**2024 NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION FUND AWARDS**
(Listed by proposal number)

Note: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's **Birds of Conservation Concern**, many of which are identified as at-risk in the 3 Billion Birds report**, are in bold blue font,** and **listed Endangered Species are in green font.**

## FY2024 Grant Award Summaries

### 7744: COMMUNITY-BASED CONSERVATION OF NMBS IN THE ECUADORIAN CHOCO VII

**Applicant:** FUNDACION PARA LA CONSERVACION DE LOS ANDES TROPICALES
**Country:** Ecuador
**Total Request:** $199,760 **Matching Contributions:** $599,748
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Bay-breasted Warbler, **Canada Warbler**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, Spotted Sandpiper, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, Swainson's Thrush, Western Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Blackburnian Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, Black-and-white Warbler, American Redstart, Scarlet Tanager, Summer Tanager.

The Mache-Chindul Reserve in northwest Ecuador is a BirdLife International 'Important Bird Area' that houses at least 28 Neotropical migratory species, 3 of which are Birds of Conservation Concern. Yet, several thousand people with limited education and economic opportunities live within its borders, leading to deforestation and habitat loss. This project directly contributes to the conservation of Neotropical migratory birds and endemic taxa in this biodiversity hotspot via the purchase of priority habitat, restoration of degraded habitat, protection of habitat at immediate risk of illegal land invasion, and community capacity building. In previous phases of this project, Fundacion para la Conservacion de los Andes Tropicales (FCAT) documented the importance of the project area for Neotropical migrants, identified priority forest fragments for conservation of migratory birds, acquired 1621 acres of priority habitat, established a field station with capacity for 50 visitors, reforested more than 247 acres, and increased awareness, capacity, and economic alternatives via women's art workshops, youth environmental programs and other programs. FCAT is now poised to extend this work and impact the conservation of migratory birds by: (1) acquiring and protecting strategically located habitat, (2) restoring 98 acres of previously acquired but degraded habitat, and (3) expanding an up-and running remote sensing and machine-learning deforestation monitoring program to cover 37,065 acres. In doing so, this project will contribute to FCAT's establishment of a corridor linking 12,355 acres of continuous, priority habitat to achieve integrated environmental and societal benefits – a crucial requirement for any realistic, long term conservation strategy for migratory birds in the project area.

**7745: COMPREHENSIVE GRASSLAND MANAGEMENT IN JANOS GPCA**
**Applicant:** PRONATURA NORESTE, A.C.
**Country:** Mexico
**Total Request:** $199,741 **Matching Contributions:** $682,026
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Long-billed Curlew, **Mountain Plover**, **Sprague's Pipit**, **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, **Thick-billed Longspur**, Lark Bunting, **Baird's Sparrow**, Swainson's Hawk, Ferruginous Hawk, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, Loggerhead Shrike.

The threats that affect priority grassland areas vary in their nature, dimension, and scope, therefore, to increase the resilience of the Janos Grassland Priority Conservation Area (GPCA) and reduce its vulnerability to these threats, Pronatura Noreste, A.C. (PNE) will pursue a conservation approach based on comprehensive land management seeking a balance between economic activities, society, and the landscape. PNE will focus conservation efforts on key grassland properties inside the Janos GPCA and under the influence zone of Janos Natural Protected Area, protecting17,526 acres with legal mechanisms to prevent agricultural production expansion into native grasslands. PNE will promote the sustainable use of rangelands, implementing management and restoration activities within four properties impacting 3,597 acres. To update bird density information, surveys will be done in 11 key properties at a ranch-level scale. PNE will conduct a large outreach effort by supporting the International Grassland Congress held in Chihuahua in 2025 anticipating at least 200 attendees, and in collaboration with Bird Conservancy of the Rockies, they will organize the "4th Encuentro Ganadero" (livestock meeting) also in the city of Chihuahua including at least 80 producers. Finally, PNE will enhance local grassland management capacities and promote the adoption of better management practices through various training events.

**7746: CONS OF STRATEGIC PROPERTIES & CAPACITY BUILDING IN QUEBEC'S GREEN MOUNTAINS VII**
**Applicant:** APPALACHIAN CORRIDOR APPALACHIEN (ACA)
**Country:** Canada
**Total Request:** $199,800 **Matching Contributions:** $1,355,322
**Notable bird species to benefit:** American Redstart, Bank Swallow, Barn Swallow, **Bicknell's Thrush**, **Black-billed Cuckoo**, **Bobolink**, **Canada Warbler**, **Chimney Swift**, Common Nighthawk, **Eastern Whip-poor-will**, Eastern Meadowlark, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Peregrine Falcon, Veery, **Willow Flycatcher**, **Wood Thrush**, Yellow-bellied Sapsucker.

Appalachian Corridor's mission is to protect biodiversity through private land stewardship. Their expertise lies in the protection of private lands in partnership with Affiliate Members (local conservation Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs)), Nature Conservancy Canada and local municipalities. This project makes direct use of this expertise, with 2 main elements: Habitat Protection and Capacity Building. The protection aspect aims to complete at least 13 projects out of 19 targeted tracts (i.e., over 2,280 acres targeted) to reach a minimum of 900 acres protected in perpetuity via notarized deeds. Habitat protection activities include first contacts and further negotiations with landowners, ecological surveys on each tract, preparation of notarized deeds, as well as supervision and coordination of all steps leading to project completion (land surveying, appraisals, compliance with ecological priorities, management plan for each protected property, etc.). Located in Quebec's Northern Green Mountains natural transborder corridor, ten of the targeted properties are strategically located in core areas of unfragmented forest (each greater than 11,000 acres and often greater than 25,000 acres), while the other nine are either located in linkage corridors or biodiversity hotspots. Protection targets represent crucial links to maintain global connectivity between the largest forest cores, from the Sutton Mountains core up to the Mt-Orford National Park. Capacity building activities are mainly oriented with Affiliate Members (local conservation groups) and municipalities, to carry out conservation projects.

**7749: CONSERVATION OF PRIORITY CHIHUAHUA TALL GRASSLANDS**
**Applicant:** UNIVERSIDAD AUTONOMA DE NUEVO LEON (UANL)
**Country:** Mexico
**Total Request:** $130,845 **Matching Contributions:** $464,980
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, **Thick-billed Longspur**, **Sprague's Pipit**, Swainson´s Hawk, **Mountain Plover**, Long Billed Curlew, and **Baird's Sparrow**.

Conservation activities will occur in two Grassland Priority Conservation Areas (GPCAs): Lagunas del Este and Alto Conchos where the grasslands are characterized by high grass cover, which provide habitat for 30 priority species of high regional or continental conservation significance. The project will implement the following objectives: 1) Maintain connectivity and pasture quality in two GPCAs in northern Mexico through conservation agreements with key site owners, covering over 22,000 acres; 2) Restore pasture areas by implementing better agricultural and livestock practices, including the cultivation of native grasses and shrub control and livestock management practices to reduce overgrazing impacts in these bird-important areas, and through training local producers in over 61,000 acres; 3) Conduct a comprehensive assessment of land tenure and legal status, and analyze pasture conditions using desertification modeling to identify areas in urgent need of conservation; and 4) Monitor the diversity and density of migratory grassland birds both within and outside the areas subject to long-term conservation efforts.

**7750: CONSERVATION OF TAMAULIPAS TEMPERATE FORESTS FOR NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRDS**
**Applicant:** PRONATURA NORESTE, A.C.
**Country:** Mexico
**Total Request:** $199,913 **Matching Contributions:** $689,547
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Flammulated Owl**, Elf Owl, Blue-throated Mountain-gem, **Rufous Hummingbird**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, **Willow Flycatcher**, Loggerhead Shrike, **Black-capped Vireo**, Blue-winged Warbler, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Colima Warbler**, **Golden-cheeked Warbler**, Hermit Warbler, Bay-breasted Warbler and **Varied Bunting**.

The Sierra Madre Oriental is a priority biological corridor for migratory birds. It is part of the Central Flyway and represents a region where birds rest and feed along their migratory route. The main threats are related to wildfires and productive activities such as agriculture, livestock, forestry, and hunting, among others, which demand large areas and can result in deforestation and soil loss. Temperate forests of Mexico are considered endangered, mostly due to intensive human exploitation; 37% of the pine-oak forests have been logged and converted to agricultural lands. In the last 5 years, more than 12,350 acres have been affected in Tamaulipas. To address this, project partners will develop conservation agreements on more than 91,143 acres in two important areas for protection in Tamaulipas. One of these areas (the Monarch Butterfly Natural Landscape) was co-created by Pronatura Noreste in 2022. This project will promote habitat connectivity between El Cielo and the new Protected Area. Additional implementers will execute management strategies that will recover important habitats for birds and wildlife, working in collaboration with the ejidos Marcela and Valle Hermoso in Miquihuana and ejido Ávila y Urbina in Jaumave, Alta Cima Gomez Farias, to manage Neotropical migratory bird habitat. Furthermore, partners will implement activities such as multicriteria analysis, bird and wildlife monitoring, capacity strengthening training, community vigilance, and creation of management units.

**7751: CONSERVING BICKNELL'S THRUSH WINTERING HABITAT VII**
**Applicant:** AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY
**Country:** Dominican Republic
**Total Request:** $166,469 **Matching Contributions:** $499,408
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Bicknell's Thrush**, **Prairie Warbler**, **Kentucky Warbler**, Louisiana Waterthrush, Cape May Warbler, Black-throated Blue Warbler, Worm-eating Warbler, Northern Parula, Palm Warbler, Pine Warbler, Yellow-rumped Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Ovenbird, and Baltimore Oriole.

The long-term goal of this project is to stop all loss of key wintering habitat for the **Bicknell's Thrush** (BITH) in the Dominican Republic and to restore at least 50 percent of the habitat lost between 2010 and 2015 in the next 30 years. Agroforestry systems, especially coffee and cacao plantations, are recognized as an important habitat type for Neotropical migratory bird species, and the Dominican Republic has multiple agroforestry areas for this target species, leading American Bird Conservancy to develop the Septentrional and Sierra de Bahoruco BirdScapes. The objectives of this proposal include maintaining and improving the management capacity on more than 158,000 acres in five reserves, implementing bird-friendly coffee and cacao agroforestry systems on 387 acres, improving local staff's capacity through hiring a full-time biologist and attending training on management of protected areas, and monitoring the project's success by surveying the BITH population at project sites.

**7752: CONSERVING GRASSLAND BIRDS IN CANADIAN PRAIRIES**
**Applicant:** BIRDS CANADA
**Country:** Canada
**Total Request:** $199,937 **Matching Contributions:** $650,232
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Sprague's Pipit**, **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, **Baird's Sparrow**, **Bobolink**, **Thick-billed Longspur**, Lark Bunting, Long-billed Curlew, Loggerhead Shrike (Prairie subspecies), **Grasshopper Sparrow**, Horned Lark, **Marbled Godwit**, and Upland Sandpiper.

The proposed 2-year project seeks to improve the conservation several high priority neotropical migratory bird (NMB) species that depend on Canadian grassland habitat in the Prairie Pothole region (Bird Conservation Region (BCR) 11). These grassland bird species are threatened by rapid large-scale breeding habitat loss through the conversion of grasslands to cropland, with nearly 60% of Canada's grassland bird populations lost since 1970. In order to halt the population decline of grassland NMBs in Canada, it is imperative that efforts to conserve grassland habitat are scaled significantly. As the majority of remaining grassland habitat in Canada occurs on private land, the conservation of grassland birds depends on stewardship by landowners, especially farmers and ranchers, on the breeding grounds. As conversion of grasslands to croplands is significantly more economical for producers, there is an urgent need to incentivize producers to maintain their grasslands for the target NMBs. To enable innovative and effective incentive tools, Birds Canada needs a standardized measure of the NMB and biodiversity benefits provided by farm that can be easily communicated to multiple stakeholders and throughout agricultural supply chains. Birds Canada is currently adapting the Bird-Friendliness Index for the Canadian Prairies (based on the National Audubon Society's successful Bird-Friendliness Index). The purpose of the Bird-Friendliness Index is to (1) serve as indicator for producers and land managers to help guide management for NMBs; and (2) act as a mechanism to enable innovative and effective incentive tools and help create a market and policy environment that rewards producers for conserving NMBs on their land and ultimately transforming NMBs and other biodiversity into an important output by the agricultural system. Through the proposed project, Birds Canada will (1) determine the Bird- Friendliness Index on 35-40 farms and ranches annually in the project area, (2) develop and implement an Integrated Monitoring in Bird Conservation Regions program for BCR 11 to provide critical comparison data to ensure that a farm or ranch's Bird-friendliness Index score is standardized relative to the surrounding area, and (3) engage and support local producers and land managers in one-on-one engagement that will enable them to become active and purposeful agents of change in eliminating the threat of grassland conversion for NMBs.

**7754: CONSERVING PRIORITY SITES FOR SHOREBIRDS IN CHILE II**
**Applicant:** MANOMET, INC
**Country:** Chile
**Total Request:** $109,200 **Matching Contributions:** $328,002
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Red Knot (*rufa*), **Hudsonian Godwit**, Whimbrel, Black-bellied Plover, Sanderling, Ruddy Turnstone, Surfbird, White-rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, **Franklin's Gull**, **Elegant Tern**.

Southern South America supports the majority of the hemispheric and global populations of a large suite of Nearctic migratory shorebirds, including the entire global population of **Hudsonian Godwit** and large proportions of the populations of rufa Red Knot, the Pacific population of Whimbrel, and White-rumped and Baird's Sandpipers. Many of the key wintering sites for these species in southern South America are facing increasing threats due to significant human-induced changes, patricularly disturbance of roosting and foraging habitat. To address this situation and enhance the conservation of critical habitats at priority sites within the Pacific Flyway, in 2021 the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN) Executive Office (housed in Manomet, Inc.) in collaboration with local partners began a project to implement four new protected areas and catalyze the safeguarding of an additional three areas. With that first phase project coming to successful completion, Manomet and its partners, including the Fundación Bandada now seek to implement a second phase of the project that will enhance and consolidate the conservation gains at five sites included in the first phase, and initiate conservation actions at two additional sites. Overall, the project will: 1) Enhance the management for shorebirds of over 22,000 acres in four protected areas; 2) Safeguard 662 acres of critical shorebird habitat through collaborative management; 3) Build local capacity for effective site conservation and management at seven key sites; 4) Integrate local development and conservation at the sites; and 5) Build strategic alliances and help integrate the conservation of key shorebird sites with other planning processes and initiatives at national and international levels. The latter will be achieved, in part, by implementing the site-based conservation actions within the framework of the recently approved national shorebird conservation plan, which builds from the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy.

**7755: CONSERVING SHOREBIRDS IN BARBADOS**
**Applicant:** WALKERS INSTITUTE FOR REGENERATIVE RESEARCH EDUCATION AND DESIGN (WIRRED)
**Country:** Barbados
**Total Request:** $183,332 **Matching Contributions:** $595,446
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **American Golden-Plover**, **American Oystercatcher**, Greater Yellowlegs, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Roseate Tern**, Semipalmated Sandpiper, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, and **Willet**.

This project will increase capacity for shorebird conservation in Barbados by increasing quality habitat for shorebird populations, filling knowledge and data gaps, strengthening local birding communities and conservation efforts, and demonstrating that Neotropical migratory bird preferred wetland areas can be maintained in a sustainable manner.

**7756: CREATING A HABITAT CORRIDOR FOR NMBS IN COLOMBIA III**
**Applicant:** AMERICAN BIRD CONSERVANCY
**Country:** Colombia
**Total Request:** $166,556 **Matching Contributions:** $600,597
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Cerulean Warbler**, **Canada Warbler**, Broad-winged Hawk, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, Acadian Flycatcher, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, Eastern Wood Pewee, Rose-breasted Grosbeak, Northern Waterthrush, Tennessee Warbler, Blackburnian Warbler, Spotted Sandpiper, Red-eyed Vireo, and Swainson's Thrush.

The long-term goal of this project is to restore and manage key wintering habitat between 1000 and 3000 meters above sea level in the Central Andes of Colombia for **Cerulean**, **Golden-winged**, and **Canada Warbler**s. Agroforestry systems, especially coffee plantations, are recognized as a main habitat type for migratory bird species, and the Central Andes contain multiple focal areas for these three target species, leading American Bird Conservancy to develop the Central Andes BirdScape. The objectives of this proposal include promoting the BirdScape conservation plan among key stakeholders; increasing native plant coverage and habitat connectivity; implementing environmentally sustainable agroforestry systems; monitoring our project’s success; and raising local awareness about Neotropical migratory birds and the importance of healthy habitat corridors.

**7758: CULTIVATING LOCAL SUPPORT AT SHOREBIRD STOPOVERS**
**Applicant:** NATURE CANADA
**Country:** Brazil, Canada
**Amount Available**: $152,090* **Matching Contributions:** $557,990
**Total Request:** $174,400
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Black-bellied Plover, Whimbrel, **Hudsonian Godwit**, **Marbled Godwit**, Ruddy Turnstone, Red Knot (*rufa* subspecies), Sanderling, Dunlin, White-rumped Sandpiper, **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, Semipalmated Sandpiper, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, Greater Yellowlegs.

This multi-phased project aims to build the base of local support and engagement in shorebird conservation at key shorebird stopover sites in the Atlantic Flyway along James Bay in Canada and Lagoa do Peixe Brazil through use of the Western Hemisphere Reserve Network (WHSRN) Shorebird Curriculum in local schools. Both areas support large numbers of shorebirds including high conservation priority species such as the Rufa Red Knot, the **Hudsonian Godwit,** and Semipalmated Sandpiper. This project supports ongoing efforts to protect and steward important stopover sites near each community. A key goal is to build the base of community support for shorebirds and shorebird conservation by implementing the WHSRN Shorebird Curriculum at local schools to cultivate interest in the birds and expand engagement in conservation and stewardship activities at their local stopover sites. Partners will build the connection between schools in different communities by applying and adapting the curriculum and facilitating exchanges between teachers, classes, and students, both within countries and between Canadian and Brazilian schools. This will deepen the understanding of the role of their site in the annual cycle of the species in the context of the Flyway and serve as motivation for local interest and conservation actions.

*This is the last project recommended to the slate and only partial funding is available.

**7760: DIMMING THE LIGHTS FOR BIRD CONSERVATION IN PANAMA CITY**
**Applicant:** ENVIRONMENT FOR THE AMERICAS
**Country:** Panama
**Total Request:** $46,595 **Matching Contributions:** $139,786
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Chimney Swift**, **American Golden-Plover**, **Wilson's Plover**, **Franklin's Gull**, **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Willet**, Whimbrel, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, **Willow Flycatcher**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, and **Canada Warbler**.

Partners will establish the Bird City Network to guide light pollution reduction efforts in Panama City. A Project Coordinator will oversee various initiatives, including collaborating with partners to develop light pollution guidelines specific to the city's need. These guidelines will help to identify areas where light pollution impacts habitats used by migratory birds in the city and contributes to collisions. Additionally, the Project Coordinator will engage in social media campaigns to raise awareness of the issue and to recognize individuals, businesses, and government offices that participate in light reduction activities. The Network will also celebrate migratory birds through World Migratory Bird Day. The project will culminate with a comprehensive long-term plan that identifies phases of activities to address the issue of light pollution beyond the two-year project.

**7761: ESTABLISHING THE COLOMBIAN MIGRATORY BIRD RESEARCH & OUTREACH NETWORK**
**Applicant:** FUNDACION PROAVES
**Country:** Colombia
**Total Request:** $188,265 **Matching Contributions:** $564,893
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Canada Warbler**, **Cerulean Warbler** and **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, **Willow Flycatcher**, Bay-breasted Warbler, **Prothonotary Warbler**, Swainson's Hawk, and **Swallow-tailed Kite**.

Over 190 Neotropical migratory bird species funnel into Colombia each year from where they disperse across the entire country and South American continent. Sadly, tropical and subtropical forests that migratory birds are so dependent upon for both stop-over and wintering habitats are increasingly at risk in Colombia. In recent years, events like the COVID-19 pandemic crisis have intensified threats to protected areas and other remnants of natural habitat. As a consequence, deforestation rates across Colombia skyrocketed to some of the highest worldwide as vital habitats necessary for Neotropical migratory birds were severely impacted. In 2003, Fundación ProAves with NMBCA support launched an intensive nationwide research and monitoring campaign to identify key areas and habitats for the most threatened migratory birds. The results and analysis of years of field data provided crucially needed insight into the distribution and threats they face, allowing ProAves to publish three national and regional Migratory Bird Conservation Plans ten years ago. Those plans presented strategies targeting key areas and actions that guided ProAves to build a strategic network of public and private protected areas safeguarding key habitat for migratory birds across Colombia. With new emerging threats across key habitats and regions of Colombia for Neotropical migratory birds, ProAves will: 1) Establish 11 permanent nationwide migratory bird research and monitoring sites in critical regions of Colombia called "*Migratory Bird & Biodiversity Research Stations*" which will expand infrastructure and resources to enable Colombian and international researchers to study migratory birds and 2) Launch an innovative strategy to take migratory bird conservation education to remote and impoverished rural schools and communities on the frontlines of deforestation across 11 key areas of Colombia through a visionary mobile classroom, called the "*Reinita Chiva*" (Warbler Bus). The goal is to deploy a repurposed Colombian chiva - a traditional and iconic type of bus used on unpaved roads to access rural communities in the Andes - and establish it as a nationally recognized "*Reinita Chiva*" that champions migratory birds in key wintering areas for priority migratory species. Partners aim to educate and inspire 11,400 school students and their teachers at 240 schools each non-breeding season (October-April) to inspire the next generation of conservationists.

**7762: EXPANDING CONSERVATION ACTIONS ALONG GCWA FLYWAY**
**Applicant:** HABITATS RESILIENTES AC (HRAC)
**Country:** Mexico
**Total Request:** $175,570 **Matching Contributions:** $535,218
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Golden-cheeked Warbler**, **Flammulated Owl**, **Rufous Hummingbird**, Blue-throated Mountain-Gem, Hermit Warbler, **Kentucky Warbler**, **Whip-poor-will**, Nashville Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Bullock's Oriole, Williamson's Sapsucker, Yellow-breasted Chat and Band-tailed Pigeon.

This proposal will identify, conserve, and protect priority Pine-Oak habitats for **Golden-cheeked Warbler** in their migration route in 25 ejido lands within the Sierra Plegada in the Sierra Madre Oriental of Mexico. The project is aligned to the strategies established in the Conservation Plan for the Pine-Oak Forests of Central America and the **Golden-cheeked Warbler** (GCWA) (2020-2023) developed by the Mesomérica Pine-Oak Forests Conservation Alliance. This project seeks to extend the success of this conservation plan to areas that the GCWA uses as a stopover in its migration phase. HRAC and partners will address the threats that affect the GCWA populations and their habitats from a full life cycle perspective in these stopover areas.

**7763: FULL LIFECYCLE CONSERVATION OF ATLANTIC WHIMBREL**
**Applicant:** MANOMET, INC
**Country:** Brazil, French Guiana, Guyana, Suriname
**Total Request:** $197,300 **Matching Contributions:** $606,926
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Whimbrel, Red Knot (*rufa*), Semipalmated Sandpiper, **Willet**, Black-bellied Plover, **Wilson's Plover**, Ruddy Turnstone, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, Greater Yellowlegs, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, **Roseate Tern**, Common Tern.

One of the Atlantic Flyway species undergoing the steepest declines is Whimbrel and, as such, it is designated as a Red-alert Tipping Point Species by Road 2 Recovery. Long-term monitoring indicates an 80% population loss since 1980, with the decline accelerating over time, but they are still abundant enough that there is an opportunity to undertake full life cycle studies and halt the declines. Although a considerable amount is known about the migration and ecology of the Atlantic Flyway population of Whimbrel, as yet there is insufficient information to build a full life cycle demographic model to guide its recovery. Although development of a demographic model is a key need for prioritizing conservation action for the Atlantic Flyway Whimbrel, sufficient knowledge exists to take some action now. Tracking and survey data have shown the northern coastline of South America, and especially from Guyana east to the Brazilian states of Pará and Maranhão to be the major wintering area for Atlantic Flyway Whimbrel, a region which is rapidly coming under threat from offshore oil and wind developments and poorly planned coastal infrastructure. The systemic lack of local knowledge and skills in shorebird conservation has left the entire coastline underserved with very few biologists, conservationists, or environmental activists. Furthermore, the history and cultural idiosyncrasies of each country mean that there is very little regional integration of conservation efforts. Manomet now seeks to address this, building from an existing project in Suriname and complementing one in Pará and Maranhão states, by developing an initiative that will: 1) Identify critical sites and habitats for Whimbrel in northern South America to prioritize conservation measures; 2) Build local capabilities and capacity for site conservation and habitat management; 3) Identify key stakeholders, current management structures, existing management plans, potential threats, and conservation action needs; and 4) Raise awareness within the region of the critical importance of northern South America for shorebird conservation. These efforts will be informed by tracking studies that will facilitate 5) Development of a demographic model for Atlantic Flyway Whimbrel, and 6) Support measures which safeguard critical sites. This work will be undertaken through a collaborative partnership, evolving from the initial Whimbrel working group into a full lifecycle conservation partnership.

**7765: GRASSLAND BIRD CONSERVATION IN SONORA, MEXICO**
**Applicant:** SKY ISLAND ALLIANCE
**Country:** Mexico
**Total Request:** $68,740 **Matching Contributions:** $209,629
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Baird's Sparrow**, **Sprague's Pipit**, **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, Lark Bunting, and Loggerhead Shrike.

The Sky Island Alliance will collaborate with local ranchers, Comision Nacional de Areas Naturales Protegidas (CONANP), and ProFauna A.C. to conduct wintering grassland bird surveys and habitat restoration actions within the Sonoita Grassland Priority Conservation Area (GPCA) in Sonora, Mexico. Objectives include: 1) Collect data on the abundance and distribution of target species within the Sonoita GPCA in Sonora to support the Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Conservation Investment Strategy; 2) Enhance capacity of CONANP to monitor grassland birds within the Sonoita GPCA and Flora and Fauna Protected Area: Bavispe Zona de Influencia; 3) Improve the quality of target species habitat by implementing restoration activities across a minimum of 6 ranches within the Sonoita GPCA (333 acres); and 4) Empower community members and land stewards to participate in grassland conservation. Partners will accomplish this through avian monitoring, habitat protection and restoration, and education and outreach.

**7766: HABITAT USE & MIGRATION ROUTES OF SHOREBIRDS IN NE BRAZIL**
**Applicant:** AQUASIS
**Country:** Brazil
**Total Request:** $164,692 **Matching Contributions:** $509,174
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Red Knot, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, Ruddy Turnstone, Semipalmated Sandpiper, Black-bellied Plover, Semipalmated Plover, Greater Yellowlegs, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Willet**, Whimbrel, Sanderling and Least Sandpiper.

AQUASIS will document habitat use and migratory movements for neomigratory shorebirds that utilize the Banco dos Cajuais, a regionally important non-breeding site in northeast Brazil recognized by the Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network (WHSRN). This information will be used to develop and implement habitat management strategies that will maximize the quality and quantity of habitat available for shorebirds. Previous surveys have documented sizable portions of the global population of Red Knot and **Short-billed Dowitcher** utilizing the Banco dos Cajuais during the non-breeding period, thus this site provides critical habitat contributing to the long-term conservation efforts of these migratory species. Partner objectives include (1) assessing local movements between key habitats used by Red Knot, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, Ruddy Turnstone, and Semipalmated Sandpiper at the Banco dos Cajuais. These four shorebird species are of high conservation concern and are listed on the "Road to Recovery" (Road to Recovery 2022). Using the Motus Wildlife Tracking System, AQUASIS will be able to track the local movements of these shorebirds and quantify the amount of time spent in the available habitats at the site. They will also track the northbound migration of shorebird species of high conservation concern at the Banco dos Cajuais using solar-powered satellite transmitters, targeting Red Knot, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, and Ruddy Turnstone. This new technology will help discern migratory pathways to inform offshore wind turbine placement to minimize risks to at-risk shorebird species. They will also use these data to identify staging areas for northbound migration, and assess connectivity from the Banco dos Cajuais, all of which is largely unknown and critical to conserving these species. Finally, results will be integrated with the existing community outreach efforts of AQUASIS in Icapuí, the municipality where the Banco dos Cajuais is located. Through this project, partners will be able to provide informed management recommendations for critical coastal habitats at high risk for loss or change, while filling knowledge gaps surrounding shorebird species of high conservation concern.

**7767: HEALTHY HABITATS FOR WARBLERS IN THE ANDES OF COLOMBIA III**
**Applicant:** ASOCIACIÓN PARA EL ESTUDIO Y CONSERVACIÓN DE LAS AVES ACUÁTICAS EN COLOMBIA (CALIDRIS)
**Country:** Colombia
**Total Request:** $100,000 **Matching Contributions:** $343,310
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Canada Warbler**, **Cerulean Warbler**, Yellow-billed Cuckoo, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, Eastern Wood-Pewee, Acadian Flycatcher, Swainson's Thrush, Blackburnian Warbler, Black-and- white Warbler, Mourning Warbler, Summer Tanager, Hepatic Tanager, Red-eyed Vireo, American redstart, Rose-breasted Grosbeak and **Grasshopper Sparrow**.

Calidris will implement specific management and on-the-ground conservation actions focusing on **Canada Warbler** (CAWA) and **Cerulean Warbler** (CEWA). This project will protect natural habitats, restore them when necessary, and convert productive lands into biodiverse systems that generate healthy conditions for the survival of local people and migratory birds. They will focus work in Jamundí, Yumbo, La Cumbre and on two sites in the Paraguas-Munchique area, a natural corridor considered a conservation priority due to its high levels of biodiversity compared to other corridors. In three landscapes they will work with partner organizations and local families to identify key ecological requirements of the focal species (CAWA and CEWA). Partners will make a participatory inventory of local productive systems and best management practices (BMPs), sharing the lessons learned and the successes of the practices implemented in previous projects. With these inputs, Calidris will select the most successful BMPs and promote the protection of new private nature reserves across nearly 500 acres. They will continue with a participatory monitoring program carried out in two landscapes (Bolivar and Jamundi) to strengthen decision-making capacity and promote a culture of empowerment and learning in their territories. Partners will develop environmental education actions with local institutions in three landscapes (La Cumbre, Bolivar, El Dovio). And lastly, they will estimate the population density of CAWA and CEWA in the wintering areas of three landscapes where BMPs will have been implemented to evaluate the impact of BMPs on the local populations of these species.

**7768: IMPROVED NEOTROPICAL MIGRATORY BIRD HABITAT CONSERVATION IN CARIBBEAN GUATEMALA**
**Applicant:** FUNDACION PARA EL ECODESARROLLO Y LA CONSERVACION (FUNDAECO)
**Country:** Guatemala
**Total Request:** $190,138 **Matching Contributions:** $1,160,347
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Chimney Swift**, **Franklin's Gull**, **Swallow-tailed Kite**, **Wood Thrush**, **Bobolink**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Kentucky Warbler**, **Cerulean Warbler**, and **Canada Warbler**.

For 32 years, FUNDAECO has promoted the participatory protection of the Cerro San Gil Protected Area and implemented the longest bird monitoring program in Central America, which started in Cerro San Gil and has expanded to the Caribbean Region. This project will support improved migratory bird habitat conservation in the Caribbean Migratory Flyway through the expansion of the fully protected zone within the area and the establishment of the Rio Frio Reserve. An additional 2,364 acres will be protected. FUNDAECO will generate migratory and resident bird scientific information and will work with surrounding communities to increase their support for bird protection. The management of the Rio Frio Reserve will support the establishment of a biological corridor between Cerro San Gil Protected Area and the Rio Dulce National Park. Through this project, FUNDAECO will expand the fully protected zone to more than 22,000 acres in Cerro San Gil, contributing to the conservation of Neotropical migratory bird habitat in wintering grounds.

**7769: IMPROVING KNOWLEDGE & CONSERVATION OF ONTARIO BOREAL & ADJOINING FOREST NMBS II**
**Applicant:** BIRDS CANADA
**Country:** Canada
**Total Request:** $149,952 **Matching Contributions:** $785,042
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Canada Warbler**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Wood Thrush**, **Chimney Swift**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, Bay-breasted Warbler, **Connecticut Warbler**, Cape May Warbler, Blackpoll Warbler, **Eastern Whip-poor-will**, and Common Nighthawk.

Boreal forest bird populations have declined 33% since 1970, amounting to 500 million birds lost. Changing forest conditions and direct harm to birds and nests from commercial forestry are considered important contributing factors to the decline. The proposed project addresses priority conservation actions for eleven target Neotropical migratory bird (NMB) species that breed in Ontario's Boreal and adjoining forest regions. The project is located in important habitat for the target species, Ontario's Bird Conservation Regions 8 and 12, which supports relatively high NMB densities but is exposed to direct and indirect threats from industrial activities. Much of the area is under-surveyed with respect to bird populations, due to difficult accessibility and specialized survey requirements, highlighting the need for additional data. Project objectives in the Boreal and adjoining forest regions are to 1) Increase the data available on target NMB species for improved species conservation and management in an additional 3,700,000 acres, 2) Help partners identify and protect an additional 1,000,000 acres of priority target NMB habitat in areas exposed to industry threats, and, 3) Improve ability of decision-makers to effectively manage target NMB species populations, through improving Provincial and/or Federal assessment process or development of Recovery Strategies for at least 5 target NMB species. The project benefits target NMB species through significantly improved understanding of their distribution, abundance, and breeding locations in a core breeding range, and then using that critical data to drive better management and protection of NMB habitat by reducing industry and other threats, as well as improving the ability of decision-makers to assess and manage target NMB populations. Objectives will be achieved through close collaboration with Indigenous communities, industry, government, and environmental non-governmental organizations who have a demonstrated need for more data to inform decision-making on habitat protection, industry activities and population threat assessments.

**7770: LONG-TERM IMPROVEMENT OF HABITAT QUALITY & CONNECTIVITY IN SO. SOUTH AMERICA**
**Applicant:** BIRDLIFE INTERNATIONAL
**Country:** Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, Uruguay
**Total Request:** $199,100 **Matching Contributions:** $667,000
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **American Golden-Plover**, Upland Sandpiper, **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, **Bobolink**, Greater Yellowlegs, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**s, White-rumped Sandpiper, Barn Swallow, Least Sandpiper, **Hudsonian Godwit**, Common Nighthawk, **Swallow-tailed Kite**, and Spotted Sandpiper.

The Southern Cone Grasslands (or pampas) of South America encompass large swathes of Argentina, Brazil, Paraguay, and Uruguay. They are the economic heartland and for over 300 years have been the region's center of growth and development. These grasslands are also the birthplace of the Gaucho culture, the equivalent of the North American cowboys, with characteristic customs and traditions. The pampas are one of the few remaining temperate grassy ecosystems in the world, and the richest in terms of biodiversity. This ecosystem supports unique assemblages of resident and endemic birds and is the wintering destination for many neotropical migrants like the **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, **Bobolink**, **American Golden-Plover**, Upland Sandpiper, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, among many other species. The principal threats to grasslands birds have been the rapid conversion of native grasslands to soybean monocrops, followed by afforestation with exotic trees, alteration by fires and grazing regimes, illegal hunting, and wildlife trapping – all exacerbated by climate change. With the support of the NMBCA and other organizations, BirdLife International and its Partners - SAVE Brasil, Aves Argentinas, Guyra Paraguay and Aves Uruguay – forged the Grasslands Alliance (GA) to address these threats. For 17 years, the GA has been working with landowners, producers, national government agencies, and local communities to protect native grasslands through sustainable grazing practices, contributing to the conservation of more than 290 migratory and resident bird species, with proven and effective conservation strategies and outcomes across one million hectares. To ensure long-term conservation of these grassland birds, BirdLife recently completed a 10-year *Conservation Investment Strategy (CIS) for the Southern Cone Grasslands*. Through the CIS, the GA proposes a series of strategies/ activities that integrate the work of local, national, and international Non-Governmental Organizations, producers, technicians, scientists, private and public entities, and the public, to achieve the following conservation objectives: 1) Improve habitat quality for migratory and resident birds by increasing native grass diversity and grass-height heterogeneity needed by these species, through sustainable ranching practices in more than 1.5 million hectares; 2) Increase resilience to climate change by maintaining/restoring Carbon content in the soil and reducing soil erosion, through sustainable grazing practices in more than 100,000 hectares; 3) Improve the conservation status of key threatened migratory and resident birds by implementing specific conservation actions on the ground in at least one focal area/country; and 4) Reduce/stop the main threat to these native grasslands (conversion to crop/forest monocultures and consequently native grassland loss) by increasing awareness of key sectors about the importance of grasslands conservation and the ecosystems services that they provide.

**7771: MIGRATORY SHOREBIRD CONSERVATION IN THE PACIFIC COAST OF GUATEMALA**
**Applicant:** FUNDACION PARA EL ECODESARROLLO Y LA CONSERVACION (FUNDAECO)
**Country:** Guatemala
**Total Request:** $160,390 **Matching Contributions:** $518,800
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **American Oystercatcher**, **American Golden-Plover**, **Wilson's Plover**, **Snowy Plover**, **Hudsonian Godwit**, **Marbled Godwit**, **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, **Willet**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Least Tern**, **Gull-billed Tern**, **Black Tern**, **Elegant Tern**, **Black Skimmer**, **Wood Stork**, and **Reddish Egret**.

The project long-term goal is to contribute to the protection of migratory shorebird habitat in the Pacific Coast of Guatemala. The project will support integrated efforts to generate scientific information regarding migratory shorebirds in the Pacific Coast, the characterization of key sites for migratory shorebirds and the generation of best practices for shrimp and salt production to contribute to shorebird protection. This project will build on the successful results from the Wildlife Conservation Society project, the ongoing efforts to develop best practices and the ongoing conservation and land use planning processes to ensure that partners contribute to shorebird protection in the long term. FUNDAECO will replicate the successful experience in landscape planning and integration of local stakeholders to advance in bird protection and sustainable community development in Caribbean Guatemala.

**7772: MULTI-HABITAT CONSERVATION OF NMBS IN ECUADOR II**
**Applicant:** FUNDACION JOCOTOCO
**Country:** Ecuador
**Total Request:** $199,363 **Matching Contributions:** $623,390
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Cerulean Warbler**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, **Black-billed Cuckoo**, **Canada Warbler**, **Franklin's Gull**, **Snowy Plover**, Whimbrel, **Willet**, Summer Tanager, Swainson's Thrush, Blackburnian Warbler, Blue-winged Teal, Western Wood – Pewee, Eastern Wood – Pewee, and Broad-winged Hawk.

Migratory birds that journey from North America to South America for winter face alarming declines due to deforestation, habitat degradation, and fragmentation. Ecuador, with its diverse ecosystems, plays a critical role as a crucial stopover and overwintering site for these birds. Yet, Ecuador's densely populated landscape has seen a significant increase in deforestation, with a loss of primary forest covering nearly 7.8% of the nation's land area over 26 years. The overarching goal of Fundación Jocotoco's proposal is to protect the critical Podocarpus-El Condor biological corridor and safeguard the last remaining forest fragments in Southern and Western Ecuador. This ambitious endeavor spans six of Fundación Jocotoco's reserves and includes a Municipal Conservation and Sustainable Use Area covering 187,000 acres of critical migratory bird habitat across a vast altitudinal range, from sea level to 3,400 meters. The success of this project hinges on several key components: First, Jocotoco will implement diligent patrols within the seven protected areas to effectively mitigate existing threats. Simultaneously, they will enhance state-of-the-art artificial intelligence models, allowing them to accurately quantify threats and identify species from recorded sounds. Second, they will continue their monitoring initiative, which will be carried out within the targeted zones to bolster understanding of migratory bird distribution and population trends. Third, they will add 548 acres of higher-elevation forest to Buenaventura Reserve and 533 acres to Tapichalaca Reserve. Finally, they will build local capacity by promoting environmental awareness and knowledge about migratory birds through educational programs within schools neighboring the Tapichalaca and Ayampe reserves.

**7773: PROTECTING BUFF-BREASTED SANDPIPER HABITAT, BOLIVIA VIII**
**Applicant:** ASOCIACION ARMONIA
**Country:** Bolivia
**Total Request:** $200,000 **Matching Contributions:** $600,000
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, **American Golden-Plover**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, Upland Sandpiper, **Hudsonian Godwit**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, and **Bobolink**.

Bolivian Beni Savana is an important fall migration stop-over area for the **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** whose ideal foraging habitat is flat, drying water-body short-grass with recent ungulate grazing and this habitat is a small part (approximately 1%) of the Beni ecosystem. The most important stop-over site in this region is Armonía's 27,000-acre Barba Azul Nature Reserve, which has had the highest **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** count in the region along with seven other Birds of Conservation Concern. Barba Azul protects ten threatened bird and mammal species including the Critically Endangered Blue-throated Macaw. In this eighth phase, Armonía will undertake the following priority actions from the USFWS Conservation Plan for the **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**: 1) Maintenance of nearly 22,000 acres of tropical savanna habitat and 2) law enforcement of Barba Azul. Barba Azul is the only site within Bolivia with a long-term shorebird monitoring program (10 years) where Armonía will research and monitor **Buff-breasted Sandpiper** populations. Additionally, Armonía will continue the management and development of 3,700 acres of grassland using best-practices ranching techniques and ideal stocking rates as an educational model eco-friendly ranching system, which will also offer sustainability support. A functioning, local model ranch will be a very powerful educational tool for ranch owners.

**7776: RESTORING DEGRADED LAND FOR NMBS IN COLOMBIA'S WESTERN ANDES**
**Applicant:** SAVING NATURE
**Country:** Colombia
**Total Request:** $45,000 **Matching Contributions:** $140,629
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Canada Warbler**, **Cerulean Warbler**, Mourning Warbler, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, and **Swallow-tailed Kite**.

This project restores winter habitat for Neotropical migratory birds (NMBs) and increases participation by the local communities in the restoration efforts. The five-year goal is to reforest 1,467 acres with native trees to increase habitat for NMBs and other species. To date, Saving Nature has purchased 761 acres of plantable land, of which they have planted 452 acres with native trees. The project objective for 2024 is to restore 247 acres of degraded land by planting 120,000 to 160,000 native trees, thus increasing the non-breeding habitat under restoration for NMBs to a total of 700 acres. For the local community to directly benefit from reforestation activities, Saving Nature has transitioned its sourcing of native seedlings from private companies to local nurseries. To do so, they are assisting local farmers with the development and management of eleven family-owned nurseries, including assistance with training, technical support and financing for infrastructure, labor, and materials. Saving Nature is also expanding partner Fundación Bioconservancy's nursery production. In 2024, they will source 110,000 native trees from community nurseries, 10,000 from Fundación Bioconservancy's nursery, and the balance from private companies.

**7778: SAVING THE GOLDEN-CHEEKED WARBLER WINTERING HABITAT IN HONDURAS**
**Applicant:** MESA DE ONG'S COMANEJADORAS DE AREAS PROTEGIDAS DE HONDURAS (MOCAPH)
**Country:** Honduras
**Total Request:** $200,000 **Matching Contributions:** $602,620
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Golden-cheeked Warbler**, **Grace's Warbler**, **Mexican Whip-poor-will**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, Worm-eating Warbler, **Red-faced Warbler**, Hermit Warbler, Townsend's Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, Blue-headed Vireo, Yellow-rumped Warbler, and MacGillivray's Warbler.

Working within critical sites of the pine-oak corridor in Honduras, through various stakeholders, MOCAPH will implement Nature-Based Solutions (NBS) as a methodology to orchestrate actions and conserve goods and services provided by this pine-oak forest ecosystem. This project will implement elements of the Conservation Plan for the Mesoamerican Pine-Oak Corridor as winter habitat for the **Golden-cheeked Warbler** (GCWA), in order to help counteract acute local threats such as climate change, food security and disaster risk. The NBS approach is widely used by Alliance members because of its effectiveness in many types of social and environmental interventions by taking an ecosystem conservations strategy. Honduras has four critical sectors (Puca-Gracias, Opalaca-La Esperanza, Corralitos and El Armado) within the pine-oak corridor in which MOCAPH will impact at least 2900 acres through 1) restoration, 2) ecosystem protection at a landscape scale, 3) inclusion of environmental education and awareness through local volunteers and citizen science that will support local biological monitoring (at least 40 birdwatchers in accompaniment), and 4) recognition of forest and water management actions through water governance (at least 15 social groups collaborating).

**7779: SAVING THE GOLDEN-CHEEKED WARBLER WINTERING HABITAT V**
**Applicant:** PRONATURA SUR, A.C.
**Country:** Guatemala, Mexico
**Total Request:** $199,940 **Matching Contributions:** $639,556
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Golden-cheeked Warbler**, Blue-headed Vireo, **Golden-winged Warbler**, Worm-eating Warbler, Black and White Warbler, Townsend´s Warbler, Hermit Warbler, Black-throated Green Warbler, Wilson's Warbler, and **Red-faced Warbler**.

This project is presented by the Alliance for the Conservation of Mesoamerican Pine-Oak Forests in compliance with the Conservation Plan for the Central American Pine-Oak Forest Ecoregion and the **Golden-cheeked Warbler** (GCWA), to implement three strategies: Integrated Fire Management, Forest Health Protection, and Strengthening of Regional and National Alliances. The management and protection of forests in border areas of Mexico and Guatemala represents a challenge for the governmental organizations and other local stakeholders in charge of these issues, since they must address local needs, while considering the regional context so that the measures to be taken have a better impact on the forest landscape. It is necessary to promote and strengthen binational interinstitutional coordination, so that national programs can articulate actions to ensure the conservation of biodiversity in border areas. This project will continue to focus on forest management and forest restoration of the GCWA winter habitat range. Implementation of an integrated fire management approach in the Chiapas and Guatemala border zone will include prevention and integrated management measures in the field, capacity building for technicians, the development of a tool to evaluate the impact of fires on wildlife, and outreach activities. Also, monitoring and field actions related to forest health will be implemented in response to forest pest and disease threats. By the end of 2026, habitat conditions in 14,208 acres of critical GCWA wintering habitat will be strengthened and improved management will be provided through forest protection programs through the development and implementation of forest health and fire integrated management tools and approaches.

**7782: STEWARDS OF SASKATCHEWAN FOR BIRD SPECIES AT RISK IX**
**Applicant:** NATURE SASKATCHEWAN
**Country:** Canada
**Total Request:** $80,000 **Matching Contributions:** $273,059
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Baird's Sparrow**, **Bobolink**, **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, **Sprague's Pipit**, **Chimney Swift**, **Thick-billed Longspur**, **Short-eared Owl**, **Western Grebe**, **Piping Plover**, Barn Swallow, Burrowing Owl, Common Nighthawk, Ferruginous Hawk, Long-billed Curlew, and Prairie Loggerhead Shrike.

The Stewards of Saskatchewan programs aim to engage landowners and managers in stewardship actions to conserve habitat for at-risk species, including the endangered Burrowing Owl, threatened Prairie Loggerhead Shrike, endangered **Piping Plover**, threatened **Sprague's Pipit**, and other prairie species designated as at-risk in Canada. Currently, 1,019 landowners participate in the Stewards of Saskatchewan programs, with 222 participating in multiple programs. These landowners have agreed to conserve approximately 713,100 acres of habitat, and 219 miles of shoreline habitat for at-risk bird species. The Stewards of Saskatchewan for Bird Species at Risk IX project's objectives and outputs are to 1) conserve habitat for multiple Birds of Conservation Concern (BCC) through voluntary stewardship agreements and actions; 2) promote legally-binding conservation easements; 3) develop site-specific Species at Risk Beneficial Management Practices plans with land managers; 4) increase, enhance (320 acres affected), and monitor target bird species' habitat; 5) monitor bird populations at participating sites through an annual census of program participants' lands; and 6) provide environmental and conservation outreach to agricultural producers as well as to youth and others.

**7784: TRACKING PHALAROPES TO INFORM CONSERVATION ACTIONS**
**Applicant:** MANOMET, INC
**Country:** Argentina, Canada, United States of America
**Total Request:** $199,060 **Matching Contributions:** $607,345
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Wilson's Phalarope, Red-necked Phalarope, **American Golden-Plover**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Pectoral Sandpiper**, **Buff-breasted Sandpiper**, Upland Sandpiper, Greater Yellowlegs, White-rumped Sandpiper, Baird's Sandpiper, Solitary Sandpiper, **Hudsonian Godwit**, and Stilt Sandpiper.

Saline lakes throughout the Americas form a network of critical habitat that hundreds of thousands of Wilson's phalaropes depend on throughout their annual cycle. Many saline lakes are suffering drastic declines in water levels, leading to increased salinities that alter the food web that Wilson's Phalaropes rely on. No other ecosystems can meet the species' unique requirements. Wilson's phalarope population data also show possible decreasing trends at site and hemispheric scales, but more data are needed. Monitoring is also needed to identify responses to and impacts of saline lakes habitat loss/degradation. Manomet will join efforts and optimize resources internationally with the following objectives and associated activities (activities shown in parentheses): 1) Assess the migratory ecology of the species (tag 55 phalaropes at multiple sites and install 6 Motus detection stations), 2) monitor Wilson's phalarope population size and trends at local and hemispheric scales (regional and local surveys in North and South America), 3) Increase knowledge and appreciation for Wilson's phalarope and saline lakes (expanding an existing educational curriculum on shorebirds, to be applied internationally, and coordinating a series of community engagement events), and 4) build capacity through international researcher exchanges and training (technical trainings on Motus installation, international researcher collaboration for training on bird capture and tagging).

**7785: U.S.- MEXICO GRASSLAND BIRD CONSERVATION XXI**
**Applicant:** BIRD CONSERVANCY OF THE ROCKIES
**Country:** Mexico
**Total Request:** $200,000 **Matching Contributions:** $600,000
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Sprague's Pipit**, **Baird's Sparrow**, **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, Lark Bunting, **Thick-billed Longspur**, Cassin's Sparrow, Brewer's Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Savannah Sparrow, Loggerhead Shrike, Golden Eagle, Ferruginous Hawk, Northern Harrier, American Kestrel, Prairie Falcon, **Mountain Plover**, Long-billed Curlew, Burrowing Owl, **Short-eared Owl**, and **Long-eared Owl**.

Previous project phases filled key ecological knowledge gaps on the distribution, abundance, and habitat use of wintering grassland birds, identified key demographic rates and their drivers, quantified patterns of land-use change, and supported permanent protection of over 64,800 acres of habitat. Since 2012, in coordination with local partners, Bird Conservancy of the Rockies (BCR) has provided mid-term protection (15-year) and improved critical habitat for nonbreeding grassland birds in the Chihuahuan Desert of northern Mexico by engaging landowners in voluntary habitat management and conservation through the Sustainable Grazing Network (SGN). To date, 32 properties encompassing over 600,000 acres in four Grassland Priority Conservation Areas (GPCAs) have enrolled and been protected, and over 360,000 acres have been enhanced or restored. BCR monitoring documented a 16%/year increase in **Sprague's Pipit** winter density on SGN ranches from 2014 to 2019, and in 2023 estimated a total population of over 1,000,000 wintering grassland birds on SGN grasslands. In this next phase, partners will continue to focus activities on the conservation of nonbreeding habitat for **Sprague's Pipit**, **Chestnut-collared Longspur** and **Baird's Sparrow**. Specifically, the project will: 1) protect at least another 10,000 acres of Chihuahuan Desert grasslands and shrublands through SGN enrollment, 2) enhance at least 10,000 acres of Chihuahuan Desert grasslands through improved grazing management, 3) monitor key species and other grassland bird populations across the SGN, 4) conduct outreach to engage SGN landowners in range management, 5) engage grassland owners and other stakeholders through the Encuentro Ganadero (livestock meeting) to increase collaboration among sectors and build a diverse community for grasslands conservation in northern Mexico, and 6) engage rural Mexican and Mennonite communities in Chihuahua through environmental education to foster a culture of sustainability around grasslands and birds. These efforts address priorities identified in the Central Grassland Roadmap, Chihuahuan Desert Grassland Conservation Investment Strategy, and other grassland conservation plans.

**ALTERNATES**
Presented in ranked recommendation order.

**7742: BRIDGING THE CONSERVATION GAP: LEVERAGING MOSI DATA FOR CONSERVATION ACTION**
**Applicant:** THE INSTITUTE FOR BIRD POPULATIONS (IBP)
**Country:** Belize, Mexico, Nicaragua
**Total Request:** $91,478 **Matching Contributions:** $304,496
**Notable bird species to benefit:** Ruby-throated Hummingbird, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, Common Nighthawk, **Willow Flycatcher**, **Wood Thrush**, Gray-cheeked Thrush, **Golden-winged Warbler**, **Golden-cheeked Warbler**, **Canada Warbler**, Summer Tanager, Scarlet Tanager, Painted Bunting, Indigo Bunting, and Baltimore Oriole.

The goal of this project is to support local Neotropical migratory bird conservation efforts of five small Latin American Non-Governmental Organizations. These groups are part of a new initiative, the Monitoring Overwinter Survival (MoSI) Conservation Grants Program, which uses monitoring data to guide on-the-ground conservation activities. Five shovel-ready projects are the centerpiece of the NMBCA funding request. These center on forest, wetland, and grassland restoration, site protection and environmental education. The estimated restoration area is 494 acres. This project will bring in several new, small partners otherwise unable to participate in the NMBCA program.

**7781: SCALING UP COASTAL BIRD CONSERVATION IN CHILE**
**Applicant:** NATIONAL AUDUBON SOCIETY
**Country:** Chile
**Total Request:** $200,000 **Matching Contributions:** $610,247
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Hudsonian Godwit**, Red Knot, Whimbrel, Ruddy Turnstone, Surfbird, Sanderling, Baird's Sandpiper, Wilson's Phalarope, Greater Yellowlegs, **Willet**, **Lesser Yellowlegs**, **Franklin's Gull**, and **Elegant Tern**.

National Audubon Society (NAS) Chile program has been pivotal in protecting shorebirds and wetlands, offering critical stopover sites for migratory birds traveling thousands of miles, by integrating on-the-ground efforts and mainstreaming bird conservation into the national development agendas. The project has the following goals, focusing on both national and local, on-the-ground action in Chile's South Center Biodiversity Hotspot and expanding to the Magallanes Region: (1) establish regulations for birds by promoting the National Plan for the Conservation of Birds and implementing sustainable practices within the forestry and livestock industries in the Humedal - Marisma Rocuant-Andalién; (2) continue to cultivate constituencies for coastal bird conservation by expanding a trained community of environmental hosts and implementing an educational program for schoolchildren along the Central Chile Coastal and Magallanes Birding Trails; and, (3) reinforce shorebird monitoring capabilities in the Humedal - Marisma Rocuant-Andalién Important Bird Area and extend a community stewardship program to mitigate critical threats to migratory and resident coastal birds resulting from human recreation. Thus, this project contributes to Audubon's long-term goals (by 2030) of protecting and improving management of at least 1.2 million acres of important coastal bird habitat and mainstreaming migratory coastal bird species conservation into coastal resilience and climate adaptation processes across the Pacific Flyway in Latin America.

**7748: CONSERVATION OF KEY GRASSLANDS IN TWO MEXICAN GPCA**
**Applicant:** PRONATURA NORESTE, A.C.
**Country:** Mexico
**Total Request:** $197,497 **Matching Contributions:** $755,439
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Sprague's Pipit**, **Grasshopper Sparrow**, **Chestnut-collared Longspur**, **Mountain Plover**, **Baird's Sparrow**, Lark Bunting, Brewer's Sparrow, Cassin's Sparrow, Eastern Meadowlark, Horned Lark, Savannah Sparrow, Vesper Sparrow, Western Meadowlark, Ferruginous Hawk, Burrowing Owl, Long-billed Curlew, and **Thick-billed Longspur**.

Pronatura Noreste, A.C. seeks 1) to protect 7,163 acres of key habitat for migratory grasslands birds through legal conservation mechanisms at the Mapimí and Tokio Grassland Priority Conservation Areas (GPCA); 2) to restore and enhance 756 acres in the Chihuahuan Desert collaborating with local producers in benefit to migratory neotropical birds and key grasslands in Tokio and Mapimí GPCAs: 3) apply sustainable livestock management in two GPCAs to benefit more than 1,235 acres; 4) to develop winter bird monitoring to determine densities and status of vegetation in two GPCAs during 2024 and 2025; and 5) to establish actions aimed at rural community development, for the diversification and appropriate use of natural resources, through outreach, extension and workshops.

**7759: DETERMINING WINTERING HABITAT RELIANCE OF MIG BIRDS VIA COMMUNITY MONITORING**
**Applicant:** GUANACASTE DRY FOREST CONSERVATION FUND (GDFCF)
**Country:** Costa Rica
**Total Request:** $74,500 **Matching Contributions:** $234,900
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Wood Thrush**, **Golden-winged Warbler**, Worm-eating Warbler, Chestnut-sided Warbler, **Kentucky Warbler**, **Elegant Trogon**, **Cerulean Warbler**, Bay-breasted Warbler, **Prothonotary Warbler**, **Willow Flycatcher**, **Olive-sided Flycatcher**, and **Canada Warbler**.

Utilizing new methods and bioacoustic and MOTUS technologies, Guanacaste Dry Forest Conservation Fund and partners are building on experience to further document and explain how migratory birds utilize tropical forest habitats during their non-breeding season. Key conservation actions of this project are: 1) Document the existence and within region movements and habitat usage of at-risk species during their non-breeding season; 2) Contribute to the dataset and trends on migratory bird movements through expanded nano-tagging of Guanacaste Conservation Area (GCA) migrant birds and activation of three MOTUS receivers; 3) Investigate the use and reliance by migratory birds of significant new ecological transition zone lands added to GCA within the last two years; and 4) Train a new group of local community-based parataxonomists in bird identification and monitoring techniques and conservation needs. The project involves collaboration with Birds Canada, the Organization for Tropical Studies and the government of Costa Rica.

**7738: A COASTAL SOLUTIONS NETWORK FOR THE PACIFIC FLYWAY III**
**Applicant:** CENTRO REGIONAL RAMSAR PARA EL HEMISFERIO OCCIDENTAL (CREHO)
**Country:** Ecuador, Mexico, Panama, Peru
**Total Request:** $199,045 **Matching Contributions:** $600,000
**Notable bird species to benefit:** **Reddish Egret**, **Franklin's Gull**, **Least Tern**, **Black Skimmer**, **Snowy Plover**, **Wilson´s Plover**, Semipalmated Plover, Black-necked Stilt, Whimbrel, Pacific Red Knot (*roselaari*), Western Sandpiper, Ruddy Turnstone, Black-bellied Plover, **Short-billed Dowitcher**, and Baird's Sandpiper.

This project is the continuation of a network effort to implement the Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy, with conservation actions in four priority sites (Mexico, Panama, Ecuador, and Peru). Project partners propose to restore and manage 25,760 acres through a combination of public policy mechanisms, land-use planning, and implementation of better management practices to reduce impacts on priority shorebird species. Partners will also build capacity for conservation leaders in Latin America and conduct outreach campaigns to create social support for these efforts.