

Matching Funds For Grants

*A report and catalog of proven and potential match sources for the
Recovering America's Wildlife Act and other grant programs*



A Report to the
AFWA Wildlife Diversity Conservation & Funding Committee

Version 1.0

September 2021



Report Purpose

To identify and catalog existing and potential new sources of funding to expand the conservation match portfolio of state fish and wildlife agencies and partners for work on SGCN and allow for an effective and efficient rollout and implementation of the Recovering America's Wildlife Act.

Writing Team

Eileen Dowd Stukel, South Dakota Game Fish and Parks

Jenny Dickson, Connecticut Department of Energy and Environmental Protection

Paul Thompson, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources

John Davis, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department

Doyle Brown, Missouri Department of Conservation

Mark Humpert, Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies

Acknowledgements

Appreciation is extended to state wildlife diversity program managers and presenters who participated in the 2021 virtual summer meeting of wildlife diversity program managers and who completed a survey on match. This report is a direct result from that meeting.

Suggested Citation

Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies, 2021. Matching Funds for Grants: A report and catalog of proven and potential match sources for the Recovering America's Wildlife Act and other grant programs. Version 1.0. Washington, DC. 26 pages.

Website

This report and match catalog reside on the AFWA Wildlife Diversity Conservation and Funding Committee webpage at the following address:

<https://www.fishwildlife.org/afwa-acts/afwa-committees/wildlife-diversity-conservation-and-funding-committee>

Executive Summary

As conservation demands for State and Territorial Fish and Wildlife Agencies (SFWA) increase, the challenge of adequately funding a myriad of actions also continues to increase. The opportunity presented by new funding mechanisms such as the Recovering America's Wildlife Act (RAWA) provides a once-in-a-generation solution to the ever-changing conservation landscape. New funding options always present new challenges, but SFWA have a long history and proven track record for being able to overcome those challenges—conservation success and creativity often go hand-in-hand.

For over three quarters of a century, SFWA have used billions of dollars from licenses and fees paid by hunters, anglers, shooters, and other sources as match for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) program. During the last two decades, SFWA have received annual appropriations through the State and Tribal Wildlife Grants (STWG) program to conserve Species of Greatest Conservation Need (SGCN) requiring them to secure millions of dollars in additional match. Some states have struggled at times to meet this match requirement and this challenge will be elevated with the enactment of RAWA, which would provide SFWA with \$1.3 billion annually and require a 25% match.

Building upon previous reports and surveys conducted by the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) and the four Regional Fish and Wildlife Associations, this report outlines ways that states can meet the match challenge. Some examples of match in this report have been used widely for decades while others capture newer approaches or have been used in just a handful of states. Also highlighted are new or innovative sources of match that could extend conservation collaboration to new partners within federal, state, and local government and the business and nongovernmental (NGO) communities. New partnerships can help states tap into tens of billions of dollars of new funding and distribute the workload of conservation more broadly. Working with new partners can increase the relevancy of SFWA thereby strengthening the support base for the critical conservation and management work they conduct.

The report makes the following six recommendations:

1. Request AFWA periodically conduct a comprehensive survey of the states on match
2. Create a searchable online database on match to share new ideas and opportunities
3. Make the administration of match more consistent across the states
4. Investigate the development of a tool to document, track, and report match more efficiently
5. Explore opportunities with the philanthropic and business communities to create a national pool of match
6. Provide capacity, training and improve guidance on the administration of match

It is expected that this report will be regularly updated and serve as a living document and resource to help SFWA overcome the challenges of securing match. While coming up with \$380 million annually in match for RAWA will be a formidable challenge, we hope this report shines new light on the vast opportunities for match and inspires new thinking that will knock down one more barrier to help agencies address the difficult challenge of conserving the nation's natural heritage.

INTRODUCTION

Twenty years ago, Congress directed fish and wildlife agencies from each state, territory, and the District of Columbia to develop State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) that identify species of greatest conservation need (SGCN), key threats, and needed conservation actions. The development and implementation of these plans through new federal funding provided by the [State and Tribal Wildlife Grants \(STWG\)](#) program began the long road to restore many declining fish and wildlife populations. New collaborations were spawned from a desire to involve new partners in conservation and from the necessity to secure required matching funds. Despite progress in conserving some of North America's rarest and declining species, the state of the nation's biodiversity has continued to decline.

In 2015, the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (AFWA) established the [Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources \(Panel\)](#). The Panel, chaired by former Wyoming Governor David Freudenthal and Bass Pro Shops CEO John Morris, was comprised of executives from conservation, outdoor recreation, and business and was charged with examining how insufficient fish and wildlife conservation investment contributes to increase federal Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings. The panel made two recommendations: 1) seek \$1.3 billion in annual dedicated funding for proactive conservation of declining fish and wildlife; and 2) make recommendations to help agencies better engage and serve broader constituencies. Since that time, the [Recovering America's Wildlife Act \(RAWA\)](#), which would invest \$1.4 billion annually in fish and wildlife conservation, has been introduced in the U.S. House of Representatives and U.S. Senate and the [Fish and Wildlife Relevancy Roadmap](#), which outlines strategies to help fish and wildlife agencies serve broader constituencies, has been adopted by AFWA.

Prospects for new funding and the desire to collaborate with and serve a broader spectrum of constituencies offer exciting new opportunities for state-based fish and wildlife conservation, but also presents challenges. Principle among these is the need to secure an estimated \$380 million in matching funds that would be required under the current version of RAWA legislation. This report chronicles many of the existing sources of matching funds that state fish and wildlife agencies use for the STWG program and other programs, but also identifies potential new sources of match. The report compiles information from several past reports, results from a workshop held in July 2021, and a survey of state wildlife diversity program managers conducted in August 2021. This information was used to construct tables of existing and new sources of match (Appendix II & III).

Building on Past Efforts

The challenge of securing match to conserve fish and wildlife is not a new one. SFWA must obtain hundreds of millions of dollars each year as match for grants through the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration (WSFR) program. Most states use proceeds from hunting and fishing licenses and associated fees to satisfy the 25% non-federal match requirement for WSFR grants. However, some state wildlife diversity programs with smaller budgets and less reliable sources of match, face challenges to obtain enough match to for the \$74 million STWG program and will face even more formidable challenges with the passage of RAWA which would require a 25% match for a \$1.3 billion annual funding program..

Over the years, state fish and wildlife agencies have developed creative means to fund wildlife diversity programs. These include revenue from voluntary state income tax checkoffs, conservation license

plates, and sales tax proceeds attributed to outdoor recreation equipment. In 2005, AFWA collaborated with the University of Michigan to construct case studies of more than a dozen sources of funding used by SFWA. Analyses of the case studies and key findings are compiled in the [Investing in Wildlife: State Wildlife Funding Campaigns](#) report. In 2006, the Midwest Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies produced a report on alternative funding for fish and wildlife. The report provides an overview of funding sources in six states and includes a list of commonly used or available funding sources. In 2011, the Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies completed a report on alternative funding from non-consumptive sources. The report includes survey responses that detail current funding mechanisms and several unsuccessful funding initiatives from 15 western states.

Funding through RAWA would represent the largest investment in state-based fish and wildlife conservation in history, achieving a scale that would significantly reduce endangered species listings. RAWA would provide SFWA and their partners with long sought sustained funding necessary to more fully implement State Wildlife Action Plans (SWAPs) to conserve over 12,000 SGCN. Each state has flexibility in identifying SGCN, which may include fish and wildlife that are state or federally listed, rare, vulnerable, or of unknown status.

RAWA would require each SFWA to provide at least a 25% match for funds received through apportionments. Under the current version of RAWA, required match would range from an estimated \$2 million per year for the District of Columbia to nearly \$20 million for Hawaii. Match required under the STWG program is approximately \$87,000 for the District of Columbia and \$150,000 for Hawaii. Meeting the new match requirement will be a major challenge for many states.

Fortunately, flexibility on match is built into RAWA. Funding from any federal agency except the Departments of Interior and Agriculture would be eligible as match. This means states could partner with and leverage match funds from the Department of Defense, Environmental Protection Agency, National Marine Fisheries Service, Department of Energy, Department of Transportation, Department of Education, and other federal agencies with collective budgets nearing \$1 trillion dollars annually. RAWA also allows funds to be used for conservation education and wildlife-associated recreation, which would open doors to collaboration with new potential partners who can provide capacity, technical expertise, and match. Municipalities, county governments, businesses, private landowners, citizen scientists, and organizations working with underserved communities could collaborate on conservation, providing matching funds while also helping to expand the relevancy of SFWA work.

This report serves as a catalog of current proven sources of match and potential new ones. It is intended as a starting point in the exploration of new match sources to inspire creative thinking. This report will be updated regularly as new potential sources of match are identified.

EXISTING OR PROVEN SOURCES OF MATCH

For decades, wildlife diversity programs have been on the hunt for increased and sustainable funding while at the same time making efficient use of limited funds to conserve rare and declining fish and wildlife. These programs received a significant funding boost in 2000 with the creation of the STWG program (the related Wildlife Conservation Restoration Program was created the same year but was only funded once). In the beginning years of the program, most states were able to tap into existing agency program funds and partner with NGOs to meet match requirements, but as funding increased it became more difficult for some states to raise the necessary match each year. The match requirement

under RAWA will require SFWA to raise hundreds of millions of dollars in new match as shown in Appendix I. Certain sources of match like revenue from nongame tax check-offs or conservation license plates are nearly universal while others like dedicated sales tax or lottery proceeds are available in just a few states. In the following section, we review common sources of match. A more complete list of current match sources are listed in Appendix II.

Voluntary cash contributions-Most SFWA have check-offs on their state income tax forms that allow taxpayers to voluntarily contribute all or a portion of their refund to support conservation rare or endangered species. Most states also have a conservation license plate depicting a wildlife species or habitat scene, which can be purchased for an extra fee to fund fish and wildlife conservation. Some states receive funding through agency-affiliated foundations or through donations from appeals on their websites or agency publications.

Volunteer time-Most SFWA have volunteer programs and many use the time of volunteers such as citizen scientists, Master Naturalists, conservation educators, private landowners, wildlife rehabilitators and others as match. Volunteers can accrue hundreds of hours each year, and the value of these hours can be used as match on grants if well documented and if they align with the purpose of the grant.

Waiver of overhead-Many SFWA use all or a portion of indirect costs from universities and NGOs that is not reimbursed as match. Federally approved indirect cost rates can exceed 50% for universities and NGOs, providing more than enough match to meet grant obligations.

Direct contributions by partners-Partner organizations can contribute staff time, expenses, and material costs as match. Conservation organizations can receive competitive grants or enter into cooperative agreements where the organization provides matching funds in exchange for receiving agency funding. In some states private landowners contribute the value of labor for habitat restoration, unharvested crops, idle land, or equipment use as match.

Direct Funding from the State or Users-Some SFWA receive direct funding through state appropriations or grants through user fees, lotteries, or other means. These funds can be used to pay for staff, expenses, and/or program dollars and serve as match for grants. Missouri, Arkansas, and Minnesota receive a portion of a dedicated sales tax and Colorado and Arizona receive funding through lottery proceeds. Texas and Virginia receive appropriations based on funding attributed to sales tax collected on outdoor products. Other forms of state match include revenue from vehicle transfer tax/registration surcharges, fees or royalties on extraction or use of natural resources on public lands, environmental fines, leases, environmental review fees, and state park Passport programs. Licenses and fees on hunting, fishing, and boating provide an important source of match on WSFR grants that support game management or hunter and boater safety programs.

NEW OR UNPROVEN SOURCES OF MATCH

The match requirements under RAWA could be significant, requiring SFWA to secure millions in new match. In federal fiscal year 2021, state fish and wildlife agencies received \$55.5 million in apportionments through the STWG program, which equates to ~4% of what states would receive through RAWA. RAWA has a 25% match requirement but unlike STWG, funding from most federal agencies could be used as match. Because of the significant increase in match requirements under RAWA, most SFWA will need to explore new potential sources of match. In the following section and

Appendix III, many new potential sources of match are highlighted. It's understood that the list below represents a small sampling of potential match sources.

Federal agencies-In the current draft of RAWA legislation, funding from all federal agencies except the Departments of Interior and Agriculture would be available as potential match. Many federal agencies work to directly or indirectly conserve SGCN, particularly those that are listed under the federal Endangered Species Act. Following is a brief description of just some of the potential opportunities to collaborate with federal agencies and leverage their funding as match.

Department of Defense (DOD)-DOD has the largest discretionary annual budget of any federal agency. Over 300 federally listed species are found on DOD lands, and they actively work with partners including SFWA to conserve these and other species, spending an average of \$3 billion annually. Below are several examples of potential collaboration:

- [Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans](#)-These plans outline how each military installation with significant natural resources will manage those resources in collaboration with state and federal fish and wildlife agencies. There may be opportunities to use time and resources to develop and implement the plans as match.
- [Sentinel Landscape Partnership](#)-This partnership is intended to help private landowners advance sustainable land management practices around military installations and ranges to strengthen military readiness, conserve natural resources, bolster agricultural and forestry economies, and increase climate change resilience. Expenditures by DOD, NGOs, and private landowners may be available for match.
- [Legacy Resource Management Plan](#)-This program is intended to assist DOD with protecting and enhancing natural and cultural resources while enabling military readiness. Projects may involve regional ecosystem management, habitat preservation efforts, invasive species control, and monitoring and predicting migratory patterns of birds and other animals.
- [Army Corps of Engineers](#)-This agency is involved in many activities that benefit fish and wildlife including river and coastline restoration, endangered species monitoring and management, and invasive species control.

Environmental Protection Agency (EPA)-EPA has many programs to improve air and water quality. Several offices conduct work and/or provide grants to better understand or manage habitat and SGCN. Following are examples from two of those offices:

- [Office of Research & Development](#)-This office serves as the scientific research arm of EPA and supports the emerging needs of states. Grants are provided to support ecosystem research, water, climate change, sustainability, and to assess contaminants on vulnerable fish and wildlife.
- [Office of Water](#)-In addition to ensuring drinking water is safe, this office works to restore and sustain oceans, watersheds, and their aquatic ecosystems to provide healthy habitat for fish, plants, and wildlife. The office works to protect estuaries, assist states with wetland planning and provides grants which could serve as match.

Department of Commerce (DOC)-The DOC includes the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and its National Marine Fisheries Service and National Ocean Service.

- [National Marine Fisheries Service](#)-This Service includes the Office of Habitat Conservation, which is charged with and provides grants to protect and restore habitat to sustain fisheries, recover protected species, and maintain resilient coastal ecosystems. The Service also supports work to better understand and address climate change.
- [National Ocean Service](#)-This Service is charged with preparedness, risk reduction, stewardship, and recreation associated with ocean environments. Agency staff work on coral reefs, modeling to support coastal management and research to assess the causes and effects of algal blooms.

Federal Highway Administration (and State Departments of Transportation)-This agency can serve as a partner to provide habitat, improve habitat connectivity for fish and other species, reduce wildlife and vehicle conflicts, and support the development of recreational trails. Roadside management can provide benefits to pollinators, birds, and other species.

- [Office of Planning, Environment, & Realty](#)-This office serves as the Federal Highway Administration's advocate and leader for environmental protection and enhancement. There are numerous opportunities to partner on transportation projects that support pollinator and other species and the development and maintenance of recreational trails. Additional potential match opportunities include using the value of unmowed roadsides as habitat, partnering on infrastructure projects that positively impact fish or wildlife, and improved culvert designs that help access fish and wildlife crossings and corridors.

Department of Energy (DOE)-There are many opportunities for SFWA to partner with DOE on work to reduce the impact of energy development and transmission on wildlife.

- [National Renewable Energy Laboratory](#)-This lab employs scientists who conduct research and develop technologies to reduce the impact of wind on bats and birds. SFWA could partner with the lab on the development or testing of deterrent technology.

Federal Emergency Management Administration (FEMA)-FEMA provides grants that can be used for hazard mitigation activities such as forest and grassland management to prevent fires and for flood damage reduction. SFWA agencies could use funding from hazard mitigation grants as match.

- [Grant Programs Directorate](#)-Grants are made available to state and territorial governments for hazard mitigation assistance and resilience. These grants can be used for forest and grassland management, flood reduction and other purposes such as living shorelines that can reduce the risks from human-made and natural disasters.

National Aeronautics and Space Administration (NASA)-NASA works with partners to explore, discover, and expand knowledge for the benefit of humanity. This includes work on climate change and on-earth environmental observations.

- [Science Directorate](#)-This Directorate works to understand the impacts of climate change and other forms of environmental change and employs citizen scientists to classify wildlife images on trail cameras, record bird songs, and make other environmental observations.

State and local governments-There are many opportunities to partner with state and local governments to enhance capacity, share in the work of implementing a SWAP, and to bring new sources of match to

the table. Following is just a sample of some of the potential partnerships with state and local government.

- State Department of Environmental Quality-These agencies can provide funding or project support for improving stream or lake water quality, wetland restoration, mapping, or pollution abatement.
- State Department of Agriculture-These agencies could provide funding or program support to install stream buffers along agricultural lands to reduce pesticide runoff and provide habitat, protect rangeland from development through conservation easements, partner on the prevention and control of invasive species, or support pollinator conservation.
- State Department of Health-These agencies could partner with SFWA to provide increased opportunities and access for the public to get outdoors and enjoy nature to improve physical and mental health.
- State Parks Department-These departments could partner on projects to improve habitat for SGCN, enlist the help of park visitors to record wildlife observations, conduct environmental education, and develop wildlife viewing facilities.
- State Office of Outdoor Recreation/Department or Office of Tourism- Sixteen states have created offices of outdoor recreation, task forces, or policy advisors to promote the benefits of outdoor recreation, improve health and wellness, ensure the conservation and stewardship of public lands and waters and educate and engage children in the outdoors. State Tourism Departments can provide funding to promote outdoor recreation tourism. Partnerships with these entities could be done to develop wildlife viewing sites and support conservation awareness and education.
- Department of Corrections-A partnership with this department could provide labor from inmates and a source of match to control invasive species, grow native plants, raise native fish in pond environments, build and install nesting structures, or participate in other activities.
- County and City Government-Many larger counties have Parks and Recreation Departments that could be partners and provide sources of match for habitat work, conservation of SGCN, outdoor education, and wildlife viewing enhancements. Transportation/Road Departments could be partners on habitat connectivity projects, invasive species control, pollinator gardens, or wildlife viewing site development. Health and Human Services Departments may be interested in being a partner on programs to improve access to nature to improve well-being. Urban forestry programs could support efforts to develop or enhance corridors for wildlife, and Environmental Quality Programs could support improvements to streams, rivers and lakes through installation of rainscapes and applying conservation landscaping.

- Soil and Water Conservation Districts-These entities can support or contribute to SGCN conservation by partnering with SFWA on stream protection, wildlife habitat development on private lands, or habitat and species monitoring.

Business/Corporations-Many businesses and corporations are interested in helping to solve environmental and conservation problems. Corporate boards are increasingly focusing on environmental sustainability and a growing number of consumers want the companies that serve them to have a lighter impact on the environment or support environmental causes. Supporting SGCN conservation can benefit a company’s image and brand while also assisting SFWA in need of match funds. Interactions with the business community may require higher-level involvement with governor’s offices.

- [Wildlife Habitat Council](#)-The Wildlife Habitat Council partners with corporations, their employees, and other organizations to recognize and encourage wildlife habitat and education projects on lands owned by some of the nation’s largest corporations. Projects go through a rigorous certification program and often align with SWAP priorities.
- Business Branding-There are nearly endless opportunities to partner with business or corporations on projects that can support conservation work or raise awareness of SGCN while also increasing brand awareness for a business. A SFWA could partner with a manufacturer of outdoor equipment, a food/beverage provider, or other business that could use the likeness of an SGCN or deliver a conservation message and in return provide funding for fish and wildlife conservation work. [Duck Pond Cellars](#) makes a \$5 donation to the Oregon Department of Fish & Wildlife for bottles of wine that depict an SGCN.
- Environmental Markets-Conservation finance is the practice of investing capital to support conservation to serve environmental, social, and economic needs. These markets are valued in the billions of dollars. Conservation activities can include stewardship, protection, and restoration of ecosystems like forests, protection of open space, changes to more sustainable agricultural practices, tradeable water rights, or carbon sequestration.
- Corporate Sustainability Programs-Many businesses and corporations want to leave a lighter footprint on the environment. Often these programs focus on reducing waste, increasing energy and water efficiency, and using more sustainable resources for their products. A growing number of companies also want to help solve the biodiversity crisis. Corporations may be interested in directly funding conservation projects, supporting employees who help with habitat projects, citizen science or participate in education or outreach campaigns.
- Water/Land banking and Open Space Programs-The value of lands and waters that are set aside as compensatory mitigation for development projects could serve as a source of match. Funding for stewardship of these lands could also be leveraged for match. Some states like Maryland fund open space programs using a small tax on real estate transactions and these acquisitions can be used as match when there are benefits to SGCN.

- Direct Contributions by Business-Businesses often support community projects, and some may be willing to support conservation projects that benefit SGCN. Companies that provide building supplies could support wildlife viewing facilities or gates on caves that harbor bats or construction companies could provide heavy machinery operators to restore wetlands or streams. Companies that provide food/beverage services could donate products or provide vouchers to volunteers who assist with fish and wildlife conservation. The value of these products and services could serve as sources of match.
- Renewable Energy Companies-The rapid expansion of wind and solar installations provides partnership opportunities. These companies are often motivated to improve the environment and address climate change but the technologies can have impacts on wildlife. Wind energy companies may be willing to donate the cost of installing deterrents for bats or pre/post construction monitoring as a source of match. Some solar companies are managing their lands to benefit pollinators, which could also be captured as match.
- Round-up for Wildlife-Many retailers allow customers to round-up their purchase to the nearest dollar or give a direct donation at the register. Companies like Bass Pro Shops already do this to support conservation organizations. Specific campaigns that allow customers to voluntarily contribute to SGCN conservation could raise substantial sums of match.
- Partnerships With Sport Teams-Many sports teams use wildlife-themed mascots. These teams may be willing to offer promotions, donate a portion of ticket sales or proceeds from special events or directly donate to SGCN conservation as a marketing opportunity. The Baltimore Orioles have supported Partners in Flight and other teams have supported similar wildlife causes.
- Mitigating Corporate Footprint-Some companies like Walmart provide voluntary cash contributions in part to help mitigate the loss of habitat from the footprint of their stores. The [Acres for America](#), administered by the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation has protected 1.6 million acres of land. The program could be expanded to other companies and raise sizeable amounts of match while also conserving SGCN.
- Nature Prescription-Many pediatricians and other medical practitioners are prescribing time outdoors and in nature to improve mental and physical well-being. There may be opportunities to partner with the medical community on programs to improve access to the outdoors, particularly in underserved areas.

Other Potential Match Sources-American’s donate billions of dollars each year to assist wildlife and environmental conservation. Much of this money goes to support the work of private conservation organizations, many of which focus on SGCN. SFWA already partner with organizations like The Nature Conservancy, National Wildlife Federation, Ducks Unlimited, Pheasants/Quail Forever, Trout Unlimited, and local land trusts but there are ample opportunities to expand this work to other organizations. Non-profit organizations could provide direct contributions to SFWA for projects that benefit SGCN, provide matching funds as part of a cooperative agreement or subgrant award or contribute waived indirect

costs as match. The Utah Department of Natural Resources provides 50% cost share to Trout Unlimited to pay a portion of the salary of biologists who work alongside agency biologists to conserve trout and SGCN.

- Crowdfunding-Some conservation and environmental organizations use crowdfunding to raise money and awareness for their causes. An agency or partner could set up a campaign to raise a specific amount of money needed for match to do a high-profile conservation project for a SGCN.
- Habitat Certification Programs-Organizations like the National Wildlife Federation, Xerces Society, and National Audubon Society offer habitat or wildlife-friendly practices certification programs. These programs raise awareness, provide benefits to wildlife, and serve as a means for people to directly help wildlife. Organizations that lead these programs could raise match through the value of habitat work or volunteer time to develop and monitor the sites.
- Adopt Habitat/Wildlife Programs-There are several programs such as Adopt-A-Stream or the Home Rivers Initiative that engage and encourage the public to take ownership in and action to conserve habitats in their community. These programs often rely on volunteers or permanent positions, which could serve as a source of match.
- Nature Centers & Zoos-Conservation education is much needed and fundable through RAWA. Partnerships with nature centers to provide capacity to reach children and adults to raise awareness and increase engagement on SGCN is an important part of biodiversity conservation. Naturalist, teacher, volunteer time and direct contributions could serve as sources of match. Some zoos also work with SFWA on projects such captive rearing of SGCN, work that could be expanded under RAWA bringing in new sources of match.

POTENTIAL BARRIERS TO ACQUIRING MATCH

There can be significant barriers to using or documenting certain types of potential match. One of the most challenging barriers is administration of match funds. Effectively documenting, tracking, and reporting match requires an understanding of federal rules and regulations and must employ responsible administrative procedures. In some cases, federal guidance can be open to interpretation, unclear, or there can be inconsistencies in match requirements among different federal agencies or administrative units within the same agency.

There can also be philosophical differences within an agency on how or if certain types of match can be used. Some staff within an agency may not support using certain match because of risk of an audit finding or the likelihood of alienating a key constituency. Documenting match sources like volunteer time can be time consuming, putting further strains on already limited staff capacity.

Tracking match for RAWA will require more staff and additional training so rules, expectations and compliance issues are fully understood. Even with new funding, it may be challenging for some agencies to hire new FTEs, which could prove to be a significant barrier to effective RAWA implementation. New online tools that allow match, such as volunteer time, to be efficiently self-reported, documented, archived, and easily transmitted to and integrated into federal grant systems such as Tracking and

Reporting Actions for the Conservation of Species (TRACS) and Grants.gov would improve efficiency and reduce agency workload. Agencies should be given the latitude to think outside the box and experiment with new sources of match.

OTHER RESOURCES

This report builds upon previous work to identify match sources for SGCN conservation. Until this point, the definitive resource on match was the [“Investing in Wildlife: State Wildlife Funding Campaigns”](#) report that was commissioned by AFWA in 2005. This report includes match examples from that publication, newer initiatives, and explores potential new sources of match. Table 1 lists the funding mechanisms that were evaluated.

Table 1: AFWA commissioned the University of Michigan’s School of Natural Resources and Environment to evaluate 15 funding mechanisms. The information was compiled in the “Investing in Wildlife: State Wildlife Funding Campaigns” report.

State	Mechanism Type	Date
Alaska	Non-Consumptive User Fee	n/a
Arizona	Lottery	1990
Arkansas	General Sales Tax	1996
Colorado	Lottery	1992
Georgia	Vehicle License Plate	1996
Georgia	Real Estate Transfer Fee	n/a
Maine	Lottery	1995
Minnesota	Tax Check-off	1980
Missouri	General Sales Tax	1976
Nevada	Natural Resource Extraction Funds	1989
Pennsylvania	Vehicle License Plate	1992
Texas	Outdoor Equipment Sales Tax	1993
Virginia	Outdoor Equipment Sales Tax	1998
Washington	Vehicle License Plate	1974
Wyoming	Natural Resource Extraction Funds	n/a*

* Wyoming’s attempt to pass the Legacy Trust in 2000 failed. A subsequent attempt passed in 2005. It is the failed first attempt that is documented in this report.

STRATEGIES FOR ACQUIRING MATCH

State-specific strategies to secure match vary widely. Some states have launched state-wide campaigns that led to significant funding, such as dedicated sales taxes for conservation in Missouri, Arkansas, and Minnesota. Often funding campaigns are spearheaded by private organizations because state agencies are unable to lead or in many cases even participate in an initiative. Strategies for securing match can take many forms and can include advocating for new funding from a legislature, a ballot initiative, constitutional change, or dedicating or reprogramming existing funds, such as a state lottery. The “Investing in Wildlife: State Wildlife Funding Campaigns” report included the following recommendations for building support to acquire new funds.

- Demonstrate need
- Make explicit connection between funding and expenditures
- Find support in urban centers
- Develop targeted messages, campaign publicity, and promotion plan
- Use motivated agency staff
- Seek active support from governor, businesses, NGOs, and legislators
- Find champions
- Be strategic in choosing funding mechanism
- Target nontraditional constituents
- Collaborate with organizations that will be impacted
- Work to improve public perception of the agency
- Actively counter any misrepresentations
- Fundraise; reach out to organizations that can contribute resources, particularly if state agency staff are prohibited from legislative activities

RECOMMENDATIONS

Following are several recommendations that would help improve RAWA readiness and overcome challenges to acquiring and using match.

1. Periodically conduct a comprehensive match survey

This report includes the results from a preliminary survey of state wildlife diversity program managers to document sources of match. We recommend that AFWA staff conduct a more comprehensive match survey of the States every 3-6 years to identify new sources of match, innovations in tracking/documenting match, and challenges to administering match. Results from the survey would be used to update the match database (Recommendation 2) and be shared with the Joint Task Force on Federal Assistance so any challenges to match administration can be addressed.

2. Create a searchable online database on match

This report includes a table of current and potential new sources of match that could be used for RAWA. We recommend that this information be put into an online database administered by AFWA. The database should be searchable, regularly updated, and include hyperlinks to key resources and supplemental information.

3. Make administration of match more consistent

What qualifies as match can vary by federal program or by administrative unit. For example, umbrella grants are acceptable for certain types of grants or within some regions but not others. In addition, TRACS and Grant Solutions can make it challenging to record or document match. We recommend that the Joint Task Force on Federal Assistance work with the states and staff from the FWS WSFR Program to identify concerns and seek to resolve them by issuing guidance, training, and/or best practices.

4. Investigate development of a tool to document, track, and report match

Documenting, tracking, and reporting sources of match can be barriers to leveraging some types of match, such as volunteer time. We recommend that AFWA, the Joint Task Force on Federal Assistance, and the FWS investigate options for developing a universal online match tracking and reporting system that can be integrated into the WSFR reporting system. Ideally the tool would allow individual users such as volunteers to enter information into the system independently through a user-friendly, verifiable, and paperless process that could be easily approved by states and incorporated into TRACS and/or Grant Solutions.

5. Explore regional and national match opportunities

There is a need for national or regional pools of matching funds that can be tapped into by those states facing challenges securing required match and/or to support multi-state projects. We recommend that AFWA explore a potential partnership with the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation or other entity to further explore a partnership to manage and administer match funds. Funds could be raised from private foundations, business/retailers, NGOs, or others and disbursed to the states as block or competitive grants.

6. Provide capacity, training and improve guidance on the administration of match

Turnover and loss of institutional knowledge through retirements, difficulties in hiring staff, and expanding workloads are straining some state Federal Aid programs. Passage of RAWA would be a further stress. In addition, as outlined in the 2017 Memorandum of Understanding signed by the FWS Director and AFWA President, there is a continued affirmation and commitment to work cooperatively and continue to communicate on items of common interest. Considering the future of new dedicated funding from the passage of RAWA, there is a need to find flexible yet consistent ways of ensuring programmatic success, particularly with third-party match. Guidance and training by WSFR have greatly improved during the last 5 years. However, there is a need for innovative approaches regarding in-kind match. Additional guidance from WSFR is needed on tracking/reporting/allocating match for landscape scale or multi-state projects. Incentives for multi-jurisdictional work, like the 90:10 match provided under the federal ESA Section 6 program, should be more broadly applied if possible. WSFR guidance related to umbrella (bundled) grants is needed to determine if match would need to be at the subaccount level or the grant level. If proposed in a comprehensive manner (as outlined in the accountability language), a grant could have multiple purposes (and obligations from subaccounts). It could last up to three years to follow the Wildlife Conservation Strategy Plan (SWAP) and reporting for each of the project statements, which may be difficult to do in Wildlife TRACS at this time. Many states may not have the financial system to track this type of grant approach. We recommend that the Joint Task Force on Federal Assistance work with FWS staff on workforce planning, training, communication,

and development of best practices (if needed) to help ensure these programs are positioned so they can successfully and efficiently implement RAWA.

CONCLUSION

During the last year and a half, millions of Americans discovered or renewed their connection to the outdoors and nature, finding a prescription for the physical and mental toll caused by the pandemic. At about the same time, we learned that during the last half century we've lost 3 billion birds, one of the most accessible wild animals people observe and appreciate. Extreme heat, drought, historic forest fires, and resulting air quality challenges remind us of our changing environment and the impacts on wildlife, human property, and livelihoods, and quality of life. There is an urgency to solve this problem like none we've seen before.

When AFWA's Blue Ribbon Panel on Sustaining America's Diverse Fish and Wildlife Resources made its two recommendations, it set in motion a legislative strategy to secure \$1.3 billion to implement SWAPs and prompted the creation of a Relevancy Roadmap to guide more effective engagement with broader constituencies. Successful implementation of both recommendations requires that we bring new partners to the table and with that come new opportunities for match.

Rarely has there been a stronger convergence between an environmental need and a solution. RAWA proposes to invest over \$1 billion in SFWA to SWAP to help stem the decline of biodiversity. With this funding comes a requirement for 25% matching funds, which will pose a significant challenge for many state fish and wildlife agencies. However, with this challenge comes enormous opportunities to bring new partners to the table to help agencies conserve fish and wildlife, expand conservation education, improve access to the outdoors.

This report identifies dozens of sources of match that state fish and wildlife agencies currently use to do conservation work and meet federal match requirements. Many of these will be important sources of match for RAWA. The magnitude of the funding increase through RAWA will mean that most states will likely quickly exhaust current forms of match and will have to look for new ones. The report details many new potential sources of match through a variety of partners including federal agencies, state and local government, business, and even private citizens. It's understood that we have only begun to scratch the surface of potential match sources. A new database recommended in this report would allow states to continually add to the list of existing and new sources of match.

SFWA and the FWS must continue working together to identify potential problems related to the administration of match to allow them to be as RAWA-ready as possible. Exploring new opportunities to more efficiently track and report in-kind match, such as volunteer time, will allow states to tap into a large potential reservoir of match. AFWA leadership is needed to work with private foundations and the business sector to determine if a national match reserve can be established to help states with unique challenges in raising new matching funds.

Much is at stake if we don't get this right. Many have been working for decades to secure new dedicated funding for fish and wildlife diversity conservation. The magnitude of funding provided through RAWA will come with high expectations that states will be able to provide matching funds. This new funding will be transformative and will help shift the work of conservation from the emergency room to a

preventive and proactive approach leading to stabilized populations for many SGCN, while also providing resources to help ensure common species remain common.

Being creative, engaging current and new partners, and looking at the issue of match as both a challenge and opportunity will help us prepare for the moment when sustained and dedicated funding becomes a reality. State fish and wildlife agencies have faced many challenges before in their long histories, and this, like challenges before, will be overcome through collaboration, hard work, and innovation. State fish and wildlife agencies have long proven they can find solutions to even the most difficult challenges.

REFERENCES

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APPENDICES

APPENDIX I: Table showing estimated apportionments to states, territories and the District of Columbia under the Recovering America’s Wildlife Act (HR3742) and estimated 25% match that each jurisdiction would require to provide as match.

State	Apportionment (Estimated)	Required Match (Estimated)
Alabama	\$27,788,095	\$9,262,698
Alaska	\$31,893,449	\$10,631,150
American Samoa	\$3,725,338	\$1,241,779
Arizona	\$31,408,276	\$10,469,425
Arkansas	\$15,109,613	\$5,036,538
California	\$59,177,899	\$19,725,966
Colorado	\$25,986,021	\$8,662,007
Connecticut	\$11,835,580	\$3,945,193
Delaware	\$11,288,902	\$3,762,967
Dist. of Columbia	\$5,644,802	\$1,881,601
Florida	\$38,670,142	\$12,890,047
Georgia	\$27,428,444	\$9,142,815
Guam	\$6,489,591	\$2,163,197
Hawaii	\$59,177,899	\$19,725,966
Idaho	\$17,659,140	\$5,886,380
Illinois	\$24,553,666	\$8,184,555
Indiana	\$14,545,263	\$4,848,421
Iowa	\$13,473,805	\$4,491,268
Kansas	\$17,668,562	\$5,889,521
Kentucky	\$15,415,770	\$5,138,590
Louisiana	\$15,586,431	\$5,195,477
Maine	\$11,288,902	\$3,762,967
Maryland	\$13,365,136	\$4,455,045
Massachusetts	\$14,309,548	\$4,769,849
Michigan	\$27,003,416	\$9,001,139
Minnesota	\$20,641,204	\$6,880,401
Mississippi	\$15,636,875	\$5,212,292
Missouri	\$21,682,107	\$7,227,369
Montana	\$27,744,488	\$9,248,163
N. Mariana Islands	\$6,083,754	\$2,027,918
Nebraska	\$17,266,635	\$5,755,545
Nevada	\$24,876,231	\$8,292,077
New Hampshire	\$11,288,902	\$3,762,967
New Jersey	\$15,594,799	\$5,198,266

New Mexico	\$28,094,230	\$9,364,743
New York	\$25,341,562	\$8,447,187
North Carolina	\$24,185,858	\$8,061,953
North Dakota	\$14,786,686	\$4,928,895
Ohio	\$20,675,230	\$6,891,743
Oklahoma	\$16,755,135	\$5,585,045
Oregon	\$24,896,543	\$8,298,848
Pennsylvania	\$20,767,476	\$6,922,492
Puerto Rico	\$17,389,443	\$5,796,481
Rhode Island	\$11,288,902	\$3,762,967
South Carolina	\$14,357,890	\$4,785,963
South Dakota	\$16,644,724	\$5,548,241
Tennessee	\$25,603,841	\$8,534,614
Texas	\$55,954,350	\$18,651,450
Utah	\$21,051,722	\$7,017,241
Vermont	\$11,835,580	\$3,945,193
Virgin Island	\$3,961,334	\$1,320,445
Virginia	\$22,107,415	\$7,369,138
Washington	\$20,755,278	\$6,918,426
West Virginia	\$12,436,970	\$4,145,657
Wisconsin	\$18,151,371	\$6,050,457
Wyoming	\$20,004,774	\$6,668,258
Total	\$1,148,355,000	\$382,785,000

APPENDIX II: Existing sources of match identified from multiple reports on match, a workshop held in July 2021, and a brief survey of state wildlife diversity program Managers in August 2021 in which responses were received from 39 states.

Match Title	States	Cash	In-Kind	Both	Notes and Links to Additional Resources
Donations	AZ, CT, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, MD, ME, MI, MT, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, OK, PA, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WY	X			Donations can be both cash and in-kind (e.g., value of land and buildings)
Volunteer Time	AK, AR, AZ, CA, CT, DE, FL, GA, IA, ID, HI, IL, IN, KS, LA, MD, ME, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, PA, PR, RI, SC, SD, TN, UT, VA, VT, WA, TX		X		Valuation of volunteer is determined by the agency and in accordance with federal policy. MT has used volunteer time as match in the past but does not currently due to the challenges of tracking and reporting.
Agency Staff Time	AR, CA, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, IA, ID, IL, KS, MO, MS, NC, NM, NV, OH, OK, PA, PR, SD, SC, TN, TX, WA, WY	X	X		If the agency is the recipient of the funds, the match is the same as “cash or a direct match.
University Indirect Costs	AK, AR, CA, CT, DE, GA, IA, IN, KS, LA, MI, MS, MT, NC, NH, NM, OH, OK, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VT, WA		X		In TX, match is used for research projects. If university is a subrecipient and they have voluntarily committed the full or a reduced amount of their NICRA, then the unrealized portion is in-kind match. However, according to 2 CFR 200.306, voluntary committed match is not expected and is not used in evaluating the merit of a project unless There is a pre-award requirement

					(2 CFR 200.30) for the use of this as match. If the NIRCA is not waived or reduced, this portion of indirect costs are considered to be the same as a cash match.
License Fees	CO, GA, HI, IA, KS, MD, ME, MI, MT, NC, NM, NC, NV, OH, PA, RI, SC, SD, TN, VA, WA, WY	X			If these are Hunting and Fishing license fees, then the provision related to “no revision” of Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration is applicable.
General Fund	AK, AR, CA, CT, DE, FL, GA, HI, NC, NH, NV, OH, PR, RI, SD, TX, UT, VT, WA, WY	X			
Conservation or Specialty Vehicle License Plate	CA, FL, GA, IA, ID, ME, MI, NC, NH, NM, NV, OH, OK, PA, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WV	X			
Federal Assistance (grants and agreements)	DE, FL, GA, KS, MD, ME, NC, OH, RI, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WY	X			
Income Tax Check-Off	AZ, CA, CT, DE, GA, IA, ID, IL, IN, KS, MD, ME, MT, NC, NM, OH, OK, SC, VA	X			
Non-Federal Assistance (grants and agreements)	FL, KS, ME, MT, NC, NH, NV, PA, RI, SC, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA, WY	X			

Private Landowner Match	AR, FL, GA, HI, IA, KS, ME, MT, NC, NV, RI, SC, SD, TN, TX, UT, VA, VT, WA			X	In RI, in-kind match on land value; NV uses similar model as Natural Resource Conservation Service. GA uses this frequently for land acquisition projects (bargain sales and donated easements).
Industry or Agency Partners (energy producers, mining, transportation, etc.)	AK, AR, DE, GA, IA, KS, LA, MT, NC, NV, OH, PA, SD, SC, TX, WA	X		X	Environmental review funded by DE DOT; LA receives funding from environmental review fees; SD has received wind energy company cash match for research
Fines and Restitution for Natural Resources Damage	CT, DE, FL, IL, IN, KS, ME, MT, NM, NV, PA, SC, VT	X			Projects must be related to the NRDA source (e.g.; oil spill in river affecting certain mussels and aquatic species). MT Natural Resource Damage Program for damage from mining operations.
Trust Funds	FL, GA, IA, ID, LA, NC, OH, OK, SC	X			
Land Donations and Associated Fees	GA, HI, ME, MT, NC, OH, SC, TN, VA, VT		X		Donated value has been used in MT as match for conservation easements.
Habitat Stamps	IL, NV, OH, SC, VT	X			
Real Estate Transfer Tax	FL, IL, MD, SC, TN	X			SC uses deed stamps
Natural Resource Extraction Funds/ Royalties (Severance Tax)	LA, MI, NV, PA, SC, UT	X			UT receives funding from a water tax; MI receives funding from timber harvesting; NV receives funds from mining and energy development; Extraction and oil/mineral royalties are not program income; however timber harvest and other revenue that an agency may receive could be program income which currently is allowed for the cost-sharing method if proposed. Pre-approval is part of the process; SC has a timber revenue pot we use as match.
Fundraising Events or Campaigns	FL, GA, NH, SC	X			

Registration Fees (watercraft, ATVs, recreational vehicles, etc.)	CT, FL, ME, NV, TN	X			CT receives funding through a standard motor vehicle registration surcharge (Passport to the Parks); NV uses boating registration fees.
Public Use Fees	FL, GA, PA, NV	X			CV uses pasture fees
Non-Consumptive Contributions/User Fees (Alaska Wildlife Viewing Pass, etc.)	AK, GA, ME, VA	X			ME Birder Band Program
Lottery Revenue	AZ, ME, CO	X			
Mitigation Revenue	ME, SC, TN				ME wetland in lieu fee fund;
General Sales Tax – New	AR	X			
General Sales Tax – Redirect Existing	MO, VA	X			
General Obligation Bonds	GA, ME, NV	X			GA uses state bonds as match for land acquisition and capital outlay projects
Membership Level Funding	VA	X			
Tribal-State Compact- Gambling Revenue	AZ	X			

APPENDIX III: New potential sources of match identified during a workshop held in July 2021 for State Wildlife Diversity Program Managers.

Match Title	States	Cash	In-Kind	Both	Notes and Links to Additional Resources
Department of Defense-Integrated Natural Resource Management Plans				X	Some SFWA already partner with the Department of Defense on NRMPs but likely don't capture it as match.
Department of Defense-Sentinel Landscape Partnership				X	Some SFWA already partner with the Department of Defense on Sentinel Landscapes but likely don't capture it as match.
Department of Defense-Legacy Resource Management Plan				X	
Department of Defense-Army Corps of Engineers				X	Many SFWA have working relationships with the ACOE
Environmental Protection Agency-Office of Research & Development				X	
Environmental Protection Agency-Office of Water				X	
Department of Commerce-National Marine Fisheries Service				X	Some SFWA have working relationships with NMFS
Department of Commerce-National Ocean Service				X	

Federal Highway Administration (and State Departments of Transportation)-Office of Planning, Environment, & Realty				X	Many SFWA work with state DOT
Department of Energy-National Renewable Energy Laboratory				X	
Federal Emergency Management Administration-Grant Programs Directorate				X	
National Aeronautics and Space Administration-Science Directorate				X	
State Department of Environmental Quality				X	
State Department of Agriculture				X	
State Department of Health				X	
State Parks Department				X	
State Office of Outdoor Recreation/Department or Office of Tourism				X	
Department of Corrections				X	
County and City Government				X	
Soil and Water Conservation Districts				X	
Wildlife Habitat Council				X	
Business Branding				X	

Environmental Markets				X	
Corporate Sustainability Programs				X	
Water/Land banking and Open Space Programs				X	
Direct Contributions by Business				X	
Renewable Energy Companies				X	
Round-up for Wildlife				X	
Partnerships With Sport Teams				X	
Mitigating Corporate Footprint				X	
Nature Prescription				X	
Crowdfunding				X	
Habitat Certification Programs				X	
Adopt Habitat/Wildlife Programs				X	
Nature Centers & Zoos				x	Some SFWA work with zoos on cross-fostering programs for SGCN