLM has an opportunity to acquire 110 acres that feature some of the only access to the lower Crooked River.

SOUTH CAROLINA

Congaree National Park

Land Unit: National Park Service

LWCF Request: \$5.38 million

There are 1,684 acres available for purchase on the Riverstone tract, which is located in Central South Carolina and connects Congaree National Park's two land areas. The acquisition will help protect the largest old-growth bottomland hardwood forest in the US. With federal funds, a corridor of tens of thousands of contiguous acres will be created and conserved.

TENNESSEE

Rocky Fork,

Land Unit: Forest Service

LWCF Request: \$9 million

Located along the Appalachian Trail corridor on the NC-TN line, Rocky Fork is comprised of 10,000 acres. The land is adjacent to 22,000 acres of wilderness and

connects to hundreds of thousands of contiguous acres of the Pisgah and Cherokee National Forests and Tennessee State lands.

North Cumberland Conservation Area

Land Unit: Forest Service

FLP Request: \$8.1 million

The Emory Tract project is a once in a lifetime conservation opportunity that will protect 4,106 acres. The land is part of a larger project that connects 127,000 contiguous acres across four counties on Tennessee's Cumberland Plateau. There is strong support by the state government and Tennessee's conservation community. In fact, the state has provided \$82 million for the entire project. Nonetheless, due to its importance and size, additional federal funding is crucial.

WISCONSIN / MINNESOTA / IOWA / ILLINOIS

Upper Mississippi River NWR:

Land Unit: Fish and Wildlife Service

LWCF Request: \$500,000

This refuge extends 261 miles along the Mississippi River and is part of a major corridor used by various migratory bird species. The purchase of a 45 acre upland terrace in La Crosse, WI will help protect several endangered and threatened species, while allowing for the construction of a small trail system and visitor center. In turn, several wildlife-dependent uses, such as fishing, hunting and photography, will be enhanced.