

Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act Grants Program

Alaska, California, Canada, Mexico

Trinational Partnership Receives a \$250,000 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 \$250,000 in funding for the Protecting Neotropical Migrants from Invasive Species on North American Islands Project off the coasts of Alaska and California. Project partners also will be carrying out activities off the coasts of Canada and Mexico to complement and further advance the conservation goals of this trinational 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.

The 3,000 islands off the western coast of the United States, Canada, and Mexico support an estimated 50 million breeding seabirds, 1.5 million breeding waterfowl, and 175 species of neotropical migratory birds. The presence of introduced species such as rats, cats, foxes, goats, and pigs on the islands have had devastating effects on some endemic and migratory bird populations, due to predation and habitat degradation. Project partners' ongoing efforts to eradicate these introduced species from a myriad of islands have largely been successful, and bird populations have increased.

In this 2-year project, partners will focus on eradicating rodents, perhaps the most damaging of all introduced mammals, from three islands off the coast of California and Mexico. They will then monitor the success and impacts of the eradication.

Partners also will implement plans designed to prevent future introductions of rodents to islands off of Canada (British Columbia) and Mexico (Baja California). Rodent eradication teams created in Mexico, the United States, and Canada will be further developed, and a new Caribbean team will be trained. Additionally, partners will continue researching the impacts of introduced rodents, eradication techniques, and native species' responses on islands in the project area. Activities in Canada will be supported with partner funds only.

Partners are contributing \$925,365 to this project. They include Island Conservation and Ecology Group, University of California-Santa Cruz, Canadian Wildlife Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, California Department of Fish and Game-Office of Spill Prevention and Response, and MacArthur Foundation. Island Conservation and Ecology Group, the project's lead organization, also will be coordinating with Mexico's National Commission on Biodiversity and National Institute of Ecology.



Forester's Tern

James Mattsson/USFWS

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Division of Bird Habitat Conservation
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