

# Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program

## California, Mexico

### **Binational Partnership Receives a \$143,280 Conservation Grant.**

On May 3, 2004, as authorized under the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act (Act), Steve Williams, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, acting on behalf of Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton, approved \$143,280 in funding for the Bird Use of Restored Riparian Habitat in the Overwintering Period Project, located in California's Shasta, Glenn, Tehama, Sacramento, and San Joaquin Counties in Congressional Districts 2, 3, 11, and 18. Project partners also will be carrying out activities in Mexico to complement and further advance the conservation goals of this binational project. The Act is nonregulatory and calls for voluntary partnerships to develop initiatives in the United States, Latin America, and the Caribbean to conserve neotropical migratory birds and their habitats. Certain activities defined by the Act are eligible for funding, and partnerships must match grant requests 3:1. Contributions from U.S. federal partners do not qualify as match.

Riparian habitat is one of the most important types of habitat for migratory birds, particularly in arid regions. However, urban development, water diversion, conversion to agriculture, and other land uses diminish and threaten riparian areas. Much effort has been invested in riparian habitat restoration, yet little is known about migratory birds' response to it.

Project partners will simultaneously study birds using well-conserved and restored riparian plots in six watersheds in California and Mexico during the nonbreeding season. They will focus on widely distributed species of warblers, kinglets, sparrows, and other upland birds that rely on riparian habitats in the winter. Their goal is to relate bird use, site fidelity, and survivorship to restoration design, silvicultural practices, water-flow regimes, and other restoration-related variables. Partners

will then test if favorable conditions for breeding birds are also good for wintering birds by comparing their data to existing breeding-bird data from these sites. Latin American students and biologists will participate at many of the sites, incorporating a field-research training component in to the project.

Partners are contributing \$771,481 to the project. They include PRBO Conservation Science (PRBO), Goldman Foundation, California Bay Delta Authority, D. Marlou Foundation, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, The Nature Conservancy, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service), U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, Reserva Bio-cultural Santa Maria, Pronatura Sonora, Terra Peninsular, and Universidad de Guadalajara. Additionally, the lead project organization, PRBO, will coordinate with 15 other U.S. partners and 4 Mexican partners to accomplish each country's project goals.

This project spans seven ecoregions and four bird conservation regions. Partners' efforts will help further the habitat goals of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan's Central Valley and Intermountain West Joint Ventures, the binational Sonoran Joint Venture, and California's Riparian Habitat Joint Venture.

### **In California**

Study sites will be located at 12 places in the Sacramento and San Joaquin Valleys, with some on the Service's Sacramento



*Say's Phoebe*

River and San Joaquin National Wildlife Refuges and several on preserves belonging to The Nature Conservancy.

### **In Mexico**

Partners will carry out their research in four states in Mexico at a total of 12 sites. *Baja California*: two sites in the Rio Santo Tomás watershed. *Sonora*: four sites in the Colorado River Delta area. *Jalisco*: four sites in the Ayuquila River watershed. *Quintana Roo*: two sites on the Yucatán Peninsula.

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**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
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