

# Southern Wings

CONSERVATION INVESTMENTS THAT SUPPORT GRASSLAND BIRDS

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2016 marked the one hundred year anniversary of the Migratory Bird Treaty. Signing of the treaty recognized that conserving migratory birds — which cross international boundaries as part of their annual life-cycle — calls for international collaborations. The treaty set the cornerstone for innovative solutions and tools that have enabled waterfowl populations to grow and thrive. Just as successful waterfowl conservation required new strategies and approaches, we now need new and innovative solutions and tools to reverse the declines of hundreds of migratory species throughout the Western Hemisphere as we embark on another one hundred years of conservation. Southern Wings is one of these tools.

Southern Wings facilitates state fish and wildlife agency participation in conservation of migratory birds on their breeding and nonbreeding (wintering) grounds, and during migration. With its partners, Southern Wings helps focus vital conservation funds on targeted sites in migratory corridors and wintering grounds for more than one-half of North America's breeding birds. These sites include forests, wetlands, and grasslands that face continually mounting pressures.

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**Vision** - Healthy and sustainable populations of migratory birds throughout the Western Hemisphere that are enjoyed for generations to come.

**Mission** - Encourage and facilitate state fish and wildlife agency participation in conservation projects for shared priority birds in Mexico, Central America, South America and the Caribbean.



# WHY SOUTHERN WINGS?



SPRAGUE'S PIPIT - JOSÉ HUGO MARTÍNEZ GUERRERO



VALLES CENTRALES GPCA (CHIHUAHUA, MEXICO) - MAURICIO DE LA MAZA

Southern Wings was modeled after state involvement in Canada through the North American Waterfowl Management Plan and North American Wetlands Conservation Act- a highly successful collaboration investing funds to conserve the breeding grounds of waterfowl. Southern Wings sets the stage for international collaboration south of the U.S. by bringing state fish and wildlife agencies together with colleagues beyond our national borders to generate shared benefits for state-priority migrant birds. Sustaining bird populations through financial investments in the wintering grounds provides economic and social benefits to the states.



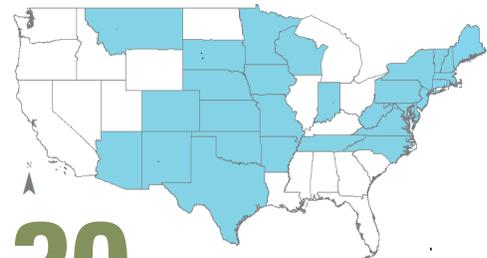
NORTHERN PINTAIL - GEORGE ANDREJKO

## SOUTHERN WINGS:

- offers an easy, transparent, and flexible process for states to effectively conserve their migratory bird species of greatest conservation need when they are not in the U.S.;
- is a critical complement to in-state investment in migratory bird stopover and breeding habitats;
- leverages limited state funds,
- can provide non-federal match for State Wildlife Grants and Pittman-Robertson funds;
- identifies strategic, biologically relevant projects with proven partners in areas where return on investment is greatest;
- helps keep migratory birds from being listed under the Endangered Species Act by addressing full life-cycle conservation needs; and
- provides an effective and efficient way to engage in successful conservation partnerships with the Neotropical Migratory Bird Conservation Act, the North American Wetlands Conservation Act and other funding sources.

## SOUTHERN WINGS PROJECTS:

- implement objectives that are biologically relevant to states;
- aim to take action on high-priority objectives in critical habitats for state-priority migratory bird species;
- protect in-state investments through full life-cycle conservation; and
- work with partners that have established and proven track records.



**30** states contributed over \$2.8 million for 22 on-the-ground conservation projects in 9 countries, leveraging millions more.



BAIRD'S SPARROW - SASHA ROBINSON

### A Continent of Birds

Almost half of the native landbirds (418 species) in North America rely on habitats in at least two of its three countries—United States, Canada, and Mexico. The Chihuahuan Desert supports 90% of migratory species breeding in the western Great Plains, including 27 species recognized as high priorities for conservation, such as Baird's Sparrow and Chestnut-collared Longspur, which winter nowhere else.



LONG-BILLED CURLEW - ALEX LAMOREAUX

More than 50 species of Species of Greatest Conservation Need have benefited from Southern Wings. Particular effort has gone into the conservation of high-priority species such as Sprague's Pipit, Grasshopper Sparrow, Lark Bunting, Brewer's and Baird's sparrows, Mountain Plover, Lark and Vesper sparrows, Long-billed Curlew, and Chestnut-collared Longspur.

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

The states of Arizona, Colorado, Montana, and New Mexico have contributed to developing a Sustainable Grazing Network to protect and restore grasslands on private and communal (ejido) lands in Mexico's Chihuahuan Desert. Bird Conservancy of the Rockies' Sustainable Grazing Network engages ranchers in grasslands conservation and management, working collaboratively to support their transition to more efficient and sustainable production practices, and enhancing habitat for birds. Since 2013, 15 ranches representing 250,000 acres have been enrolled in this network and another 300,000 acres of ranchlands has been identified as having a high potential for enrollment.



EL TOKIO GRASSLANDS AREA (MEXICO) - ANDREW ROTHMAN

## PROJECT HIGHLIGHT

One-third of all grassland species are in steep decline. Native desert grasslands conservation in communal (ejido) and private ownership in Northern Mexico were supported by Iowa Department of Natural Resources, South Dakota Game, Fish, and Parks, Nebraska Game and Parks Commission, Kansas Department of Wildlife, Parks and Tourism, and Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation. These states helped conserve and manage almost 90,000 grassland acres.



CHESTNUT-COLLARED LONGSPUR - LEE FARRELL

Nine states have worked with partners in Mexico to conserve grasslands across hundreds of thousands of acres by collaborating with local ranchers to implement sustainable grazing practices.



José Hugo Martínez 2018

McCOWN'S LONGSPUR - JOSÉ HUGO MARTÍNEZ GUERRERO

## POTENTIAL STATE AGENCY FUNDING SOURCES

(vary from state to state depending what sources are available)

- General Fund
- Income Tax Check-offs
- State Wildlife Grants
- Pittman-Robertson Funds
- State Foundations
- General Sales Tax
- Non-consumptive User Fees
- Conservation License Plates
- Lottery money
- Fines and Restitution for Natural Resources Damage
- Public Use Fees
- Habitat Stamps
- Donations
- Partnerships with Zoos, Audubon Chapters, Ornithological Unions, Private Businesses, etc.

## EASY FLEXIBLE OPTIONS FOR MOVING STATE FUNDS

- State contributes funds directly to on-the-ground project partner
- State contributes funds through a Regional Association
- State contributes funds through a third-party U.S.-based NGO
- State contributes match funds to a NMBCA, NAWCA or other grant program

### Association of Fish & Wildlife Agencies:

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FRONT COVER PHOTO:  
LARK BUNTINGS - JOSÉ HUGO MARTÍNEZ GUERRERO