



North Dakota State Wildlife Grant Success Stories

In the five years since its inception, the State Wildlife Grant Program has played an important role in the conservation of North Dakota's wildlife. The following are some projects funded through State Wildlife Grants:



White Pelicans at Chase Lake, Photo Courtesy of USFWS

Management: Proactive Measures that Benefit Wildlife and People **White Pelican Disappearance**

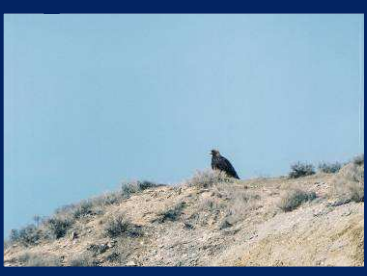
The white pelican's of Chase Lake are disappearing by the thousands and no one knows why. Over four days in May of 2004, the number of white pelican's at the lake dropped from 27,000 to 80, and thousands of eggs and chicks were left unattended and dying. In 2005, 18,000 adult pelicans returned to Chase Lake for nesting. Everything seemed to have returned to normal until July, when dead white pelican chicks began turning up—8,000 at last count—and the adults again took off. State Wildlife Grants are being used to help unravel this mystery, as well as to gather basic data on white pelican behavior. Since the health of wildlife is often an early indicator of disease and pollution that affect us all, understanding why the white pelicans are disappearing is important to us all.



Short Horned Lizard, Photo Courtesy of North Dakota GFD

Research: Gathering Information to Take Action **Mammals, Reptiles, and Amphibians**

As our communities expand, wildlife habitat is altered, leading to changes in the distribution and abundance of a wide range of animals. State Wildlife Grants are helping us understand how climate change and human land use are affecting a variety of wildlife, including small mammals, reptiles, and amphibians. By comparing the data collected by this project to information on species diversity in the 1970's, biologists will be able to identify how populations have shifted over the past three decades. That information will help planners and decision-makers make proactive decisions to conserve wildlife for future generations.



Golden Eagle, Photo Courtesy of North Dakota GFD

Conservation: Protecting Imperiled Land, Water, and Wildlife **Golden Eagle Research on the Missouri National Grasslands**

The status of golden eagles in North Dakota is unclear but many eagle nests in the state do not have eagles living in them. A U.S. Forest Service study of factors that might negatively affect nesting golden eagles on the grasslands was expanded with State Wildlife Grant money to include surrounding lands, making this the first comprehensive study on the subject. Information from this research project will allow biologists to determine the status of golden eagles and will inform wildlife management decisions, allowing the most cost-effective path to golden eagle conservation to be taken.

Congress has appropriated \$3.7 million in State Wildlife Grants to North Dakota since 2001. This has been matched with at least \$637 thousand state and partner dollars.