

NATIONAL FISH AND WILDLIFE FOUNDATION

2021 ANNUAL REPORT



NFWF



NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation is dedicated to sustaining, restoring and enhancing the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats for current and future generations.

NFWF will advance its mission through innovative public and private partnerships, and by investing financial resources and intellectual capital into science-based programs designed to address conservation priorities and achieve measurable outcomes.



A female mallard landing
on a river in Montana

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Chairman's Message

J. MICHAEL CLINE

CHAIRMAN, NFWF BOARD OF DIRECTORS

As we look back on 2021, it's appropriate and important to acknowledge the continuing challenges facing the nation. It's been a bumpy ride, to say the least.

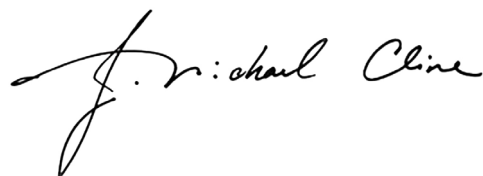
But as we move into a new year, I hope all of us pause for a moment to take stock, take heart and realize that despite these challenges, we share great cause for optimism. All of us here at the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) know this, with absolute certainty, because we see the work being done every day by dedicated partners and grantees to build a better future for the nation's wildlife and its people.

Throughout 2021, NFWF worked with corporate leaders, public agencies, nonprofits, local organizations and individuals across the nation to sustain wildlife populations, restore natural habitats and protect communities from the worst effects of climate change.

We are proud to invest in these efforts, and we are determined to do so at a scale that drives a rapid expansion of landscape-scale conservation projects. In fiscal year 2021, NFWF invested \$314.3 million to support 701 projects across the nation. These investments leveraged \$301.3 million in matching support from grantees to generate a total conservation impact of \$615.6 million.

NFWF's investments enabled nonprofit organizations, businesses and individuals to work together to stem the loss of songbirds, monarch butterflies, corals and other declining wildlife. The grants we awarded helped coastal communities embrace turtle-safe lighting, protect vital nesting areas for seabirds and restore barrier islands that protect their homes and businesses from storms. Farmers, ranchers and timberland owners adopted new technologies and practices that enable them to improve efficient use of natural resources and enhance nature's ability to sequester carbon and slow climate change.

Most of all, we are optimistic about the future because we know that millions of people throughout the nation, in our biggest cities and our smallest towns, cherish wildlife and want to protect natural resources. With every passing day, more people realize that the conservation of wildlife and natural habitats is not some esoteric endeavor removed from their daily lives. Now, more than ever, people are united in the knowledge and conviction that the conservation of natural resources will play a direct and deciding role in the resilience and future prosperity of our wildlife, our families, our communities and our nation.





“ In fiscal year 2021, NFWF invested \$314.3 million to support 701 projects across the nation. These investments leveraged \$301.3 million in matching support from grantees to generate a total conservation impact of \$615.6 million. ”

*J. Michael Cline, Chairman of the Board of Directors,
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation*

About NFWF

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) is the nation's largest private conservation grant-maker and one of its most trusted, dependable and effective conservation leaders.

NFWF is a private, independent 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization dedicated to sustaining, restoring and enhancing the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats for current and future generations. The Foundation was created by Congress in 1984 — and reauthorized in 2020 by a unanimous vote of the Senate and the House — to build public-private partnerships that increase the resources available for conservation in order to advance the science and practice of conservation throughout the United States.

NFWF is governed by a 30-member Board of Directors approved by the Secretary of the Interior. The Foundation uses public funding as a springboard to build new partnerships with major corporations, philanthropic foundations and individual donors to fund landscape-scale conservation projects based on sound science and designed to produce measurable results. NFWF supports projects that draw voluntary participation by landowners, community leaders and natural resource managers across the nation.

NFWF's staff provides unrivaled expertise in the implementation of competitive grant programs, maximization of conservation returns on philanthropic investments, and analysis of results on the ground. The Foundation bridges the gap between corporate and federal leaders focused on resilience and sustainability and the conservation professionals working every day to develop nature-based solutions that sequester carbon and mitigate the negative effects of climate change.

The Foundation does not advocate for policy change, litigate environmental issues or pursue public membership campaigns. Instead, NFWF remains sharply focused on building public-private partnerships that support highly vetted, on-the-ground conservation projects. In fiscal year 2021, NFWF invested more than 97 percent of its revenue into conservation programs, and less than 3 percent on management and fundraising.

Over the past 37 years, NFWF has funded more than 20,400 projects and supported more than 6,000 grantee organizations. The Foundation's investments since its founding have leveraged matching contributions from grantees and other partners to generate a total conservation impact of **\$7.4 billion**.

To learn more about the Foundation,
please visit nfwf.org



NFWF

1984–2021

\$7.4 BILLION

TOTAL CONSERVATION IMPACT

NFWF's investments and grantee match since its founding by Congress in 1984

20,400+

PROJECTS funded throughout all states and U.S. territories

6,000+

GRANTEE ORGANIZATIONS funded throughout all states and U.S. territories

FISCAL YEAR 2021

\$615.6 MILLION

TOTAL CONSERVATION IMPACT

NFWF's investments and grantee match in fiscal year 2021

\$314.3 MILLION INVESTED BY NFWF

The Foundation awarded \$148.5 million in federal funds and \$48.8 million in private contributions. NFWF also awarded \$117 million in Impact-Directed Environmental Account funds, including \$86.4 million from the Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund.

\$301.3 MILLION IN MATCHING CONTRIBUTIONS

Investments made by our grantees

701 PROJECTS

Across all states and U.S. territories



A pink-footed shearwater flying along California's coast

PUERTO RICO AND U.S. VIRGIN ISLANDS



Note: Projects with multiple locations are represented once, locations are approximate, some projects overlap, and projects in other U.S. territories and countries are not shown. Alaska, Hawai'i and U.S. territories are not drawn to scale.

NORTHERN MARIANAS ISLANDS



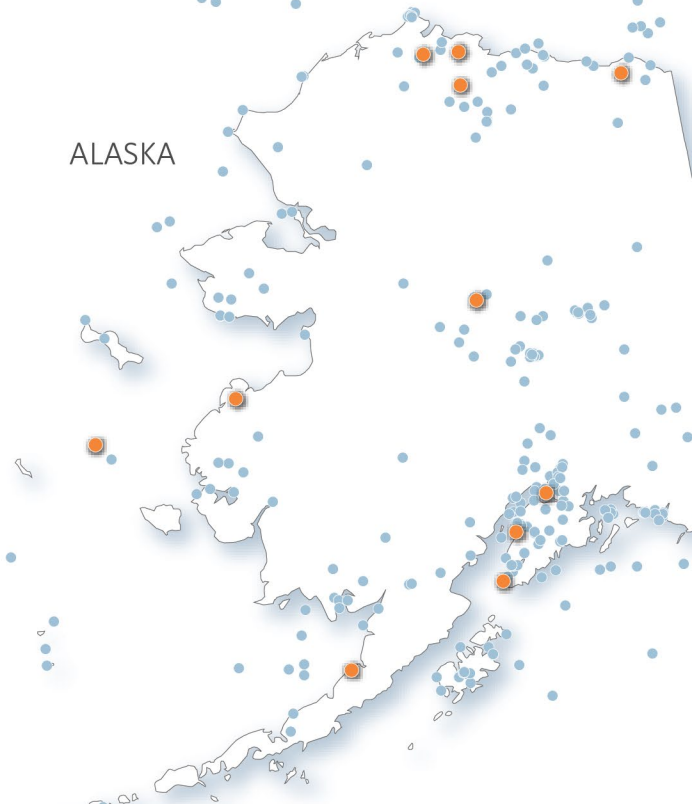
AMERICAN SAMOA



GUAM

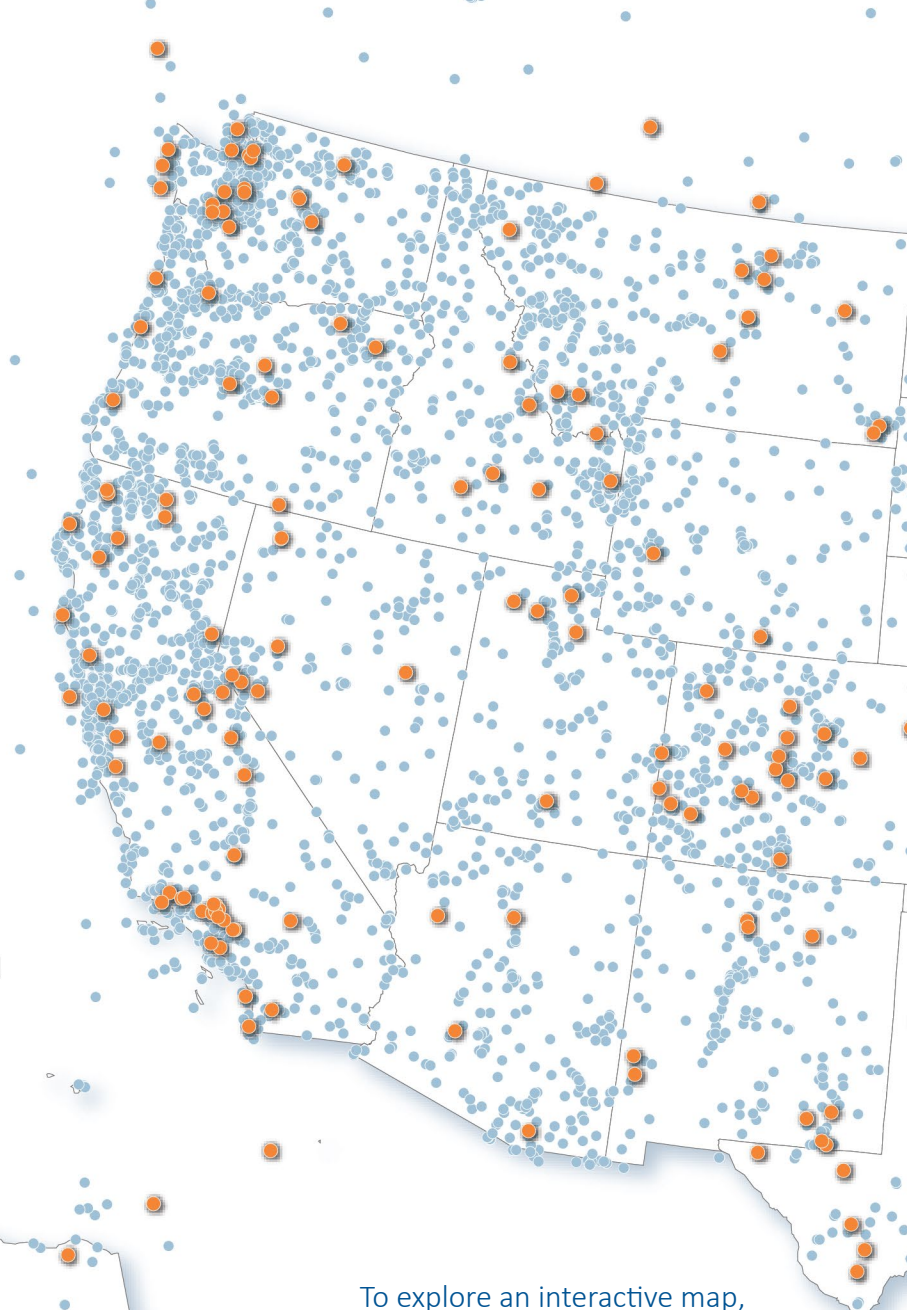
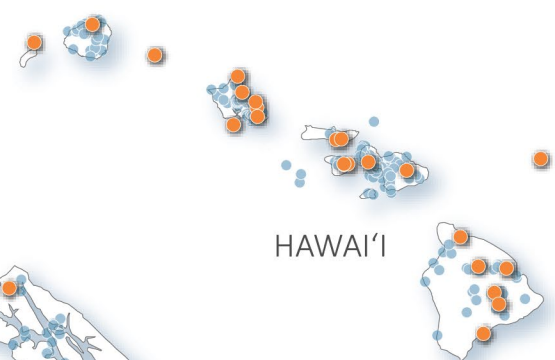


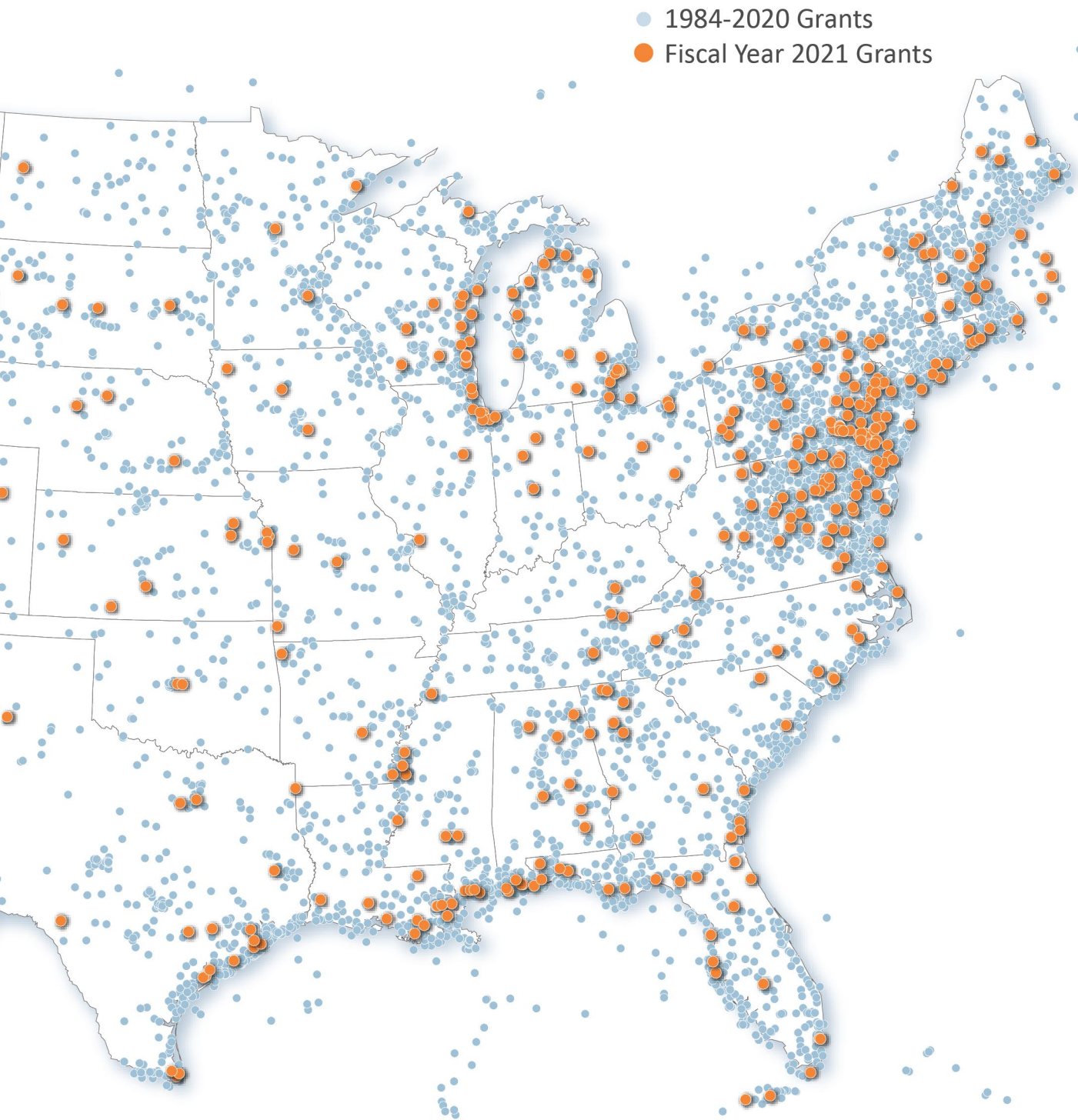
ALASKA



To explore an interactive map,
please visit nfwf.org/where-we-work

HAWAI'I





Where we work

NFWF has funded conservation projects in all 50 states and U.S. territories, more than 20,400 since our founding in 1984. Our effectiveness depends in large part on our ability to identify and quickly take advantage of conservation opportunities whenever they arise and garner voluntary support – public or private lands, urban or rural areas, marine or terrestrial environments, specific locations or broad landscapes.

A bull elk bugling beside a female in the Rocky Mountains



Immediate action to sustain wildlife

NFWF worked with funding partners and grantees throughout 2021 to address urgent conservation challenges and sustain wildlife populations and natural habitats into the future.



An island sanctuary for 20,000 whimbrels

Many people who catch a rare glimpse of a whimbrel flying along the East Coast may not know its name, but they will surely remember the sight.

Masters of the winds and tides, these dappled-brown, long-distance flyers jet along on wind-swept wings used for open-ocean voyaging and hurricane-dodging. Long, curved beaks used to probe fiddler crab burrows give the whimbrel an unmistakable profile, even at a distance.

These elegant birds have long flourished in coastal habitats along their cross-continental migration routes, which on the Atlantic Flyway can stretch for 2,500 miles. In modern times, however, urban development, erosion and slowly rising sea levels have chipped away at migratory stopover locations crucial to the species' survival. Scientists estimate that the population of whimbrels along the East Coast has fallen by as much as 79 percent between 1980 and 2019.

So it was no wonder that in 2019, a surprising discovery at a barrier island south of Charleston, South Carolina captured the attention of scientists, conservationists and birders across the nation and abroad. State biologists discovered that 20,000 migrating whimbrels, now recognized as the largest known gathering of whimbrels in the world, were using the uninhabited island called Deveaux Bank as a nocturnal roosting site and a hub from which to launch foraging trips into neighboring tidal flats during their annual migration between South America and Canada. In these protected coastal marshes, whimbrels fatten up on a rich bounty of fiddler crabs, storing enough energy to reach far-away nesting grounds in the arctic tundra.

"Seeing this number of whimbrels in one place was like going back in time," said Felicia Sanders, who serves as the South Carolina Department of Natural Resources' Coastal Bird Conservation Project supervisor. "This remarkable discovery proves that we still have much to learn if we want to save the remaining flocks of whimbrels and other shorebirds, and it shows just how crucial certain locations are to their survival."

Following this discovery, NFWF awarded a \$145,000 grant to the College of William & Mary to search for additional roost sites along the Atlantic Coast. In 2021, NFWF awarded a grant of \$99,400 to the college to expand that search along the Gulf of Mexico. Another grant of \$84,400 will enable scientists at the University of South Carolina to use telemetry to study whimbrel movement to and from Deveaux Bank while the birds are foraging nearby.

These investments are just a few of the many grants awarded by NFWF in 2021 to identify, conserve and restore habitats for migrating shorebirds along the nation's entire coastline.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNER
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



Whimbrels returning to Deveaux Bank in South Carolina

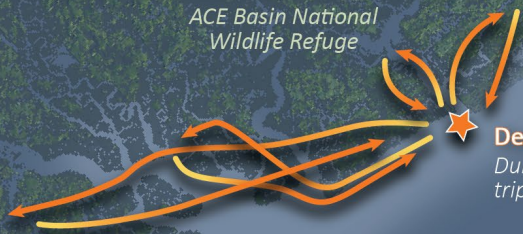


Charleston, South Carolina

ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge

Deveaux Bank

During the day, the birds make foraging trips into nearby coastal marshes.



Hudsonian Whimbrel's General Northbound Migration Path

Whimbrel have a number of migration paths. This one, which runs between their wintering grounds in South America and nesting habitat in Canada, includes a pit stop at Deveaux Bank in South Carolina.

ATLANTIC OCEAN

Hilton Head Island

St Helena Island



Cold-stunned sea turtles being rescued in Texas



LOUISIANA

MISSISSIPPI

ALABAMA

GEORGIA

TEXAS

FLORIDA

Eliminate light pollution that endangers nesting sea turtles and emerging hatchlings

Protect and restore barrier island habitats important to sea turtles

Protect vital nesting sites from development

Support organizations responding to cold-stunning events

Control predation at imperiled nesting sites

Decrease the threat of sea turtle bycatch

GULF OF MEXICO

Use advanced sonar technologies to study and prioritize offshore habitats vital to sea turtles

Engage students and other volunteers in sea turtle conservation

Sea Turtle Conservation

NFWF has maintained a focus on sea turtle conservation since the organization's founding in 1984. In recent years, the Foundation has invested in sea turtle conservation domestically and internationally through its Sea Turtles Program, Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund and other competitive grant programs. Here are examples of the type of work NFWF supports along the Gulf of Mexico and Florida's Atlantic Coast.

Saving sea turtles, by land and sea

If baby sea turtles knew the dangers that awaited them on their journey to adulthood, they might not ever leave their sandy nests.

Starting out no bigger than potato chips with flippers, these fragile hatchlings must avoid being eaten by predators, caught in fishing nets and hit by boats.

Scientists estimate that only one out of every thousand hatchlings survives to adulthood. Those that do make it to maturity must produce enough offspring to carry their species into an uncertain future of changing weather patterns, disappearing beaches, plastic pollution and increasing risk from commercial fishing, among other threats.

Adult female sea turtles hold the key to a brighter future. If they survive to sexual maturity, about 20-30 years old, healthy females can become prodigious breeders. Often returning to the same stretches of beach where they hatched, these females haul themselves out of the surf at night, crawl up the beach and excavate nests in the sand. They lay clutches of up to 200 eggs, depending on the species. Many determined females repeat the process multiple times each breeding season.

“Every one of these turtles that makes it to breeding age is incredibly valuable, in terms of population recovery and resilience,” said Earl Possardt, marine turtle program officer for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. “There’s a lot that happens in the open ocean that we can’t control, but when these animals return to our shores and coastal waters, to breed or feed, we need to do everything we can to maximize survival rates and nesting success.”

For most of its 37-year history, NFWF has championed sea turtle conservation by rallying public- and private-sector partners to support the efforts of grantee organizations to stem and reverse the drastic decline of sea turtle numbers throughout the 20th century.

In 2021, the Foundation awarded more than \$740,000 to conserve populations of endangered sea turtles by reducing sea turtle bycatch in focal fisheries, restoring nesting beach habitat and building capacity for population-scale conservation.

NFWF also established a new, \$500,000 fund in 2021 to help offset financial burdens encountered by organizations that respond to sea-turtle stranding events along the nation’s coasts. The Foundation established the fund following a historic cold-stunning event along the coast of Texas, when a brutal winter storm in February 2021 endangered the population of green sea turtles caught in frigid nearshore waters. A coalition of federal, state, nonprofit and private partners joined forces to quickly recover almost 11,000 stunned turtles for rehabilitation and eventual release back into the Gulf of Mexico.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS SEAWORLD PARKS AND ENTERTAINMENT,
NOAA, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Clearing the way for the return of eels

Those who dismiss American eels as slimy muck-dwellers are missing out on one of North America's most fascinating wildlife stories.

These incredible fish start their lives hundreds of miles off the coast of the Southeastern United States, hatched from eggs laid in the Sargasso Sea. Ocean currents carry the tiny, transparent babies northeast, toward the Mid-Atlantic region and New England.

Known as “glass eels” at this stage of their lives, these slender and transparent juveniles enter coastal estuaries and start working their way upstream. As they move inland, the eels turn brown and become known as “elvers.” When they reach adult size, another color change leads to yet another name: “yellow eels.” After 10 to 20 years living as freshwater fish, these yellow eels receive some kind of signal — unknown to science — that triggers an amazing transformation. Their eyes grow larger, they stop eating, and they become “silver eels.” They swim back downstream, out into the Atlantic Ocean and across thousands of miles to gather in the Sargasso Sea, where they spawn and die.

Eels serve critical ecological functions everywhere they go. They provide food for a range of fish, birds — and adventurous human eaters — and keep food webs healthy by eating a variety of smaller critters as they go. When eels disappear from a watershed, often because of manmade barriers to their migration, things can go wrong.

Such is the case in the Schuylkill Watershed of Pennsylvania, where emerging research from the Delaware Riverkeeper Network (DRN) and other partners suggests a strong and direct correlation between declining eel densities due to manmade barriers, the rapid spread of invasive crayfish and the resulting disappearance of native crayfish.

In 2021, the organization completed a three-year project, funded in part by an \$88,500 grant from NFWF, during which about 500 moderate-sized eels were captured from Delaware River tributaries and released in the Pickering Creek watershed. The group also released approximately 3,600 young-of-year glass eels that had been reared in a federal biology lab. Scientists will continue to monitor the health of the watershed as these young eels mature into adults over the next 10-20 years.

“The long-term sustainable health of the Pickering Creek ecosystem depends on the restoration of native crayfish populations and reduction of invasive crayfish,” said Erik Silldorff, restoration director at DRN. “This, in turn, will depend on reestablishing natural migratory pathways for American eels to repopulate this and similar streams in the Schuylkill drainage.”

CONTRIBUTING PARTNER
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

American eels in their early "glass eel" stage



Chinook salmon
Pacific Northwest, Rocky Mountains and Alaska



Lake sturgeon
Great Lakes



Alewives
New England



Cutthroat trout
Rocky Mountains



Brook trout
Appalachians, New England



Pecos pupfish
New Mexico, Texas

Bridled darter
Southern Appalachians, Cumberland Plateau



Freshwater Fish

American eels are just one of many types of freshwater species benefiting from NFWF investments. Here is a sampling of other focal species across the nation.

A peregrine falcon
in Michigan



Raptor Migration

Birds of prey migrating south for the winter from the forests of eastern Canada navigate around the Great Lakes in order to take advantage of the lift produced by columns of warm air rising from land masses.

Long-Distance Raptor Migration

Hawks, falcons, eagles, owls and other raptors complete some of the longest migrations of any bird species. In the Western Hemisphere, birds of prey travel thousands of miles from northern Canada, through the United States and Mexico, and into South America.



Restoring habitat along a raptor flyway

Peregrine falcons, sharp-shinned hawks, golden eagles and a host of other raptors migrate south every fall from the forests of Canada, riding thermals and keeping a watchful eye for prey far below as they move through the United States and Mexico on their way to various wintering grounds. Heat rising from the land below provides lift for soaring, so when these birds of prey arrive at the Great Lakes, they must navigate around the water to stay aloft. In some places, such maneuvers funnel eye-popping numbers of birds through a relatively narrow path.

The stretch of land running from Toronto to Detroit, between lakes Erie and Ontario to the south and Lake Huron to the north, is one such place. Here, the yearly influx of immense numbers of raptors, often swirling together in formations known as “kettles,” delights spectators.

Pockets of high-quality wildlife habitat along this migration route provide raptors with places to hunt and rest. Freshwater marshes along the Great Lakes represent some of the richest and most important of these stopover points – not just for raptors, but also for the millions of migratory songbirds, waterfowl and shorebirds that also move through and live in the Great Lakes region.

“The marshes of the Great Lakes are engines of biodiversity,” said Patrick Doran, The Nature Conservancy’s (TNC) associate state director for Michigan. “These marshes serve as spawning grounds and nurseries for fish, safe havens for rare native plants, and irreplaceable migration stopover points for some of the nation’s richest collections of birds.

“These same wetlands also help human communities, both rural and urban, by mitigating flooding, filtering out excess nutrients before they hit the Great Lakes, and providing outdoor recreation opportunities to the public.”

At 2,216 acres, the Conservancy’s Erie Marsh Preserve in Michigan, just south of Detroit, is one of the largest marshes on Lake Erie. The preserve represents 11 percent of the remaining coastal marshland in southeastern Michigan, and it plays a vital role as a migratory and nesting area for shorebirds, waterfowl, songbirds and, in the fall, raptors.

In 2021, NFWF awarded TNC a grant of \$491,000 to continue a multi-year project to construct the many dikes and water control structures needed to restore highly degraded wetlands at Erie Marsh. This latest grant brings NFWF’s total investment in the Erie Marsh project to nearly \$3.1 million since 2013.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS CLEVELAND-CLIFFS, GENERAL MILLS,
U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,
USDA’S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE AND U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Protecting parrotfish, from ridges to reefs

How is it that the Hawaiian Islands, with their dark volcanic soils and black lava rock formations, are famous the world over for stunning beaches of powdery white sand?

For that, we can thank parrotfish. Primarily herbivores, these colorful fish graze along coral reefs, using their beak-like dentition (hence the name) to nip off algae and other marine plants that would otherwise smother coral structures. They ingest bits of hard coral as they chomp at the reef. This material is ground up and cleaned as it moves through the fish's digestive system, exiting the fish as sand. Just one adult parrotfish can produce 1,000 pounds of the stuff in a year. Waves carry this by-product onto the islands, to be enjoyed by all those lucky enough to live in or visit Hawai'i.

Coral reefs represent some of our planet's most complex and valuable ecosystems. They are home to a wondrous array of life, provide an irreplaceable source of sustenance and enjoyment to countless people, and protect coastal communities from storms, wave energy and erosion. Yet they are also some of the world's most fragile ecosystems. Overfishing, overuse, land-based run-off, plastics and other marine debris, pollution and climate change have driven widespread and sometimes drastic declines in coral health around the globe.

NFWF works with its grantees and a range of public- and private-sector partners to protect, repair and enhance coral reefs wherever they exist in the United States and its territories. NFWF invests in coral propagation and out-planting, critical research to understand the causes of a global decline in coral health, as well as the herculean task of removing marine debris from the reefs of the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, which encompasses 582,578 square miles northeast of Hawai'i — an area larger than all the country's national parks combined.

Coral conservation efforts on islands such as Hawai'i, Puerto Rico and Guam focus in large part on building coalitions of willing partners to address land-based sources of pollution and siltation. On the Hawaiian island of Lāna'i, NFWF works with partners to preserve and enhance Lāna'i's unique natural and cultural resources "from mauka to makai" (from the top of the mountain down to the ocean), while encouraging community engagement and shared stewardship.

In 2021, NFWF awarded \$409,200 in grants to projects on Lāna'i that will reduce sediment run-off to nearshore reefs, restore native vegetation to improve watershed health, protect and enhance populations of terrestrial and marine species, and bolster community conservation ethic and involvement in landscape protection efforts.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS ARAMCO, PŪLAMA LĀNA'I, NOAA,
USDA'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE,
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE



A spectacled parrotfish in Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

Conservation in Hawai'i

NFWF invests in conservation throughout the Hawaiian Islands and the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument. Here are a few examples of the nearly 60 NFWF supported projects that were ongoing as 2021 came to a close.

NI'HAU



Create or enhance habitat for Laysan albatross, Hawaiian monk seals, sea turtles and native seabirds

Protect Newell's shearwater, Hawaiian petrel and other seabirds from predation

KAUA'I

O'AHU



Identify and grow thermally tolerant coral stocks, then outplant them along coral reefs

MOLOKA'I



MAUI



Assess and protect populations of Maui parrotbill and crested honeycreeper

LĀNA'I

THE KUAHIWI A KAI PROGRAM

NFWF and Pūlama Lāna'i created a program to support landscape-scale conservation across 20,000 contiguous acres on the island of Lāna'i. Goals include:

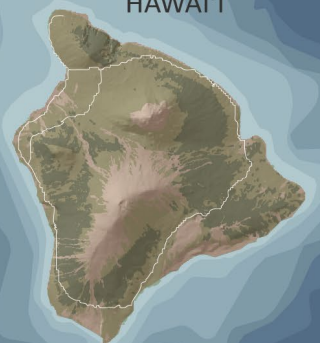
- Reduce sediment runoff to reefs
- Restore native vegetation to improve watershed health
- Protect endangered and endemic species
- Improve habitat and management for Hawaiian petrel
- Improve preservation of cultural resources and sites
- Increase community's involvement in conservation



Remove derelict fishing gear and plastics from the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument

Protect forest bird species across the Hawaiian Islands through predator control, habitat restoration, fencing and research

HAWAII



A wolverine scanning the landscape in the Rocky Mountains



Wolverines

Grants awarded by NFWF support conservation projects throughout the wolverine's range in the continental United States. These projects often depend on the willing participation of agricultural producers and timber operators who see tremendous value in sustaining populations of iconic Western wildlife.



Managing lands for Western wildlife

Wolverines will devour just about anything they run across, from berries and seeds to bird eggs, ground squirrels, marmots, beavers, porcupines ... even other wolverines. Their stamina and keen sense of smell enables them to track down their favorite meal: carrion. Wolverines feed heavily on the carcasses of deer, moose and elk throughout their range, but any dead animal will do. Foxes, lynx, wolves and bears are all on the menu.

These tenacious predators cover great distances in their never-ending search for food. Big males can travel more than 20 miles per day across some of the roughest terrain in the world.

Wolverines live solitary and secretive lives, slipping unseen through the vast wildernesses and working landscapes of the mountainous West. The southern portion of their range extends into Idaho, Montana, Oregon, Washington and Wyoming, and individual wolverines have recently been documented as far south as the Sierra Nevada of California and Southern Rockies of Colorado.

Like most other Western wildlife species, wolverines need room to roam. Their long-term survival depends not on any one conservation project at any one place, but rather on landscape-scale conservation strategies implemented across vast expanses of public and private lands.

NFWF supports conservation efforts throughout the wolverine's range in the continental United States. The Foundation plays an important role in this landscape through its proven ability to match private funding with federal resources, a unique landscape perspective that is not limited by land ownership or state boundaries, and the ability to catalyze collaboration among partners.

Investments made by NFWF in this region have helped grantees and willing landowners protect and enhance vital habitats through conservation easements, invasive plant management and improved irrigation. Other projects supported by NFWF have improved or removed fencing so that big-game species can complete yearly migrations. Many grants have helped willing landowners better manage their properties in ways that benefit both their business interests and the wildlife that live on or move through their properties, including hungry wolverines.

"The Northern Rockies and Northern Great Plains are home to some of the nation's most awe-inspiring landscapes and iconic wildlife species," said Matt Hogan, Mountain-Prairie regional director for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, which serves as one of NFWF's major funding partners in this region. "Partnerships between the public and private sectors are key to driving conservation at the scale needed to achieve real-world, measurable results in these regions."

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS BNSF RAILWAY, CONOCOPHILLIPS,
U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE,
USDA'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE AND U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Restoring the coast for Lone Star stilts

Black-necked stilts are fun to watch. These small-bodied, black-and-white shorebirds stride through coastal marshes on absurdly long pink legs, *kek-kek-kekking* at each other in a near-constant babble. Slender necks, delicately tapered beaks and red eyes accentuate the stilt's striking, if somewhat comical, appearance.

When threatened, stilts put on a show. Parent stilts will dramatically feign a wing injury to lure would-be predators away from their nests. If threatened while foraging in open mud flats, stilts will draw into a tight formation and then erupt in a frenzy of jumps, wing-flapping and alarm calls — known as a “popcorn display” — to intimidate and confuse predators.

As clever as they are, black-necked stilts have absolutely no defense against much of what the modern world throws at them. They, like countless other wildlife species along the rich Gulf Coast, are completely dependent on healthy coastal habitats, and particularly vulnerable to habitat loss, pollution and man-made disasters.

When the Deepwater Horizon oil rig exploded in the Gulf of Mexico on April 20, 2010, claiming 11 lives, it unleashed the largest oil spill in the history of the United States. By the time the well was sealed, 87 days after the explosion, approximately 134 million gallons of oil were released into the Gulf. The resulting environmental catastrophe wreaked havoc upon communities, natural habitats and wildlife populations.

In 2013, a U.S. District Court approved two plea agreements resolving certain criminal cases against BP and Transocean related to the disaster. The agreements directed a total of \$2.544 billion to NFWF to fund projects benefiting the natural resources of the Gulf Coast that were impacted by the spill. In the 11 years since the tragedy, NFWF has worked closely with state and federal partners to award nearly **\$1.5 billion** from its Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund (GEBF) to restore natural resources harmed by the spill.

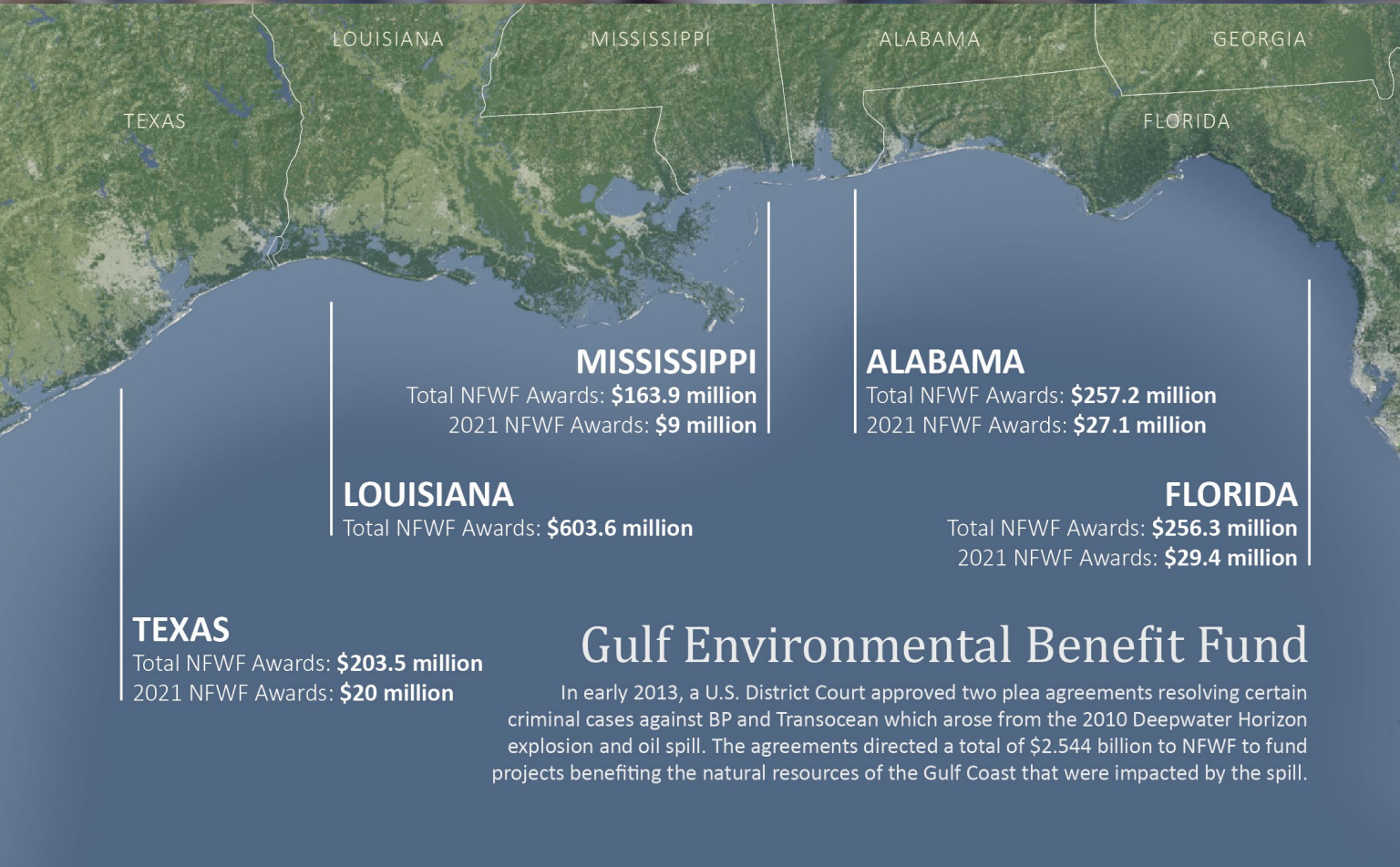
In fiscal year 2021, NFWF awarded approximately \$86.4 million from the GEBF to projects in Alabama, Florida, Louisiana, Mississippi and Texas. The award of \$20 million to projects in Texas marked a major milestone for the GEBF: the successful completion of the fund's obligations to that state. Since 2013, the GEBF has awarded \$203.5 million to 61 projects in Texas.

The GEBF's investments in the Lone Star state have conserved, restored or enhanced more than 112,000 acres of coastal habitat, protected more than 40 miles of vulnerable shoreline, and restored more than 100 acres of oyster reefs — all vital habitats for the state's coastal wildlife populations, including flamboyant, funny stilts.

“Recovering from a disaster of this magnitude takes time, and it couldn't be done without leveraging all resources available and collaborating with a variety of partners,” said Carter Smith, executive director of the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department. “The projects funded through the GEBF will leave a lasting legacy of conservation for future generations.”



A black-necked stilt foraging for food along the Gulf Coast



Gulf Environmental Benefit Fund

In early 2013, a U.S. District Court approved two plea agreements resolving certain criminal cases against BP and Transocean which arose from the 2010 Deepwater Horizon explosion and oil spill. The agreements directed a total of \$2.544 billion to NFWF to fund projects benefiting the natural resources of the Gulf Coast that were impacted by the spill.



Scaling up for the future

New public-private partnerships will sustain wildlife, help mitigate climate change and ensure all communities benefit from conservation efforts.



Bald eagles
fishing in Alaska

Boosting resilience along our coasts

NFWF's science-based, competitive grant-making process ensures that our partners' conservation investments support projects that generate measurable results for wildlife. Quantifying these results can, at times, be relatively straightforward: acres of habitat conserved or restored, miles of streams reconnected, increase in the number of breeding pairs of a particular bird species.

Beyond such project-specific metrics lie far more complicated considerations. Are these gains likely to persist, and can we build on those successes? How can we make sure the benefits accrued won't be lost to short-term setbacks such as storms, floods or wildfires? Which types of investments will help wildlife, natural habitats and human communities withstand the negative effects of climate change?

The overarching goal, in a word? **Resilience.**

Nowhere is this concept more important than along the nation's coasts, where many of the modern world's most intractable environmental challenges collide. There is no magic wand, no single solution to deal with rapid population growth, urban development, habitat loss, pollution, rising sea levels and the intensifying threat of storms. The stakes are incredibly high along our coasts, not just for wildlife but also for the estimated 130 million Americans who live there.

Throughout 2021, NFWF worked with a growing number of major partners in the public and private sectors determined to act quickly, and at an unprecedented scale, to strengthen coastal resilience and safeguard the benefits of present-day conservation efforts for generations to come. The Foundation invested in coastal conservation throughout the nation's most heavily populated watersheds, including those feeding the Chesapeake Bay, Long Island Sound, Delaware Bay, Puget Sound and the Great Lakes. NFWF also announced the third year of grants awarded through its National Coastal Resilience Fund, a landscape-scale program that restores, increases and strengthens natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities and enhance habitats for fish and wildlife.

In 2021, NFWF awarded more than \$37 million in grants through the National Coastal Resilience Fund, pushing the program's total investment since its founding in 2018 to more than \$90 million. Since its inception in 2018, NCRF has supported projects that will enhance or restore more than 18,000 acres of coastal habitat and reduce flood and erosion risk for nearly 100,000 properties and 2,000 infrastructure assets.

The ambitious projects supported by this fund will be a boon to the fish, birds and other wildlife species that depend on rich coastal marshes and wetlands, dune and beach systems, oyster beds, coral reefs and barrier islands.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS AT&T, SHELL, OCCIDENTAL, TRANSRE,
NOAA, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF DEFENSE, U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY



A striped bass swimming
in Maine's coastal waters



A Lewis's woodpecker
visiting its nest in a scorched
California forest

Helping forests heal and deal with flames

There was a time when North America's great forests required no help from us. Wildlife and indigenous communities flourished in these vast and varied woodlands, from towering stands of redwood and ponderosa pine in the West to the rolling hardwood forests of the Northeast and open longleaf pine savannas of the Southeast.

Seasonal wildfires and timber-toppling storms were necessary components of forest health, creating pockets of open canopy that allowed sunlight to fuel explosions of new growth and biodiversity. Forests could heal themselves while steadily adapting to changes in climatic conditions.

Today, this is no longer the case. Even the most remote sections of forest now face existential, man-made threats. Temperatures and weather patterns are changing faster than these ecosystems can adapt. Invasive insects are wreaking havoc on forest structure, leaving mountainsides of dead trees to erupt in catastrophic wildfires. Dramatic population growth in fire-prone areas has led to the suppression of wildfires that would have normally moved through and burned off excess fuels. Much of the nation's forests have been degraded by development, depriving wildlife of essential habitat and migration corridors while degrading the natural infrastructure we depend on to remove excess carbon from the atmosphere.

NFWF and its extensive network of funding partners and grantees recognize the urgency of the situation, as well as the need to act with speed and scale. Throughout 2021, these public and private entities have leveraged resources to address the threats to forests, in every region of the nation.

The growing intensity of wildfires throughout California's 33 million acres of forest sits atop that list of threats. Six of the top 10 most destructive wildfires in California's recorded history, in terms of acres burned and loss of life, have occurred since 2020.

Working closely with federal and state foresters, NFWF awarded \$5.8 million to a variety of grantees working in the rugged mountainous forests of California to heal fire scars, ensure the survival of rare species, protect rivers and streams from sedimentation, restore alpine wet meadows and remove excess fuels in places that would deliver the greatest value to both people and wildlife. These investments leveraged \$3.8 million in matching contributions to generate a total conservation impact of \$9.5 million.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS ARBOR DAY FOUNDATION, CAL FIRE,
SIERRA PACIFIC INDUSTRIES, U.S. BUREAU OF LAND MANAGEMENT,
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE, USDA'S U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Opportunities abound in agricultural sector

Farmers and ranchers wield enormous influence over conservation efforts across nearly 1 billion acres in the United States used for crops, pasture or grazing.

What farmers and ranchers do on these lands — and don't do — holds profound meaning for all of us, from the food we eat to the water we drink, the air we breathe and the stability of our climate. For wildlife across the nation, conservation outcomes on agricultural lands can mean the difference between abundance and scarcity, recovery and extinction.

Conservation-minded producers across the nation understand and embrace this responsibility. They continually adjust operations to make more efficient use of natural resources. They innovate, working with industry partners to develop new technologies to better manage runoff, minimize fertilizer waste, and where water is scarce, make every drop count. They monitor and safeguard the health of soils and grasslands that feed not just their livestock, but also the birds, deer and other wildlife species that live on agricultural lands or migrate through them. They plant riparian borders and maintain livestock fencing to protect water quality. They battle invasive species that threaten not just the productivity of their lands, but also the wellbeing of native wildlife and vegetation. They cultivate portions of their properties — often all of it — to benefit wildlife and create bountiful opportunities for hunting and fishing. They have a vested interest in the prosperity of bees, butterflies, birds and bats that pollinate crops and control pests.

NFWF and its funding partners understand that the nation's agricultural lands hold incredible potential for rapidly scaling up conservation efforts that will sustain wildlife populations, decrease pollution and sequester more carbon in healthy soils and grassland systems.

Throughout 2021, the Foundation worked with federal partners such as the U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resources Conservation Service to increase funds available for conservation activities. The number of NFWF's corporate partners in the agricultural sector grew from three to seven in 2021, with several more expected to join these efforts in the coming year. As leaders in agriculture-based industries, these partners seek to improve the sustainability of their producers, supply chains and business models.

The grants awarded through these partnerships drive conservation on dairy farms in the Chesapeake Bay Watershed, vast ranches on the Great Plains, and small farms from the Pacific Northwest through the Great Lakes region and Southeastern United States.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS ALTRIA, CARGILL, CORTEVA, DANONE NORTH AMERICA, GENERAL MILLS, SYSCO, TRUTERRA, U.S. ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION AGENCY, USDA'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE AND U.S. FOREST SERVICE

Greater prairie-chicken
displaying on a lek
in South Dakota



A monarch butterfly
waiting for the morning dew
to dry in the Midwest



Protecting pathways for migrating wildlife

Just about every patch of natural habitat in the United States supports wildlife migration of one kind or another, from the intercontinental journeys of songbirds, waterfowl and shorebirds to the multi-generational migration of monarch butterflies, and the mass movements of elk, pronghorn and mule deer.

Large, intact natural landscapes are ideal for supporting wildlife migration, and much of NFWF's grant-making supports landscape-scale projects that generate lasting and measurable outcomes for wildlife and people. Big, in these cases, is often better. But in today's world, creatures on the move must take advantage of any safe place, however small, to rest and refuel.

NFWF's position as a leader in public-private conservation partnerships lends itself particularly well to migration work. The Foundation works closely with federal agencies and other conservation nonprofits to identify, conserve and enhance critical migratory pinch-points and stopover sites, whether on federal lands, state lands, tribal lands or private properties owned by individuals and companies willing to implement conservation practices.

In 2021, NFWF awarded \$4 million to projects that will enhance and improve habitats on winter ranges, stopover areas and migration corridors used by elk, mule deer and pronghorn. These grants will leverage \$21.6 million in matching contributions to generate a total conservation impact of \$25.6 million.

Monarch butterflies, which cycle through up to five generations to complete an annual migration between the mountains of central Mexico and the United States and Canada, will benefit from \$1.7 million in 2021 awards that will provide technical assistance to private landowners and improve habitat for these iconic insects. Grantees committed an additional \$3.3 million in matching contributions, generating a total conservation impact of more than \$5 million.

Another \$1.3 million in awards will protect habitats used by migrating grassland birds and expand a telemetry network to improve bird data collection across the Great Plains and Chihuahuan Desert. Grantees are matching the grant awards with more than \$7.7 million in additional contributions to generate a total conservation investment of more than \$9 million.

Red knots, whimbrels, oystercatchers and other shorebirds will benefit from \$625,000 in grants awarded to projects that will improve habitats and reduce human disturbance along the Atlantic Flyway. These awards will leverage nearly \$657,000 in matching contributions to generate a total conservation impact of \$1.28 million.

CONTRIBUTING PARTNERS BAYER CROP SCIENCE, BNSF RAILWAY,
CONOCOPHILLIPS, SHELL OIL COMPANY, SOUTHERN COMPANY,
USDA'S NATURAL RESOURCES CONSERVATION SERVICE AND U.S. FOREST SERVICE,
U.S. BUREAU OF RECLAMATION, U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

A pronghorn in
Western grasslands



Conservation offers jump start on carbon

The accelerating climate crisis threatens the health, resilience and stability of ecosystems, communities and economies around the world. Addressing this urgent global challenge requires a comprehensive, multi-faceted approach that includes regulatory action, advances in technology, and the widespread implementation of nature-based solutions.

Regulatory changes and technological advances related to clean energy, carbon capture and carbon sequestration will continue to evolve over the years to come ... but time is not on our side. To act today, with the speed and scale that the climate crisis demands, we must immediately and exponentially increase investment in nature-based solutions.

The nation's grasslands, forests and coastal habitats represent our best defense against climate change, as well as our best current tool to capture and sequester more carbon. If these natural habitats continue to disappear, as they are today, then climate change will accelerate. If we can conserve existing ecosystems that are at risk and invest in the creation and enhancement of additional nature-based solutions, then we stand a far better chance of slowing climate change and mitigating its most destructive effects on habitats and wildlife.

As the nation's largest private conservation grant-maker, NFWF plays a leading role in national conservation efforts. The Foundation leverages its deep network of funding partners and grantees to generate and capitalize on landscape-scale conservation opportunities. Many of our largest grants support projects that protect local communities and economies, while at the same time enhancing wildlife habitats that will play a key role in the future course of climate change impacts in the United States.

Throughout 2021, NFWF worked with federal agencies, major corporations and on-the-ground implementers to protect and enhance vast grasslands that support agricultural production, provide habitat to wildlife, and sequester carbon in deep root systems. Huge tracts of forests were permanently protected, securing critical habitat for wildlife, recreational opportunities for people, and a natural capacity for capturing carbon. Coastal communities were able to tackle once-in-a-lifetime projects to preserve salt marshes, mangrove forests and other habitats that absorb enormous amount of carbon while also providing buffers from intense storms.

There are no easy solutions to protecting our vital natural resources from climate change, no silver bullet to solve the many cascading challenges we will face in the years to come. But the work that NFWF and our funding partners make possible is making a difference today, and will make an even larger difference for communities and wildlife in the decades to come.

A mountain goat in the
Rocky Mountains



2021

FINANCIAL SUMMARY

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF ACTIVITIES

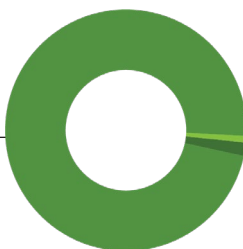
(in millions of dollars, for the fiscal year ended September 30, 2021)

	2021	2020
REVENUE, EXPENSES AND NET ASSETS		
Total Revenue and Support	\$392.9	\$355.9
Total Expenses	\$362.1	\$354.8
Change in Net Assets	\$30.8	\$1.1
Net Assets, beginning of year	\$243.8	\$242.7
Net Assets, end of year	\$274.6	\$243.8

USE OF FUNDS

\$362,068,855

Program/Mission **97.4%**
\$352,509,883



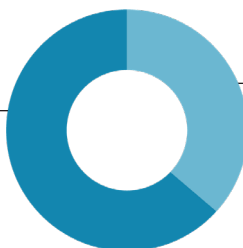
Fundraising **0.8%**
\$3,028,587

Management and General **1.8%**
\$6,530,385

TOTAL REVENUE

\$392,893,635

Non-Federal/Other **66%**
\$258,035,589



Federal **34%**
\$134,858,046

CONDENSED STATEMENT OF FINANCIAL POSITION

(in millions of dollars, as of September 30, 2021)

	2021	2020
ASSETS		
Cash and Investments	\$2,718.7	\$2,807.9
Other Assets	\$56.2	\$45.9
Total Assets	\$2,774.9	\$2,853.8
LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS		
Liabilities	\$2,500.3	\$2,610.0
Net Assets	\$274.6	\$243.8
Total Liabilities and Net Assets	\$2,774.9	\$2,853.8

CORPORATE PARTNERS

NFWF collaborates with many of America's leading corporations to implement philanthropic conservation strategies and invest in conservation projects based on sound science and measurable outcomes.



Altria

Altria and NFWF began working together to restore some of the nation's most iconic bodies of water in 2009. The partnership began as an effort to address the impact of Altria's supply chain on local water quality in Kentucky, Tennessee, and Pennsylvania and has since blossomed into a model of focused collaboration at the intersection of corporate responsibility and conservation need. Working now to restore the Chesapeake Bay, the Cumberland Plateau and piedmont regions of the southeastern United States, and the Columbia River basin, the partnership has leveraged nearly \$17 million in Altria funding into nearly \$146 million in total conservation impact.

aramco



Aramco and NFWF began working together in 2020 to stop the decline in both the quantity and productivity of coral reef ecosystems through the Coral Reef Conservation Fund. The partnership addresses multiple coral conservation initiatives that aim to improve management, increase public awareness, and reduce threats to coral reefs both domestically and internationally. Aramco seeks to support healthy ecosystems around the world through a comprehensive biodiversity program, supporting initiatives that protect and enhance wildlife and regional natural ecosystems. Aramco's support of the Coral Reef Conservation Fund is one of the many ways the company is working to leave an enduring conservation legacy for future generations.



As a corporate partner of the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative, **Apache Corporation** is developing a new way to address conservation challenges in West Texas and Southeast New Mexico. The Pecos Watershed is a unique and extraordinary resource, and the growing group of corporate sponsors, along with state and federal agencies, are partnering with NFWF to ensure that the development of oil and natural gas resources goes hand-in-hand with protecting wildlife and improving the quality of life for local communities in the region.



AstraZeneca and NFWF began working together in 2021 to plant and sustain one million trees in the United States by 2025. This partnership contributes to AstraZeneca's goal to plant and sustain 50 million trees globally by 2025. With a primary focus in the Delaware River Watershed, but with additional targeted investments in other regions of the eastern United States, AstraZeneca is funding tree plantings that maximize the dual role of carbon storage and habitat restoration, including by planting streamside forests on farmland, in parks and residential areas, restoring urban tree canopy in cities and towns and restoring degraded forest lands. These projects will restore habitat for eastern brook trout, American eel, bog turtles, river herring and shad, and migratory songbirds. They also will support green infrastructure in urban communities.



Apex Clean Energy and NFWF began working together in 2021 to support local conservation projects across the country that benefit the communities in and around the areas where Apex's utility-scale renewable energy projects are developed. The partnership represents the first conservation grant program of its kind in the clean energy industry. By supporting local and regional conservation projects through existing NFWF programs, Apex supports NFWF's efforts to address conservation challenges and generate lasting benefits for communities across the nation.

A well-camouflaged male spotted
seahorse brooding eggs on a reef
off West Palm Beach, Florida





AT&T and NFWF began working together to build resilience for coastal communities through the National Coastal Resilience Fund (NCRF) in 2020. Through this collaboration, NFWF will invest in projects designed to restore, increase and strengthen natural infrastructure to reduce risks to communities, with a focus on underserved and minority communities, from the growing impacts of sea-level rise, flooding, and increased frequency and intensity of storms, and enhance habitats for fish and wildlife. This conservation collaboration supports NFWF's efforts through the NCRF to restore or expand natural systems such as coastal marshes and wetlands, dune and beach systems, oyster and coral reefs, forests, coastal rivers and floodplains, and barrier islands, features that can help to minimize the impacts of future storms and other naturally occurring events on coastal communities



The **Avangrid Foundation** supports a diverse set of NFWF programs. This program portfolio encompasses a suite of important and imperiled wildlife populations, including hibernating bats throughout North America, fish and migratory forest birds in the Northeast, and grassland-dependent birds and mammals in the West.



Bayer Crop Science is partnering with NFWF, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and others to support work under the Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund. Established in 2015, the Fund is catalyzing efforts to improve the quality, quantity and connectivity of habitat for monarch butterflies and other at-risk pollinators. In its first six years, the Fund has focused on planting milkweed and other nectar plants, providing technical assistance to private landowners, and improving coordination and capacity to help reverse population declines of these important species.



BNSF Railway and NFWF began working together in 2014 to support community-based projects that conserve wildlife and enhance local cultural and economic values. Working through multiple NFWF programs, this partnership has supported efforts to minimize negative interactions with grizzly bears in the Northern Rockies, reconnected high-priority habitats for pronghorn and mule deer across the West, and improved high-value green space and water quality in Chicago, Fort Worth and Pacific Coast cities. This partnership supports NFWF's efforts to maintain the incredible wildlife assemblage of the Rocky Mountains, secure critical migration corridors for iconic Western species, and improve the health and vitality of waterways in key cities across the country.



Cargill and NFWF began working with ranchers to improve grazing lands management in April 2021 through the newly established Southern Plains Grassland Program. Together, NFWF and Cargill aim to implement conservation practices on 1 million acres of grasslands, with the potential to sequester up to 360,000 metric tons of carbon per year. Stretching across sections of Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas, the Southern Plains is a vast landscape of open grasslands that makes up one of the most important beef production areas in the United States. NFWF will engage a network of on-the-ground partners, such as livestock associations, rancher-led collaboratives, universities, state wildlife agencies, and conservation nonprofits to implement proven strategies for improving rangeland management including prescribed grazing and invasive species control. This conservation partnership supports NFWF's efforts to implement voluntary practices designed to improve the sustainability of working rangelands and restore grasslands and wildlife habitat.



human energy

As a corporate partner of the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative, **Chevron Corporation** is developing a new way to address conservation challenges in West Texas and Southeast New Mexico. The Pecos Watershed is a unique and extraordinary resource, and Chevron, with other area operators and state and federal agencies, is partnering with NFWF to ensure that the development of oil and natural gas resources goes hand-in-hand with protecting wildlife and improving the quality of life for communities in the region.



Cleveland-Cliffs began working with NFWF in late 2020 after significantly increasing its presence and commitment in the Great Lakes region with the acquisition of ArcelorMittal USA. Now the largest flat-rolled steel producer in North America, the company is building on the legacy of leadership and NFWF partnership that began with ArcelorMittal in 2007. Cliffs is engaged in the ongoing performance of three NFWF programs: Sustain Our Great Lakes, the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund and the Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund. These programs have collectively improved more than 46,000 acres of critical habitat and reconnected more than 2,200 miles of stream to allow fish passage. Since 2013, these programs have also installed natural infrastructure that adds capacity to slow and filter more than 251 million gallons of stormwater in flood-prone areas. This conservation partnership supports NFWF's efforts in the Great Lakes basin to restore healthy fish and bird populations, enhance the many ecological, social and economic values that depend on clean water, and improve the condition and accessibility of the region's waterways and natural areas.



ConocoPhillips and NFWF began working together to advance the conservation of birds and other wildlife two decades ago. Working through the ConocoPhillips SPIRIT of Conservation Program, the Alaska Fish and Wildlife Fund, the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative and NFWF's Western Big Game Migrations Program, this partnership has supported the conservation of more than 530,000 acres of important bird habitat, spurred advances in bird monitoring and polar bear and beluga whale research, and helped restore movement corridors for pronghorn, mule deer and other western wildlife. With a geographic focus that spans multiple priority landscapes, this partnership supports NFWF's efforts to provide for the needs of wildlife across their full life cycles, secure essential migratory pathways and drive innovations that shape the next generation of wildlife conservation.



Corteva Agriscience and NFWF work together to restore grassland habitat, improve sustainable land management practices, and enhance biodiversity through two separate programs: the Restore Colorado Program and the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative. This partnership directly supports both NFWF's work to implement a variety of conservation strategies and Corteva's goal to enhance biodiversity through sustainable land management and habitat conservation. Together, Corteva and NFWF are helping grantees in Texas restore up to 8,000 acres of brush-invaded dry mixed prairie, benefiting migratory grassland birds and native wildlife. In Colorado, Corteva and NFWF are supporting ranchers as they work to improve grazing lands management on 56,000 acres, restore more than 6,000 acres of grassland, and improve soil health through the implementation of sustainable agriculture practices. Together, these efforts will improve vital habitat for target bird species such as chestnut-collared longspur, Sprague's pipit, lesser prairie chicken, eastern black rail, lark bunting and thick-billed longspur, and other wildlife.



Covanta, a leader in sustainable waste management, and NFWF began working together to clean up U.S. waterways, and serve as a catalyst for innovation in gear technology and management solutions through the Fishing for Energy program in 2008. The Fishing for Energy partnership provides commercial fishermen with no-cost solutions to dispose of derelict and retired fishing gear, and offers competitive grants to reduce the impacts of derelict fishing gear on the environment. Fishing for Energy derelict fishing gear bin collection efforts alone have collected more than 4.95 million pounds of fishing gear. In addition to being a funding partner of the Fishing for Energy program, Covanta also provides in-kind support through its solid waste processing facilities. This conservation partnership supports NFWF's efforts to restore the quality of marine and coastal habitats and supports the communities and industries that rely on these resources.



Danone North America (DNA) and NFWF began working together in 2019 to advance cutting-edge conservation practices and research focused on improving farm sustainability and performance. With a focus on dairies and other supporting farm operations, their work will help agricultural producers implement and evaluate soil health practices and other regenerative agricultural approaches. Together, DNA and NFWF aim to positively impact up to 100,000 acres, and produce multiple benefits for both farm profitability and conservation, including fewer agricultural inputs, higher yields, healthier soils, and reduced field runoff. This partnership supports NFWF's efforts to help farmers and ranchers implement voluntary conservation practices on their working lands — in ways that improve soil function, enhance water quality, and improve habitats for local fish and wildlife populations — and DNA's ongoing soil health research and work to provide financial support for its farmers and incentivize the adoption of sustainable farm management practices.



FedEx and NFWF began working together in 2009 to fund community-based conservation projects in 12 U.S. cities through the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program. The Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program seeks to develop nationwide community stewardship of local natural resources, preserving these resources for future generations and enhancing habitat for local wildlife. To date, the projects supported by FedEx have engaged more than 4,500 FedEx volunteers along with 540,000 community members to restore 3,600 acres of habitat and plant 360,000 trees. This conservation partnership supports NFWF's efforts to address water quality issues in priority watersheds, such as erosion due to unstable streambanks, pollution from stormwater runoff, and degraded shorelines caused by development.

General Mills and NFWF began working together in 2020 to accelerate the implementation of conservation practices that support regenerative agriculture on working lands. These projects will help farmers improve soil health and water quality and reduce green-house gas emissions while also enhancing habitat for fish and wildlife in the Great Lakes Basin and in the Southern Great Plains. Through this partnership, NFWF provides technical assistance to farmers in areas that supply important dairy and grain ingredients for General Mills products. The partnership supports agricultural management principles that can be utilized to improve local ecosystem health and increase resilience. Examples of conservation actions that are supported through these grants include: minimizing chronic disturbances to the soil and biological community; maximizing the diversity of plants and animals; keeping the soil covered; and keeping a living root in the ground at all times.

INTERNATIONAL PAPER

International Paper and NFWF began working together to restore and enhance the forested ecosystems of the Southeast in 2013. The partnership has achieved many significant accomplishments, including establishing or enhancing more than 1 million acres of native forest and wildlife habitat. This conservation partnership supports NFWF's efforts to help species that call forests their home in four major regions of the Southeast: the coastal Carolinas, the Cumberland Plateau, the Piney Woods of Texas and Louisiana, and the Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley. The fund works with both public land managers and private working forest landowners to plant, manage and protect key forest habitats.

JPMORGAN CHASE & CO.

JPMorgan Chase and NFWF began working together to improve coastal resilience planning and impact assessments of resiliency projects of the Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund in 2019. This program was established to invest in conservation projects that restore or expand natural features that minimize the impacts of storms and other naturally occurring flooding events on coastal communities. This partnership provides NFWF the support to conduct assessments of restoration projects implemented through the Emergency Coastal Resilience Fund and work towards developing predictive models to determine the extent to which projects provide flooding protection to a community and contribute to our ability to build more informed coastal resilience programs in the future.

A porcupine feeding in Michigan





As a corporate partner of the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative, **Marathon Oil Corporation** is developing a new way to address conservation challenges in West Texas and Southeast New Mexico. The Pecos Watershed is a unique and extraordinary resource, and the growing group of corporate sponsors, along with state and federal agencies, are partnering with NFWF to ensure that the development of oil and natural gas resources goes hand-in-hand with protecting wildlife and improving the quality of life for local communities in the region.



Microsoft and NFWF are working together to address critical conservation challenges and take action to protect natural habitats and sustain wildlife populations vital to maintaining biodiversity. Launched in April 2020, this partnership will conserve critical habitats and migration corridors for a wide variety of birds, fish, plants and wildlife in landscapes across the United States. This conservation partnership supports NFWF's efforts to implement innovative, science-based programs and advance conservation efforts that have the greatest benefit for wildlife and people.



Occidental

As a founding corporate partner of the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative, **Occidental** supports new ways of addressing conservation in West Texas and Southeast New Mexico. This effort helps to ensure the responsible development of oil and natural gas resources goes hand-in-hand with protecting wildlife and improving the quality of life for local communities in the region. In 2020, Occidental expanded its partnership with NFWF to include the RESTORE Colorado program and the National Coastal Resilience Fund. These additional programs support important conservation needs in landscapes where Occidental has significant operations in the United States.



Since 1999, the **Pacific Gas and Electric Company** (PG&E) has partnered with NFWF on PG&E's Nature Restoration Trust program, to support riparian, coastal and wetland habitat restoration throughout California. This PG&E and NFWF collaborative partnership empowers local communities to care for native habitats and species and engage youth in hands-on enhancement, restoration and stewardship projects.



Pūlama Lānaʻi supports the Kuahiwi A Kai (From the Mountain to the Ocean) Program, which focuses on watershed-scale strategies to protect and enhance Lanai's coral reefs, native plants and animals, endangered Hawaiian petrel habitat, and sensitive coastal cultural sites, while fostering co-management with, and engagement of, Lanai's community stakeholders. Lanai presents an unparalleled opportunity to demonstrate the benefits of sustainable land management and community stewardship in Hawai'i by both protecting native ecosystems, and providing improved ecosystem services such as clean water, resource gathering, and recreation to the people who call Lanai home. With few land managers on the island, Lanai has one of the few true examples of a unified approach to land management similar to the ahupua'a system of Hawaiian tradition. In restoring the bio-cultural landscape of Lanai, we honor our kupuna and leave a legacy allowing future generations to thrive.



Since 2015, **SeaWorld Parks and Entertainment** has worked with NFWF on marine and coastal conservation issues and was the lead sponsor for the establishment of the Killer Whale Research and Conservation Program. The program works to increase Chinook salmon, the Southern Resident killer whale population's primary prey base, to increase the quality of killer whale habitat in the Puget Sound/Salish Sea region and to reduce critical gaps in knowledge needed for the effective management of this declining population. In the first seven years, the program has awarded 46 grants totaling \$5.3 million, drawing an additional \$9.2 million in grantee match for a total conservation investment of more than \$14.5 million. These awards have fostered collaborative efforts in all three strategies partnering science with management action and restoration activities. NFWF has taken a comprehensive food-web approach to recovering this apex predator and works with state and transboundary management to implement recovery actions.



Shell Oil Company and NFWF began working together in 1998 to conserve priority habitats and species in the communities where Shell lives and operates. Over the past two decades, more than 360 projects funded by Shell and other sponsors have generated more than \$166 million in on-the-ground conservation impact, supporting the protection, restoration and management of over 230,000 acres across the United States, and improving monitoring and management of key species in ecosystems nationwide. Today, through the Shell Marine & Wildlife Habitat Program, the company supports the following programs: Central Appalachia Habitat Stewardship Program, Monarch Butterfly and Pollinators Conservation Fund, National Coastal Resilience Fund, and the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative. Shell also supports investments to reduce threats to North Atlantic right whales and other marine life off the coast of New England.



Sierra Pacific Industries and NFWF began working together to advance conservation of Sierra Nevada meadows, improve forest health and support the recovery of at-risk species in California through the Pacific Southwest Fuels Management Partnership in 2017. Through this partnership, the program supports planning and compliance tasks for important conservation actions, as well as funds on-the-ground restoration and management efforts that will protect and enhance habitat to benefit a variety of threatened and endangered species, including the California spotted owl. This conservation partnership contributes to NFWF's larger efforts to address important landscapes and watersheds in California, from the high mountain headwaters down to the sea.



Southern Company and Southern Company and NFWF began working together to support conservation of species and ecosystems across the Southeast as far back as 2003. Now, over 18 years, the partnership has evolved into one of the premier examples of public-private partnerships helping to support critical wildlife needs across landscapes throughout the United States. The partnership has been central to some of NFWF's most significant recent accomplishments, including restoring more than 2.7 million acres of longleaf under the Longleaf Stewardship Fund and building new community stewardship capacity through the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Grant Program. Today, this conservation partnership also supports NFWF's efforts focused on freshwater habitat restoration in priority watersheds through the Southeast Aquatics Fund, important research and management to protect bat populations through the Bats for the Future Fund and shorebird conservation along the Atlantic Flyway through the Atlantic Flyway Shorebird Initiative.



Cardinal shiners
schooling in Tennessee



Sysco began partnering with NFWF on the Southern Plains Grassland Program in April 2021 to help ranching communities tackle climate change and improve grasslands and wildlife habitats through one of the largest sustainable beef cattle grazing efforts in the nation. Stretching across sections of Kansas, Oklahoma, Colorado, New Mexico and Texas, the Southern Plains is a vast landscape of open grasslands that makes up one of the most important beef production areas in the United States. NFWF will engage a network of on-the-ground partners, such as livestock associations, rancher-led collaboratives, universities, state wildlife agencies, and conservation non-profits to implement proven strategies for improving rangeland management including prescribed grazing and invasive species control. This conservation partnership supports NFWF’s efforts to implement voluntary practices designed to improve the sustainability of working rangelands and restore grasslands and wildlife habitat.



TransRe supports the National Coastal Resilience Fund, which restores, increases and strengthens natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities while also enhancing habitats for fish and wildlife. TransRe is the brand name for Transatlantic Holdings, Inc. and its subsidiaries (including Transatlantic Reinsurance Company). TransRe is wholly owned by Alleghany Corporation, a reinsurance organization headquartered in New York with operations worldwide.



Truterra, the sustainability business at Land O’Lakes, partners with NFWF to support conservation specialists deployed alongside agricultural retailers, to build knowledge and capacity in order to support conservation practices around the country. This work is advancing private-sector delivery of on-farm stewardship that generates benefits for farmers, wildlife habitat, and watershed health.



Walmart and NFWF began working together to sustain and enhance wildlife populations and natural habitats with the creation of the Acres for America conservation program in 2005. Originally designed to offset Walmart’s retail footprint by protecting an equivalent acreage of natural habitats, the program has far surpassed that goal to become one of the most successful public-private land conservation partnerships in the history of the United States. To date, the program has helped to protect over 1.6 million acres across the country, an area comparable in size to Everglades National Park. This conservation partnership supports NFWF’s efforts to protect wildlife migratory routes, conserve and enhance natural habitats at a landscape scale, open new lands to public access, and implement conservation on working lands such as ranches and timberlands.



Wells Fargo and NFWF began working together to build community resilience in 2012, through the Environmental Solutions for Communities program. In 2017, NFWF and Wells Fargo launched the Resilient Communities program to build on the success of this program while refocusing on resilience in the face of a changing climate. To date, this program has supported projects that will reach more than 130,000 community members and restore more than 179,000 acres of habitat.



As a corporate partner of the Pecos Watershed Conservation Initiative, **XTO Energy** is developing a new way to address conservation challenges in West Texas and Southeast New Mexico. The Pecos Watershed is a unique and extraordinary resource, and the growing group of corporate sponsors, along with state and federal agencies, are partnering with NFWF to ensure that the development of oil and natural gas resources goes hand-in-hand with protecting wildlife and improving the quality of life for local communities in the region.

A bull moose testing
the air in Wyoming



FEDERAL AND STATE PARTNERS

NFWF was established by Congress in 1984 to conserve fish, wildlife and plant species through innovative partnerships with federal agencies, corporations, foundations, and nonprofit organizations to generate new resources for conservation.



**United States
Department of
Agriculture**

Natural Resources Conservation Service

The U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Natural Resources Conservation Service** (NRCS) provides farmers, ranchers, foresters and other private working landowners the tools they need to restore and protect the productivity of their lands. NFWF partners with NRCS to support outreach, education and conservation technical assistance on farms and ranches in order to provide conservation benefits for wildlife, water quality and soil health, while at the same time strengthening local economies. The partnership began in 1996 with a pilot through the Wetland Reserve Program and has expanded to include partnerships with national and state offices across the country.



NFWF partners with the **U.S. Forest Service** (USFS) across the country, through both the national forest system and the state and private forestry programs. The partnership supports restoration of priority USFS landscapes, including national forests, national grasslands, and state and private forests within NFWF's priority landscapes. Partnership activities focus on forest management to improve forest health and resilience, fuels management to protect critical infrastructure and habitat, post-fire restoration, and grassland enhancement to support rural economies and sensitive wildlife species.



The partnership between NFWF and the **National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration** (NOAA) was formalized by Congress in 1994. Through the partnership, NOAA and NFWF work together to support marine and coastal conservation. The partnership focuses across the marine environment, including sustainable fisheries, coral reefs, marine debris removal, sea turtles, and the restoration of living shorelines and other coastal habitats. The partnership also focuses on increasing ecosystem resilience by strengthening natural infrastructure to protect coastal communities and wildlife.



NFWF, in partnership with the **U.S. Department of Defense**, is working to conserve, restore and manage habitat off-base to improve the status of species of concern to military training and operations. The partnership focuses on the longleaf pine ecosystem throughout the Southeast and on riparian habitat in Southern California to benefit a suite of species in both geographies. Most recently, the partnership was expanded to include a focus on improving the resilience of coastal military communities through the installation of natural infrastructure. Together, these outcomes support military training and readiness goals.



NFWF developed a conservation implementation plan that will guide off-base conservation activities to benefit desert tortoise in the Mojave Desert in partnership with **U.S. Marine Corps** (USMC) Air Ground Combat Center Twentynine Palms. NFWF also partnered with USMC Air Station Camp Pendleton to support habitat conservation for federally listed species. These partnerships will improve military operations and species recovery throughout Southern California.



NFWF worked with the **U.S. Navy** to develop an implementation plan to support restoration of the limestone and ravine forest ecosystems on Guam. This effort will support resilience for the island's unique plant and animal species. The partnership builds off an existing program at the Pacific Missile Range Facility in Hawai'i where NFWF is helping to protect and enhance seabird colonies enabling long-term recovery of the birds and improved operations at the base.



In 2021 NFWF entered into its first partnership with the **U.S. Army** Fort Irwin to support recovery of the desert tortoise in the Mojave Desert of Southern California. The Army joined the U.S. Marine Corps and other federal agencies in the development of an implementation plan that will be executed upon in early 2022.



In partnership with the **Bonneville Power Administration** and the Northwest Power and Conservation Council, NFWF supports an innovative, grassroots, incentive-based program to improve stream flows for at-risk fish throughout Oregon, Washington, Idaho and Montana. The Columbia Basin Water Transactions Program, founded in 2002, is the first regional effort of its kind in the United States to enhance flows in tributaries through cooperative partnerships between flow restoration practitioners and farmers and ranchers. The program supports a combination of practices to restore instream flows to key Columbia Basin tributaries that support important anadromous and resident fish populations. NFWF is working to better align flow improvements with other priority habitat restoration efforts.



The **Bureau of Land Management** (BLM) partners with NFWF to support migration corridors for big game such as elk, mule deer, and pronghorn. The enhancement of these important migration routes provides outsized benefits to a suite of species, including sage-grouse, that depend on the health of these landscapes. NFWF is also working with BLM to support Monarch and pollinator habitat, riparian sagebrush habitat, southwest headwaters, as well as desert tortoise habitat in the Mojave Desert of Southern California.



The **U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** (FWS) has been a core partner since NFWF's founding by Congress in 1984. The partnership between FWS and NFWF benefits a wide range of landscapes including the Delaware River, Great Lakes, sagebrush ecosystem, and the Klamath Basin. The partnership benefits a wide range of species from mule deer and pronghorn to turtles, shorebirds, bats and native fish. FWS funding serves as the critical base to a broad range of NFWF conservation programs. The partnership allows NFWF to raise private-sector funds to amplify and complement the federal agency's conservation efforts across the nation, on both public and private lands.



— BUREAU OF —
RECLAMATION

NFWF works with the **Bureau of Reclamation** (Reclamation) within three defined watersheds. In the Middle Rio Grande watershed of New Mexico, NFWF and Reclamation are working with the local irrigation district and landowners to pilot voluntary water leasing and other innovative conservation solutions that support the needs of the farming and ranching community. NFWF also supports Reclamation’s coho salmon recovery goals in the Lower Klamath Basin and Trinity River watershed through grant programs focused on improving flow and habitat in Northern California. In Western Nevada, NFWF works with the Walker Basin Conservancy under a Reclamation grant to restore and maintain Walker Lake while protecting agricultural interests and supporting new opportunities for public recreation in the Walker River Basin.



The **Environmental Protection Agency** (EPA) and NFWF partner to improve water quality through natural restoration activities. The partnership supports coordinated conservation activities across large watersheds in partnership with the states and other federal agencies. The partnership began in 1999 with the Chesapeake Bay Program and has since expanded to include the Great Lakes and Long Island Sound. NFWF also works with EPA to support community engagement and green infrastructure through the Five Star and Urban Waters Restoration Program and to support coastal resilience in the Gulf of Mexico.



COLORADO
Department of Natural Resources

In its second full year, NFWF partnered with two state of Colorado entities on the RESTORE Colorado program that supports coordinated restoration, improvement and management of wildlife habitat within Colorado. Funding came from **Great Outdoors Colorado**, which invests a portion of Colorado Lottery proceeds to help preserve and enhance the state’s parks, trails, wildlife, rivers and open spaces. Additional support was provided by the **Colorado Department of Natural Resources** through support from both Colorado Parks and Wildlife Habitat Stamp Program, Habitat Partnership Program and the Colorado Water Conservation Board’s Watershed Restoration Grants.



A long-tailed weasel on alert in Idaho

In 2021, NFWF also worked with the following agencies:

- California Department of Forestry and Fire Protection (CAL FIRE)**
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers**
- U.S. Coast Guard**
- State of Arizona**
- State of New Mexico**

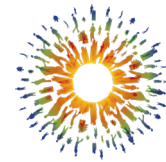
FOUNDATION PARTNERS

NFWF works with many foundations to advance conservation across the country. These foundations actively supported NFWF conservation programs in 2021.



American Forest Foundation

The **American Forest Foundation (AFF)** supports conservation programs across multiple NFWF landscapes in the eastern half of the country to improve habitat for forest-dependent, at-risk wildlife, while increasing the amount of family forests under sustainable, active management.



Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation

The **Fred A. and Barbara M. Erb Family Foundation** supports the Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund, which increases the resilience of communities and natural resources in Southeast Michigan by reducing the impact of stormwater, improving water quality, enhancing habitat, and increasing the accessibility and usability of public green space and natural areas.



The **Arbor Day Foundation** supports multiple NFWF conservation programs and landscapes, including the Longleaf Landscape Stewardship Fund, Lower Mississippi Alluvial Valley Restoration Fund, Northern California Forests and Watersheds Program, and Southern California Forests and Watersheds Program. The Foundation is particularly interested in the role of trees in these efforts.



The **Arthur Vining Davis Foundations** support the Northern Great Plains program, which aims to conserve mixed grass prairie and associated wildlife populations of the northern prairie.



CROWN FAMILY PHILANTHROPIES

The **Crown Family Philanthropies** supports the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, which invests in the health and vitality of the communities, waterways and natural resources of the Chicago/Calumet region, as well as the Sustain Our Great Lakes program, which enhances habitat and water quality in Wisconsin's Lake Michigan watershed.



The **Gates Family Foundation** supports the RESTORE Colorado Program, which was established to fund large-scale restoration and stewardship projects across several habitat priorities in Colorado.



GAYLORD AND DOROTHY DONNELLEY FOUNDATION

The **Gaylord and Dorothy Donnelley Foundation** supports the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, which invests in the health and vitality of the communities, waterways, and natural resources of the Chicago/Calumet region.



The **Hunter Family Foundation** supports the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, which aims to restore the health, vitality, climate resilience and accessibility of the waterways in Chicago and the Calumet region.



A spotfin butterflyfish swimming among corals in the Florida Keys

The Joyce Foundation

The **Joyce Foundation** supports the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, which invests in the health and vitality of the communities, waterways and natural resources of the Chicago/Calumet region.



The **Kingfisher Foundation** supports the Electronic Monitoring and Reporting Grant Program, which aims to develop and implement electronic technology and information infrastructure to improve the timeliness and quality of fisheries data, expand access and availability of data, and increase knowledge of fisheries management and science.



The **Kresge Foundation**, founded in 1924 to promote human progress, supports the Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund, which increases the resilience of communities and natural resources in Southeast Michigan by reducing the impact of urban flooding caused by climate change and stormwater, by improving water quality, enhancing habitat, and increasing the accessibility and usability of public green space and natural areas.



Margaret A. Cargill Philanthropies supports the Northern Great Plains Program, which directly maintains or improves 1 million acres of interconnected, native grasslands in focal areas within the Northern Great Plains to sustain healthy populations of grassland-obligate species while fostering sustainable livelihoods and preserving cultural identities.



The **Orton Foundation**, an affiliate of the Moore Charitable Foundation, founded by Louis Bacon, supports the Longleaf Stewardship Fund to help establish more resilience for wildlife and communities. The fund expands, enhances and accelerates longleaf pine ecosystem restoration across longleaf pine's historical range.



The **Ralph C. Wilson, Jr. Foundation** supports the Southeast Michigan Resilience Fund and the Sustain Our Great Lakes Program through a special initiative investing in western New York. These programs work to increase the resilience of communities and natural resources in Southeast Michigan and western New York by reducing the impact of stormwater, improving water quality, enhancing habitat, and increasing the accessibility and usability of public green space and natural areas.



The **Rasmuson Foundation** supports internship opportunities for Alaska Native students to work with U.S. Fish and Wildlife staff to learn the intricacies of federal decision-making while providing hands-on experiences to learn about the practical impact of conservation.



The **Richard King Mellon Foundation**, which has helped to conserve more than 4.5 million acres of environmentally valuable land nationwide, works with NFWF in western Pennsylvania to restore forest and freshwater habitat through the Central Appalachia Habitat Stewardship Program. The program seeks to increase the distribution and abundance of native fish, birds and other wildlife.



The **Trinchera Blanca Foundation**, an affiliate of the Moore Charitable Foundation, founded by Louis Bacon, supports the Southwest Rivers Program which includes the Rio Grande. This program improves the ecological function of the Rio Grande mainstem and its headwaters by working collaboratively with stakeholders to restore aquatic and riparian habitats that directly support native fish and wildlife.



The **Walder Foundation** supports the Chi-Cal Rivers Fund, which invests in the health and vitality of the communities, waterways and natural resources of the Chicago/Calumet region, and a new funder collaboration under the Sustain Our Great Lakes program, which will enhance habitat and water quality in Wisconsin's Lake Michigan watershed.



The **Walton Family Foundation**, a family-led foundation, works to create access to opportunity for people and communities through three areas: improving K-12 education, protecting rivers and oceans and the communities they support, and investing in their home region of Northwest Arkansas and the Arkansas-Mississippi Delta. The Foundation supports conservation programs at NFWF that address threats to water quality and bottomland hardwoods in the Mississippi River Basin, support sustainable fisheries, and restore riparian habitat in the Colorado River Basin. Walton and NFWF support each other in operating at a landscape scale to maximize outcomes for marine fisheries, wildlife, water and people.



The **William Penn Foundation** supports the Delaware River Restoration Fund, which helps community-based nonprofits and government agencies work together to clean up and restore polluted waters to benefit water quality through the Delaware River Watershed Initiative.



A purple gallinule exploring the Florida Everglades



Eastern newt
in Virginia

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In 2021, generous gifts from these donors furthered NFWF’s actions to sustain and restore wildlife and their habitats. We greatly appreciate their support.

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A Nashville warbler foraging
among dogwood blossoms in Virginia



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1133 15th Street, NW
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ON THE FRONT COVER

A bobcat in Montana

ON THE BACK COVER

A day octopus hunts
along a coral reef
in Hawaiian waters.

