

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
FY 2027 LWCF Land Acquisition Requested Project List
(Dollars)

Priority	Project	State(s)	Funding⁽¹⁾	Acres
1	Everglades to Gulf Conservation Area	FL	5,000	833
2	Dakota Grassland Conservation Area	SD, ND	2,800	1,647
3	Dakota Tallgrass Prairie Wildlife Management Area	SD, ND	2,000	952
4	Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area	FL	5,000	714
5	Middle Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge	IL, MO	500	500
6	Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge	TX	10,700	2,042
7	Bear River Watershed Conservation Area	ID, UT, WY	1,200	840
8	Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge	IN	500	150
9	Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge	TX	1,600	80
10	Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge	LA	6,000	2,899
11	Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge	GA	6,000	2,000
12	Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area	MT	1,500	1,763
13	Aransas National Wildlife Refuge	TX	5,000	1,687
14	Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge	NJ	500	332
15	Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area	KS	1,000	333
	FY 2027 Requested Project List		49,300	17,165

(1) Bureau line item funding amounts are Net Budget Authority, the amount available to execute after sequester and pop-up adjustments. All mandatory LWCF funding is subject to a sequestration reduction of -5.7% across all programs.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Everglades to Gulf Conservation Area

Priority: 1

State(s): FL

Congressional District(s): FL-11, FL-16, FL-17, **FL-18**, FL-26

Location:

Spans 12 counties in Southwest Florida including Charlotte, Collier, Desoto, Glades, Hardee, Hendry, Highlands, Lee, Manatee, Okeechobee, Polk, and Sarasota Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	833	\$5,000,000
Acquired to Date	7	\$0
Remaining to be Acquired	799,160	7,991,600,000

Project Description:

The Everglades to Gulf Conservation Area is a collaborative effort driven by a network of partners to conserve wildlife corridors from Southwest Florida into the state’s northern regions. This effort benefits many species of native plants and wildlife, including over 100 federally- and state-listed species such as the Everglade snail kite, and Florida panther. Protection and management actions would support Florida’s family farms and ranches, improve water quality, quantity, and water storage within the Greater Everglades. As in other Conservation Areas, the FWS's focus is on conserving important wildlife habitat through voluntary conservation easements.

Purpose / Need:

The FWS’s conservation easement program facilitates public-private partnerships and reduces conflicts between landowners and listed species by offering a financial incentive to maintain important wildlife habitat while protecting Florida’s cattle ranching heritage. This phased easement acquisition will conserve wetland and upland habitats that support migratory birds, listed species, and regionally important wildlife and plant communities, while helping to connect priority wildlife corridors. Since landowners continue management of the land under the easement, the FWS incurs minimal management costs.

Cooperator(s):

Conservation Area partners include the Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Sportsman's Trust, Florida Cattlemen's Association, Florida Conservation Group, National Wildlife Refuge Association, Trust for Public Land, Ducks Unlimited, USDA - Natural Resources

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Conservation Service, The Nature Conservancy, Florida Wildlife Corridor Foundation, Wildpath, Live Wildly, Defenders of Wildlife, Audubon of Florida, and Audubon of Western Everglades.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$1,000	\$2,000

Describe O&M:

Start-up costs include the posting of boundary signs. Annual costs include monitoring easements and managing habitats, including prescribed burns.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Dakota Grassland Conservation Area

Priority: 2

State(s): ND, SD

Congressional District(s): ND-AL, SD-AL

Location:

North Dakota and South Dakota, lying east of the Missouri River.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	1,647	\$2,800,000
Acquired to Date	114,036	\$61,106,442
Remaining to be Acquired	1,824,317	\$1,737,323,184

Project Description:

The Prairie Pothole Region—spanning parts of the Dakotas, Montana, Iowa, and Minnesota—is a vital grassland-wetland ecosystem that supports over half of North America’s breeding waterfowl. The Dakota Grassland Conservation Area helps protect the most important waterfowl breeding habitat within this landscape, primarily through the acquisition of voluntary grassland conservation easements. These easements preserve critical grassland nesting areas near prairie potholes—many supporting up to 100 duck pairs per square mile—directly supporting the North American Waterfowl Management Plan goals. Since landowners continue management of the land under these easements, the FWS incurs minimal management costs.

Purpose / Need:

With over 700 willing seller landowners awaiting easement offers, the Conservation Area reflects strong demand, high biological value, and cost-effective conservation through landowner partnerships. These 13 grassland conservation easements span a broad geographic area benefiting multiple watersheds and migratory corridors identified by North Dakota and South Dakota, while enhancing recreational opportunities and supporting local economies through the conservation of waterfowl, game birds, and big game.

Cooperator(s):

Conservation Area partners include The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Audubon Great Plains, Delta Waterfowl Foundation, Pheasants Forever, and Prairie Pothole Joint Venture.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$0	\$0

Describe O&M:

The FWS is already monitoring existing easements in the area; the additional costs would be minimal.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Dakota Tallgrass Prairie Wildlife Management Area

Priority: 3

State(s): ND, SD

Congressional District(s): ND-AL, SD-AL

Location:

South Dakota east of the James River Valley and three counties in the southeast corner of North Dakota.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	952	\$2,000,000
Acquired to Date	80,535	\$25,048,565
Remaining to be Acquired	108,513	\$82,483,381

Project Description:

Established in 2000, the Dakota Tallgrass Prairie Wildlife Management Area aims to conserve tallgrass prairie in southeastern North Dakota and eastern South Dakota through the acquisition of voluntary grassland conservation easements. This diverse ecosystem supports over 147 breeding bird species, including declining grassland birds, and also boasts waterfowl densities exceeding 100 pairs per square mile—some of the highest duck production habitat in the nation. Since landowners continue management of the land under these easements, the FWS incurs minimal management costs.

Purpose / Need:

With over 200 willing seller landowners expressing interest, the project shows strong biological value and transactional readiness. These six grassland conservation easement acquisitions will protect important breeding habitat for grassland birds, waterfowl, and other wildlife, all while supporting ranching and other traditional working operations. These easements contribute to expanding recreational opportunities locally and nationally by supporting populations of migratory waterfowl, game birds, and big game.

Cooperator(s):

Wildlife Management Area partners include the Prairie Pothole Joint Venture, Audubon Great Plains, The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, Delta Waterfowl Foundation, and Pheasants Forever.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$0	\$0

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Describe O&M:

The FWS is already monitoring existing easements in the area; the additional costs would be minimal.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area

Priority: 4

State(s): FL

Congressional District(s): FL-9, FL-18

Location:

Approximately 50 miles south of Orlando and 75 miles east of Tampa, in Okeechobee, Osceola, Highlands, and Polk Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	714	\$5,000,000
Acquired to Date	13,210	\$40,367,313
Remaining to be Acquired	136,076	\$398,122,833

Project Description:

Everglades Headwaters National Wildlife Refuge and Conservation Area protects the headwaters of the Greater Everglades ecosystem, conserving diverse wetland and upland habitats in the Kissimmee River Basin. These habitats support migratory birds, more than 150 federally- and state-listed species, and imperiled wildlife like the Florida panther. Through voluntary easements, FWS partners with landowners to preserve habitat and Florida’s ranching heritage, while minimizing federal management costs.

Purpose / Need:

Phased acquisition of this voluntary conservation easement from a willing seller will protect diverse habitats—seasonally wet grasslands, longleaf pine savannas, sandhill, scrub, and forested wetlands—while enhancing habitat connectivity and resilience in the Greater Everglades ecosystem. Acquisition will help preserve Florida’s working rural landscape, promote active land management, support listed species, and expand public-private partnerships for long-term habitat conservation.

Cooperator(s):

Refuge and Conservation Area partners include Florida Fish and Wildlife Conservation Commission, Florida Department of Agriculture and Consumer Services, Florida Department of Environmental Protection, Florida Sportsman's Trust, Florida Cattlemen's Association, Ducks Unlimited, USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service, and The Nature Conservancy. FWS is a partner of the Avon Park Air Force Range Sentinel Landscape.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$2,000	\$4,000

Describe O&M:

Start-up costs include the posting of boundary signs. Annual costs include monitoring easements and managing habitats, including prescribed burns.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Middle Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 5

State(s): IL, MO

Congressional District(s): IL-12, IL-13, MO-1, MO-2, MO-3, MO-8

Location:

Along the Mississippi River, from St. Louis, Missouri, to Cairo, Illinois.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	500	\$500,000
Acquired to Date	8,404	\$3,042,400
Remaining to be Acquired	110,514	\$271,100,016

Project Description:

The Middle Mississippi River National Wildlife Refuge, established in 2000 following the 1993 flood, lies in the free-flowing section of the river below the Missouri confluence. It features floodplain hardwood forests, wetlands, and open water, supporting native fish during high water and creating a corridor of vital habitat for migratory birds and wildlife. Designated an Important Bird Area in 2008, the Refuge offers public opportunities for wildlife viewing, hunting, and fishing.

Purpose / Need:

Acquiring land from willing sellers in Dogtooth Bend will help restore natural floodplain functions, benefiting species like pallid sturgeon, least tern, and native mussels. It will also improve water quality, floodwater storage, and habitat for migratory waterfowl. Phased acquisition of these two tracts will enable the FWS expand public access and recreational opportunities such as hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation, while reducing habitat fragmentation in a key migratory flyway.

Cooperator(s):

Partners supporting FY27 acquisitions include Ducks Unlimited and The Nature Conservancy. Refuge partners further include the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service. The Refuge also participates in the Middle Mississippi River Partnership—a collaboration of 22 federal, state, academic, and nonprofit organizations working together since 2004 to restore and enhance natural resources of the river corridor from St. Louis, Missouri, to Cairo, Illinois.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$8,000	\$2,000

Describe O&M:

Start-up costs include initial restoration and posting of boundary signs. Annual costs include habitat management, law enforcement, and maintenance.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 6

State(s): TX

Congressional District(s): TX-22, TX-27

Location:

Matagorda and Jackson Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	2,042	\$10,700,000
Acquired to Date	4,526	\$2,529,860
Remaining to be Acquired	48,432	\$57,005,442

Project Description:

Big Boggy National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1983 to protect saline and intermediate marsh habitat. The Refuge is comprised of salt marshlands and coastal prairies, which support migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, wading and waterbirds, and native resident wildlife species dependent on these habitats. Aside from being a haven for wildlife, the Refuge benefits public recreation, offering seasonal waterfowl hunting and fishing access on Boggy Creek.

Purpose / Need:

This is part of a phased acquisition to conserve coastal prairie and improve connectivity among existing Refuge System lands in Matagorda County. This acquisition from a willing seller is adjacent to existing refuge lands within San Bernard NWR and would protect inland habitats from erosion and damage from tropical storms and increase the resiliency of the Refuge and its neighboring communities. Acquisition will allow FWS to expand public waterfowl hunting opportunities.

Cooperator(s):

Refuge partners include the Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$1,250	\$750

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Describe O&M:

Start-up costs include posting of boundary signs, prescribed fire, and vegetation management. Annual costs include habitat management and maintenance.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Bear River Watershed Conservation Area

Priority: 7

State(s): ID, UT, WY

Congressional District(s): ID-2; UT-1, UT-3; WY-AL

Location:

Northeastern corner of Utah, extending into southeastern Idaho and southwestern Wyoming. Bannock, Bear Lake, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, and Power Counties in Idaho; Box Elder, Cache, Rich, and Summit Counties in Utah; and Lincoln and Uinta Counties in Wyoming.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	840	\$1,200,000
Acquired to Date	7,809	\$8,595,940
Remaining to be Acquired	911,351	\$898,396,374

Project Description:

The Bear River Watershed Conservation Area spans parts of Utah, Idaho, and Wyoming, conserving wetlands, riparian corridors, and sagebrush ecosystems through the use of voluntary conservation easements. The FWS works with private landowners to conserve farm and ranch lands that include these vital wildlife habitats. Wetlands and riparian areas provide key stopover and nesting sites for millions of migratory birds in the Pacific and Central Flyways, and the watershed serves as a critical corridor linking the northern and southern Rockies and Greater Yellowstone ecosystems for big game species. Easement acquisitions enhance connectivity among refuges and protected lands that support over 270 species, including greater sage-grouse and Bonneville cutthroat trout.

Purpose / Need:

Featuring a mix of aquatic, wetland, riparian, and upland habitats, these two voluntary conservation easements from willing sellers will permanently protect the land’s ecological integrity while allowing traditional agricultural practices to continue. The easements will safeguard water quality and quantity, maintain wildlife corridors and connectivity, and provide food, cover, and space for native fish and

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

wildlife. By preserving healthy habitat for diverse species and supporting migratory corridors, these protections ensure long-term conservation benefits across the landscape.

Cooperator(s):

Refuge and Conservation Area partners include The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, Ducks Unlimited, Western Rivers Conservancy, Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust, and PacifiCorp.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$0	\$5,000

Describe O&M:

Annual costs include easement monitoring and enforcement.

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Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 8

State(s): IN

Congressional District(s): IN-08

Location:

Gibson and Pike Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	150	\$500,000
Acquired to Date	12,657	\$14,405,358
Remaining to be Acquired	11,649	\$37,380,110

Project Description:

Established in 1994, Patoka River National Wildlife Refuge protects one of Indiana’s last intact floodplain forests and helps improve Patoka River water quality. Spanning 30 miles of river corridor, it provides vital habitat for migratory birds, fish, and listed species like the Indiana bat and whooping crane. Located near major metro areas, the Refuge offers public recreation such as hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, and photography.

Purpose / Need:

Featuring floodplain forests, restored wetlands, and a half-mile of river frontage, the three tracts will connect existing Refuge lands and eliminate flood-prone private inholdings. These acquisitions from willing sellers will enhance public access and recreation opportunities, supporting hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation across diverse habitats. These acquisitions will also advance Refuge priorities by reducing fragmentation, enhancing connectivity within the riverine system, and strengthening management efficiency through partnerships.

Cooperator(s):

Partners supporting FY27 acquisitions include Ducks Unlimited, Friends of Patoka Refuge, and Indiana Department of Transportation. Refuge partners further include Indiana Department of Natural Resources, The Nature Conservancy, Sycamore Land Trust, National Wild Turkey Federation, Pheasants Forever, Indiana Department of Environmental Management, Duke Energy, Evansville Chapter of the Audubon Society, and USDA - Natural Resources Conservation Service.

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Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$5,000	\$5,000

Describe O&M:

Start-up costs include posting of boundary signs. Annual costs include maintenance, law enforcement, and habitat management.

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Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 9

State(s): TX

Congressional District(s): TX-10

Location:

60 miles west of Houston, Texas in Austin and Colorado Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	80	\$1,600,000
Acquired to Date	10,541	\$6,459,530
Remaining to be Acquired	19,379	\$387,584,000

Project Description:

Established in 1972, Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge protects one of the last populations of the Attwater’s prairie-chicken, one of the most endangered birds in North America. The Refuge focuses on habitat restoration and offers wildlife viewing, photography, and environmental education, partnering with local and Houston-area schools. As one of only two places where the Attwater’s prairie-chicken survives, it draws global visitors. While not currently open to hunting, upland game opportunities are under review.

Purpose / Need:

These two acquisitions from willing sellers would strengthen habitat connectivity and advance recovery goals for the endangered Attwater’s prairie-chicken, supporting the Refuge’s conservation mission. Acquisition of these tracts would improve habitat management, lower operational costs, and enhance access for restoration efforts such as prescribed fire. Acquisition would provide opportunities to expand public recreation, hunting, and grazing, while supporting local ranching and preserving critical prairie ecosystems.

Cooperator(s):

Refuge partners include the Coastal Prairie Initiative and The Nature Conservancy.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$650	\$3,000

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Describe O&M:

Start-up costs will include posting boundary signs and realigning fences. Annual costs include habitat management activities such as grazing and prescribed fire.

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Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 10

State(s): LA

Congressional District(s): LA-4, LA-05

Location:

Morehouse and Union Parishes.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	2,899	\$6,000,000
Acquired to Date	54,243	\$39,660,162
Remaining to be Acquired	26,323	\$54,479,600

Project Description:

Established in 1978, Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge conserves wetlands and migratory bird habitat along 18 miles of the Ouachita River. Its cypress swamps, bottomland hardwoods, and upland forests support diverse wildlife, including alligators, bald eagles, Louisiana black bears, Rafinesque’s big-eared bats, and the threatened red-cockaded woodpecker. The Refuge offers public recreation such as birding, fishing, boating, hunting, and wildlife observation.

Purpose / Need:

Phased acquisition of this bottomland hardwood tract, which spans nearly the entire eastern boundary of the Refuge, from a willing seller will provide public access to roughly 7,000 acres of existing Refuge lands that are largely inaccessible today as they are bounded on one side by the Ouachita River and on the other side by this proposed acquisition property. Acquisition will significantly enhance recreational opportunities— including hunting, fishing, and wildlife observation—and strengthen connectivity with the nearby Felsenthal NWR to support cross-refuge management and operational efficiency.

Cooperator(s):

Partners supporting the proposed FY27 acquisition, and cooperating more broadly at the refuge scale, include The Conservation Fund and Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$10,000	\$5,000

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Describe O&M:

Start-up costs include posting of boundary signs. Annual costs would include habitat management and maintenance.

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Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 11

State(s): FL, GA

Congressional District(s): FL-3; GA-1, GA-8

Location:

East of the Suwannee River in Charlton, Clinch, and Ware Counties in Georgia, and Baker County in Florida.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	2,000	\$6,000,000
Acquired to Date	406,936	\$5,625,271
Remaining to be Acquired	118,779	\$235,978,068

Project Description:

Established in 1937, Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge protects the unique Okefenokee Swamp and supports diverse wildlife, including threatened species like the red-cockaded woodpecker and indigo snake. It is one of the world’s largest intact freshwater ecosystems, recognized as a Wetland of International Importance and nominated as a World Heritage Site. The Refuge offers public recreation such as canoeing, hiking, fishing, and wildlife viewing.

Purpose / Need:

This phased acquisition from a willing seller is along the Refuge’s western boundary. The tract connects to State Highway 177, which will create a natural firebreak and improve protection for nearby private lands. Restoring slash pine to longleaf pine will enhance fire resilience and provide habitat for threatened species. The tract expands public access for hunting, fishing, and recreation—including to currently landlocked areas—and offers a site for a new boat ramp on the Suwannee River. It also supports public-private conservation through the Greater Okefenokee Association of Landowners.

Cooperator(s):

Partners supporting the proposed FY27 acquisition, and cooperating more broadly at the refuge scale, include The Conservation Fund, The Nature Conservancy, Okefenokee-Osceola Longleaf Initiative, the Muscogee Nation, and the Greater Okefenokee Association of Landowners.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$440,000	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$8,000	\$24,000

Describe O&M:

Start-up savings are the result of the land being converted from commercial slash pine to longleaf pine by the landowner before being acquired by the FWS. Start-up costs include posting of boundary signs and installation of firebreaks. Annual costs include maintenance and habitat management.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area

Priority: 12

State(s): MT

Congressional District(s): MT-01, MT-02

Location:

Missoula, Powell, and Lewis and Clark Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	1,763	\$1,500,000
Acquired to Date	63,295	\$27,355,261
Remaining to be Acquired	34,942	\$29,729,047

Project Description:

The Blackfoot Valley Conservation Area, established in 1997, uses conservation easements to protect one of the most intact, low-elevation river valley ecosystems in western Montana. The watershed supports over 250 bird species, 63 mammals, and multiple listed species such as grizzly bear and bull trout. Since landowners continue management of the land under these easements, the FWS incurs minimal management costs.

Purpose / Need:

These two voluntary conservation easements from willing sellers will strengthen connectivity with 13,000 acres of easements and nearby public lands. It supports Montana’s State Wildlife Action Plan by protecting key migration corridors and winter range for elk, mule deer, and pronghorn, while enhancing hunting and fishing opportunities. It also promotes active rangeland management, public-private partnerships, and habitat conservation for listed species.

Cooperator(s):

Conservation Area partners include The Nature Conservancy, Trout Unlimited, and The Conservation Fund.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$0	\$5,000

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Describe O&M:

Annual costs include easement monitoring and compliance.

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Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Aransas National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 13

State(s): TX

Congressional District(s): TX-22, TX-27

Location:

Aransas, Calhoun, Goliad, Jackson, Matagorda, Refugio, San Patricio, and Victoria Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	1,687	\$5,000,000
Acquired to Date	115,324	\$17,166,817
Remaining to be Acquired	93,229	\$276,314,730

Project Description:

Established in 1937 on the south Texas coast, Aransas National Wildlife Refuge conserves vital marsh, prairie, and pond habitats for waterfowl, waterbirds, and other resident and migratory species. The Refuge became central to whooping crane recovery efforts in 1941 and now supports over 400 bird species, 39 mammals, and 100 reptiles and amphibians. The acquisition area provides habitat for several federally listed species, including the whooping crane and piping plover. The Refuge offers public recreation, including wildlife viewing, fishing, hunting, and beachcombing.

Purpose / Need:

This is part of a multi-phase acquisition of coastal prairie from a willing seller. It provides high-quality habitat for waterfowl, waterbirds, and federally listed species, supporting the refuge’s conservation mission. Adjacent to the State’s Powderhorn Wildlife Management Area, it enhances landscape connectivity and helps buffer inland areas from erosion and storm impacts.

Cooperator(s):

Refuge partners include The Conservation Fund, Friends of Aransas National Wildlife Refuge, FarWide Conservation Trust, and International Crane Foundation.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$110,500	\$110,500
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$7,500	\$4,500

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Describe O&M:

Start-up and annual saving costs are the result of using cooperative farming and grazing as management tools on this tract. Start-up costs include posting of boundary signs. Annual costs include habitat management and maintenance.

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Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge

Priority: 14

State(s): NJ

Congressional District(s): NJ-02, NJ-03, NJ-04

Location:

Spans 50 miles along coastal New Jersey from Barnegat Bay in Brick Township to Reeds Bay, across Atlantic, Burlington, and Ocean Counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	332	\$500,000
Acquired to Date	48,122	\$53,413,269
Remaining to be Acquired	23,870	\$35,948,830

Project Description:

Established in 1984, Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge protects tidal wetlands and shallow bays that serve as vital habitat for migratory waterbirds. Situated along one of the Atlantic Flyway's most active flight paths, the Refuge is a critical stopover during seasonal bird migrations and offers world class opportunities for birding and wildlife photography. The Refuge offers public hunting and fishing opportunities, in addition to wildlife observation and photography, and routinely sees over 400,000 visits each year.

Purpose / Need:

These fee title acquisitions from willing sellers will protect habitat for migratory waterbirds and expand public recreational opportunities including hunting and fishing, as well as hiking, boating, and bird watching. These six tracts will support important federal- and state-listed species including osprey, herons, and egrets, and also benefit the federally listed piping plover and red knot, as well as the saltmarsh sparrow, as they take advantage of these stops along their migration routes.

Cooperator(s):

Partners supporting the proposed FY27 acquisitions, and cooperating more broadly at the refuge scale, include Trust for Public Land and Save Barnegat Bay.

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$2,000	\$2,000

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Describe O&M:

Startup costs include initial restoration and the posting of boundary signs. Annual costs include habitat management and maintenance.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Agency: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Fiscal Year: 2027

Project / Unit: Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area

Priority: 15

State(s): KS

Congressional District(s): KS-1, KS-2, KS-4

Location:

The Flint Hills of eastern Kansas run north-south in a long, narrow band and include portions of 21 counties.

Project Estimates

Land/Cost	Acres	Cost
Estimate for FY 2027	333	\$1,000,000
Acquired to Date	11,842	\$4,528,350
Remaining to be Acquired	1,087,825	\$3,261,843,718

Project Description:

Tallgrass prairie is one of the most endangered ecosystems in the United States, with less than 4 percent of the original acreage remaining. The purpose of the Flint Hills Legacy Conservation Area to help maintain the integrity of tallgrass prairie wildlife habitat, stream water quality, and the rich agricultural heritage of the Flint Hills through voluntary conservation easements. These easements will protect habitat for more than 100 species of grassland birds and 500 plant species and ensure the region's sustainable ranching culture--which directly supports conservation of the tallgrass prairie--continues. Since landowners continue management of the land under the easements, FWS incurs minimal management costs.

Purpose / Need:

Funding will complete the phased acquisition of a voluntary conservation easement from a willing seller. The acquisition will protect tallgrass prairie while allowing traditional ranching to continue, and also connect key migration corridors, foster public-private partnerships, and support habitat conservation for listed species. It will advance landscape-scale conservation for grassland and migratory birds such as Henslow's sparrow, short-eared owl, and Bell's vireo. Additionally, it will protect prairie streams critical to the endangered Topeka shiner, whose populations have declined by over 80%.

Cooperator(s):

Conservation Area partners include The Nature Conservancy and The Conservation Fund.

LAND AND WATER CONSERVATION FUND – Project Data Sheet

Operations & Maintenance

Savings/Cost	Start-up	Annual
Estimated O&M Savings:	\$0	\$0
Estimated O&M Costs:	\$0	\$5,000

Describe O&M:

Annual costs include easement monitoring and enforcement.