

North American Wetlands Conservation Act

Agencies: U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Citation: [16 U.S.C. §§ 4401 et seq.](#)

Enacted as: the “North American Wetlands Conservation Act” on December 13, 1989

Summary:

The [North American Wetlands Conservation Act \(NAWCA or Act\)](#) provides matching grants to organizations and individuals who have developed partnerships to carry out wetlands conservation projects in the U.S., Canada, and Mexico for the benefit of wetlands-associated migratory birds and other wildlife. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s Division of Bird Habitat Conservation is responsible for facilitating the Act’s Grants Program.

The NAWCA was passed, in part, to support activities under the [North American Waterfowl Management Plan](#), an international agreement that provides a strategy for the long-term protection of wetlands and associated uplands habitats needed by waterfowl and other migratory birds in North America. The Act has been reauthorized and expanded to include the conservation of all habitats and birds associated with wetlands ecosystems.

Pursuant to the Act, there are two grants programs: the [Standard Grants Program](#) and the [Small Grants Program](#). The Standard Grants Program supports projects in Canada, the U.S., and Mexico that involve long-term protection, restoration, and/or enhancement of wetlands and associated uplands habitats. Funds from U.S. federal sources may contribute towards a project, but are not eligible as match. The Small Grants Program operates only in the United States; it supports the same type of projects and adheres to the same selection criteria and administrative guidelines as the U.S. Standard Grants Program. However, project activities are usually smaller in scope and involve fewer project dollars. Grant requests may not exceed \$75,000, and funding priority is given to grantees or partners new to the Act’s Grants Program.

Decisions about eligible grant proposals are made through a process involving the [North American Wetlands Conservation Council](#), a nine-member council established by the Act, and the [Migratory Bird Conservation Commission](#), a seven-member commission authorized by the Act to give final funding approval to projects.

Source: <http://www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/Grants/NAWCA/index.shtm>

Information last updated: September 20, 2012