

Habitat Restoration

Restoring damaged habitats provides increasing opportunities for meaningful conservation. Habitat restoration encourages biodiversity, addresses climate change and other environmental stressors, creates jobs and heals the earth. We provide bridge financing to partners who are coupling acquisition with restoration and who are pursuing land restoration on its own. By seizing opportunities to restore lands—urban and rural—we can regain habitat lost through development and degradation.



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Ducks Unlimited Canada

Much of our work takes place in the United States, but wildlife knows no international boundaries. That's why we are proud to partner with Ducks Unlimited Canada to protect and restore habitat in the Prairie Pothole Region of the northern Plains, which provides a home to more than 50 percent of North American migratory waterfowl and many other birds.

The region is characterized by shallow wetland depressions—or potholes—left behind by glacier activity. Today, nearly half of these wetlands have been drained for agricultural or other uses. To combat this ongoing loss, we established a \$10-million line of credit with Ducks Unlimited Canada that allows the organization to purchase sensitive habitat on the prairie, restore its wetlands, and resell the land with a conservation easement that prevents future development or agricultural conversion. To date, the program has impacted over 30,000 acres of important habitat.



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Mendocino Land Trust - Fort Bragg, California

Mendocino Land Trust had obtained numerous reimbursement-style grants from the state for seven endangered salmon restoration projects, including large woody debris placements, design and removal of a fish passage barrier, and decommissioning of several abandoned logging roads.

“The Conservation Fund's willingness to provide Ducks Unlimited Canada with a conservation loan was instrumental in kick-starting our revolving land work across the Canadian Prairies. We are seeing increased demand for our paid conservation easements as more landowners are introduced to our revolving land program. The Fund provided true international conservation leadership that was critical to the continued success of wetland conservation in Canada.”

- Dr. Karla Guyn, CEO, Ducks Unlimited Canada

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The group was also awarded grants focused on climate change to install 12 electric vehicle charging stations at state park locations in northern coastal California.

Our Conservation Loan program is stepping in to help the Trust complete the habitat restoration and climate change work on schedule by providing a line of credit up to \$750,000. This line of credit is allowing the group to meet its cash flow challenges and complete each project phase while waiting for public grant reimbursement payments.



The Wetlands Initiative - Chicago, Illinois

The Wetlands Initiative's (TWI) vision is simple: Wetlands are more valuable wet than dry. For over 20 years, they have been dedicated to restoring the wetland resources of the Midwest to improve water quality, increase wildlife habitat and biodiversity, and reduce flood damage.

When 423 acres of restorable habitats adjacent to its 2,700-acre Dixon Waterfowl Refuge along the Illinois River came up for sale, the group knew it couldn't afford to miss the chance. Having 90 days to secure funds after shaking hands on a purchase price, TWI obtained grant commitments to cover most of the purchase price. They planned to raise the rest of the funds by re-selling about 135 acres that would be protected by a conservation easement and serve as an undeveloped buffer. Our Conservation Loans program provided bridge financing to cover this funding gap until TWI re-sold the forested land. After successfully repaying the loan, TWI began intensive restoration of the property to a mix of sand prairie, wet prairie, sand savanna and riparian oak-hickory woodland.

“We'd tried to acquire that ground a decade earlier and struck out. Besides giving us control of the hydrology of a rare seep, restoring this ground would give us for the first time the upland habitats that are crucial to the life cycles of some bird and reptile species that live in our bottomlands. It also added about a mile to our ownership of an intermittent-stream corridor. The Conservation Fund's fast response was crucial to making this deal happen.”

- Paul Botts, Executive Director, The Wetlands Initiative

About The Conservation Fund

At The Conservation Fund, we make conservation work for America. By creating solutions that make environmental and economic sense, we are redefining conservation to demonstrate its essential role in our future prosperity. Top-ranked for efficiency and effectiveness, we have worked in all 50 states since 1985 to protect nearly 8 million acres of land.

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