



# Cumberland Plateau Stewardship Fund

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## PARTNERS

- USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Forest Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Cargill
- Nestlé
- Altria Group

## ABOUT NFWF

Chartered by Congress in 1984, the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores the nation's fish, wildlife, plants and habitats. Working with federal, corporate and individual partners, NFWF has funded more than 6,800 organizations and generated a total conservation impact of more than \$10 billion. NFWF is an equal opportunity provider.

Learn more at [www.nfwf.org](http://www.nfwf.org)

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Grasshopper sparrow

## OVERVIEW

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) and U.S. Department of Agriculture's Natural Resource Conservation Service, U.S. Forest Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Cargill, Nestlé and Altria Group announced a 12th year of funding for Cumberland Plateau Stewardship Fund (CPSF) projects. Five new or continuing freshwater and forest habitat restoration grants totaling more than \$3.6 million were awarded. The six awards announced leveraged \$3.3 million in matching contributions from the grantees, providing a total conservation impact of nearly \$7 million.

CPSF was established in 2013 to restore forest and freshwater habitats to conditions that will improve associated wildlife species and the health of freshwater systems, while advancing strategies to support working forests and farms. CPSF helps nonprofits, government agencies and other local partners work together to accelerate restoration of shortleaf pine and oak savannas, riparian forests, grasslands and instream habitats in strategic geographies within the greater Cumberland Plateau, one of the most biodiverse regions in the United States.

In 12 years, the fund has invested more than \$17.8 million across 79 projects, leveraging \$15.4 million in matching contributions from grantees for a total conservation impact of \$33.2 million.

*(continued)*

CPSF restores native forest, grassland and freshwater habitats to benefit populations of associated wildlife species while advancing strategies to support working forests and farms. CPSF accomplishes this by focusing on priority areas that include:

- Establishing shortleaf pine and oak savanna forests
- Reforesting previously mined lands
- Enhancing and maintaining existing shortleaf pine-oak ecosystems
- Enhancing and restoring riparian forests and watershed health to support aquatic species
- Increasing adoption of conservation practices on agricultural lands
- Expanding and coordinating technical assistance and outreach
- Conserving working forests through voluntary conservation easements

The fund's investments are targeted primarily to focal areas that were selected by scientifically analyzing upland and riparian forest and freshwater systems within the greater Cumberland Plateau region. These focal areas represent locations with the greatest potential for forest and freshwater habitat restoration for terrestrial and aquatic species based on resource mapping, interviews with practitioners in the field, and capacity to carry out habitat restoration work.

**2024 GRANTS**

**Engaging Private Landowners in White Oak Reforestation (AL, KY, TN)**

Grantee: Alabama Forestry Foundation  
 Grant Amount:..... \$687,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$687,200  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,374,200

Engage private landowners to develop awareness and understanding of forest management practices that will benefit the conservation of white oak forests and associated species. Project will result in 225 landowners implementing conservation activities, 900 acres of private land burned, 6,300 acres under improved management, 1,800 acres restored and 54,000 trees planted on private lands.

**Improving Rangelands and Restoring Threatened Grasslands through Private Landowner Outreach (AL)**

Grantee: Alabama A&M University  
 Grant Amount:..... \$480,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$685,800  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,165,800

Engage private landowners through demonstration sites to promote implementation of regenerative soil management, prescribed burning and adaptive grazing techniques. Project will restore and improve grassland habitat, benefiting species such as bobwhite quail, grasshopper sparrow and meadow jumping mouse.

**Restoring Abandoned and Legacy Mine Lands for Conservation and Community Benefits (KY, TN)**

Grantee: Cumberland River Compact  
 Grant Amount:..... \$376,500  
 Matching Funds:..... \$379,300  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$755,800

Reforest 100 acres of legacy coal mine sites in the Cumberland River basin to generate essential habitats for aquatic species, birds and pollinators, and improve water quality. Project will plant 70,000 trees, including 28,000 white oak and 11,200 short leaf pine, and assess seedling establishment and survivability.

**Restoring Grasslands and Forests on Private Lands in Tennessee**

Grantee: Pheasants Forever  
 Grant Amount:..... \$1,348,800  
 Matching Funds:..... \$1,039,300  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$2,388,100

Support a habitat specialist crew to work across private and public lands to improve grassland and shortleaf pine wildlife habitat. Project will complete prescribed burning on 2,500 acres and restore 500 acres on private land through shortleaf pine plantings by delivering technical assistance on both private and public land.

**Restoring Mined Lands through Reforestation and Forest Management Practices (KY, TN)**

Grantee: The Ruffed Grouse Society  
 Grant Amount:..... \$749,700  
 Matching Funds:..... \$515,500  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$1,265,200

Restore habitat on previously mined lands, marginal agricultural lands, and other forested lands through reforestation and forest management. Project will reforest 650 acres of previously mined land, complete midstory removal treatments on 709 acres and provide technical assistance to private landowners to improve habitat and increase climate resilience.

**Removing Fish Passage Barriers and Improving Water Quality on the Cumberland Plateau (TN)**

Grantee: Tennessee Aquarium  
 Grant Amount:..... \$50,000  
 Matching Funds:..... \$0  
 Total Project Amount:..... \$50,000

Replace a failing culvert to improve habitat connectivity within 12 miles of a stream and monitor the response of the endangered Laurel dace and other at-risk fish species to stream habitat and water quality improvements.