

Approved Small Grants Fiscal Year 2007

Connecticut

Title: *Aton Forest Preservation Project*

State(s): *Connecticut BCR: Atlantic Northern Forest (14)*

Agency or Organization: *Aton Forest, Inc*

Grant Request: *\$75,000 Non-Federal Partner Contributions: \$1,224,900*

Acres: *1,166(P)*

Aton Forest Inc., a nonprofit ecosystem research organization, proposes to permanently protect their existing 1,097 acre core property with a permanent easement and acquire in fee one inholding and an adjacent property. Project partners have provided very generous match at >16:1. One acquisition (60.5 acres) has a stream running through it, and slopes draining directly into an Aton Forest bog which provides habitat for waterfowl, Canada Warbler, and several rare plants. The adjacent property (8.5 acres) buffers wetlands but has 600' of road-frontage which could support house lots, and the parcel connects the Aton Forest with a large, adjacent, undeveloped property owned by another matching partner in the proposal. The Aton Forest is in a rural, largely-undeveloped landscape in Northwestern Connecticut, which has excellent natural resource values; however, its proximity to New York City and other urban areas equates to high long-term threats from first and second home development. The 1,166 acre area contains >183 acres of wetlands including diverse habitats such as a large active beaver pond, two swamps, small bogs, wet fields, many vernal pools, and four shaded streams. Wetland habitats are buffered by surrounding uplands, 37% of which are within 100' (and 70% are within 100 yards) of typed-wetlands. The Aton Forest allows and promotes considerable public access for research, environmental education, outdoor recreation, and hunting.

Maine

Title: *Big Hill and Second Pond Forest Reserve*

State(s): *Maine BCR: Atlantic Northern Forest (14)*

Agency or Organization: *New England Forestry Foundation*

Grant Request: *\$75,000 Non-Federal Partner Contributions: \$75,000*

Acres: *1,609 (E)*

Big Hill and Second Pond is a 1,609-acre property in a largely undeveloped landscape in close proximity to the Bangor, the Maine coast and Acadia National Park. The area contains 167 acres of wetlands, buffered by 1,441 acres of uplands. The project area provides breeding habitat for American Black Duck, Wood Duck, and merganser species, and migratory habitat for many other waterfowl species including scaup. The area also provides nesting and foraging habitat for Common Loon, Bald Eagle, American Bittern, American Woodcock, Pied-billed Grebe, Osprey, Yellow Rail, and some shorebirds of regional concern. The project will have important benefits for BCR 14 priority landbirds, including wetland-associated species such as Canada Warbler and Olive-sided Flycatcher. The project area is notable as a highly-ranked scenic viewshed and for its important protection of the water supply for one of Maine's largest cities. The project also contributes important linkages to thousands of acres of protected public and private land within the same landscape.

Title: *Caribou Bog/Katahdin Iron Works*

State(s): *Maine BCR: Atlantic Northern Forest (14)*

Agency or Organization: *Appalachian Mountain Club*

Grant Request: *\$75,000 Non-Federal Partner Contributions: \$323,000*

Acres: *3,070 (P)*

The Caribou Bog/Katahdin Iron Works project would protect over three thousand acres of high-quality wetlands and buffer within a 37,000-acre conservation and sustainable forestry area in central mountains of Maine. The Appalachian Mountain Club designed the NAWCA project boundary to capture the largest contiguous wetland complex and wetland buffer within this larger area at a very low cost to the NAWCA program and a low cost per acre. Although the land is already held by the Appalachian Mountain Club, the NAWCA funds guarantee that AMC is able to hold onto the parcel for conservation and allows the

Maine Bureau of Parks and lands hold a conservation easement and oversee and monitor the management of these lands. The project contains a significant diversity of high quality peatlands, extensive mixed shrub and graminoid marshes, lakes, ponds, and swamps. This wetland complex is extremely important to a diversity of priority landbird species identified in Partners in Flight (such as Olive-sided Flycatcher and Rusty Blackbird) waterfowl identified in NAWMP, particularly breeding American Black Duck and a number of Highest Priority BCR 14 species including American Woodcock, Canada Warbler, Wood Thrush and Bay-breasted Warbler.

Title: *Northern Corea Heath Acquisition*

State(s): *Maine* **BCR:** *Atlantic Northern Forest (14)*

Agency or Organization: *Frenchman Bay Conservancy*

Grant Request: *\$50,000* **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** *\$84,781*

Acres: *450 (E)*

This fee acquisition is immediately adjacent to the 431-acre Corea Heath Unit of the Maine Coastal Islands National Wildlife Refuge, and drains directly into the 135-acre Grand Marsh, identified by the USFWS and Maine Dept. of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife as high value habitat for shorebirds, coastal waterfowl, and wading birds. This project would ensure protection for the largest contiguous block of habitat (>1,000 ac) within a designated Focus Area of the Maine Natural Areas Program. The proposal property is dominated by a 171-acre wetland complex of bogs, fens, swamp, and shrub wetlands, it is bisected and bordered by Roaring Brook (which feeds Grand Marsh) and buffered by 435 acres of forest and early-successional habitats. Due to its location on the coast and proximity to Acadia National Park, the area is under increased development threat, and a subdivision has been approved on the subject property, if it is not protected. When acquired, public access to the site will be allowed, including hunting, and the property would be managed cooperatively with the USFWS and the State of Maine to enhance habitats for declining wildlife, including early-successional habitats. The project is within a BCR 14 Focus Area and an ACJV Waterfowl Focus Area, an area important to a diversity of waterfowl, shorebirds, wading birds, marine birds, and migrating landbirds.

Title: *Northeast Penjajowoc Property Acquisition*

State(s): *Maine* **BCR:** *Atlantic Northern Forest (14)*

Agency or Organization: *Bangor Land Trust*

Grant Request: *\$75,000* **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** *\$142,417*

Acres: *83(P)*

This project would protect two adjacent parcels that are part of and would help buffer one of Maine's most productive interior, emergent marsh complexes, the "Bangor Bog" or Penjajawoc Marsh. At the southern tip of an 18,000 acre corridor of undeveloped wetlands and uplands, and immediately adjacent to Maine's third largest city (Bangor) and one of its major river systems (the Penobscot), Penjajawoc Marsh has outstanding wetland habitat values. It provides breeding habitat for American Black Duck, Mallard, Wood Duck, Ring-necked Duck, Hooded Merganser, and Blue-winged Teal, and stopover habitat for thousands of ducks and geese every year during migration. It is also famous as a breeding site for an incredible diversity of waterbirds, and some species of concern found in few other places in Maine, including Common Moorhen, Least Bittern, American Bittern, Pied-billed Grebe, Black Tern, Northern Harrier, Marsh Wren, and Sedge Wren. The project property's 18 acres of wetlands include a significant tributary marsh that is close to and directly connected (by a stream) to the main Penjajawoc Marsh complex, as well as vernal pools, the shoreline of a small pond used frequently by American Black Ducks, and portions of flooded forest and scrub shrub wetlands. Of the buffering uplands (65 ac) more than 60% is within 200' of typed wetlands; frequent beaver activity in this area often floods significant portions of the 'upland' acreage, often improving habitat values for priority birds such as waterfowl, American Woodcock, and Canada Warbler. Development threats are significant in this area, which is within a few hundred meters of some proposed "big-box" stores. These parcels would also allow public access to Penjajawoc Marsh for the first time; private landowners previously were prohibited all access to the marsh.

Massachusetts

Title: *Upper Great Marsh Tidal Marsh Restoration*

State(s): Massachusetts **BCR:** New England - Mid Atlantic (30)

Agency or Organization: Ducks Unlimited

Grant Request: \$45,000 **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** \$45,200

Acres: 150(E)

Parker River NWR is a globally-important bird habitat; it's 4,662 acres are the core of the 17,000 acre Great Marsh in north-coastal Massachusetts, the largest salt-marsh in New England. This area is a Western Hemisphere Shorebird Reserve Network-designated site, an Area of Critical Concern by the Commonwealth of Massachusetts, and an ACJV Waterfowl Focus Area. The project area provides exceptional breeding habitat for highest-priority saltmarsh birds, and breeding, stopover, and wintering habitat for large numbers (and a great diversity) of waterfowl, waterbirds, and shorebirds. The project will proactively enhance 150 acres of estuarine intertidal emergent wetland by eradicating a series of small but growing stands of *Phragmites*, and thus protecting the integrity of the larger 17,000 acre ecosystem. Currently, invasive plants are a significant, but still manageable threat to this critical habitat.

New Hampshire

Title: *Robb Reservoir Conservation Project*

State(s): New Hampshire **BCR:** Atlantic Northern Forest (14)

Agency or Organization: Meade Cadot, Harris Center for Conservation Education

Grant Request: \$75,000 **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** \$450,000

Acres: 1,667 (P) (196) (R)

The Willard Pond/Robb Reservoir project in southwestern New Hampshire would protect a critical wetland complex as part of a network of 40,000 acres of protected lands and restore an emergent wetland through construction of a water control structure. The project would protect a mosaic of wetlands along the Contocook River including emergent marsh, floating bogs, forested wetlands and open water. There are a number of matching partners all making significant contributions to the project. An important component is the increased public access and use of the area and the ability to restore and manage the wetlands for wildlife. The site is important for a diversity of priority BCR 14 birds and for both breeding and during migration.

North Carolina

Title: *Invasive Species Eradication and Habitat Revitalization Project: Orton Plantation*

State(s): North Carolina **BCR:** Southeast Coastal Plain (27)

Agency or Organization: Orton Plantation

Grant Request: \$25,000 **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** \$65,585

Acres: 188(E)

This project proposes to eradicate invasive *Phragmites* and restore native vegetation through planting and natural revegetation on 188 acres of tidal brackish managed wetlands in the Lower Cape Fear River Basin and Focus Area of the ACJV and SAMBI. This area is important to waterfowl, wading birds, and wetland songbirds, and will result in the restoration of native vegetation and plant foods for these birds. These old ricefields are extremely important in the management of waterfowl, shorebirds, and waterbirds in the southeast, this private property being one of the few remaining large tracts in southeastern North Carolina actively managing for public use of wildlife.

South Carolina

Title: *Santee NWR Cuddo Unit Project*

State(s): South Carolina **BCR:** Southeastern Coastal Plain (27)

Agency or Organization: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Santee NWR

Grant Request: \$4,500 **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** \$4,500

Acres: 900 (E)

The Santee NWR was established and is critically important for wintering waterfowl, specifically the Southern James Bay Canada Goose. Currently, water level management, critical to these wintering waterfowl populations, is compromised by a faulty pumping system. This proposal, in partnership with

Ducks Unlimited, Inc., will result in purchasing and installing an engine to properly manage the vast interconnected system of impoundments on the refuge. This proposal is critical to achieving goals of the Joint Venture and SAMBI, and is located in the Santee Cooper Lakes Focus Area of the ACJV.

Title: *Sucker Brook Project*

State(s): *Maine* **BCR:** *Atlantic Northern Forest (14)*

Agency or Organization: *Greater Lovell Land Trust*

Grant Request: *\$75,000* **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** *\$494,800*

Acres: *227 (P)*

This fee acquisition would protect 22.3 acres of significant wetlands, >200 acres of buffering uplands (targeted for development), and nearly a mile of shore frontage along the Sucker Brook wetland complex in southern Maine, which provides high value habitat for many waterfowl and waterbird species in particular, and is used for breeding and migration by American Black Duck, Wood Duck, Common Loon, Pied-billed Grebe, Mallard, and Hooded Merganser. The area also provides breeding habitat to many BCR 14 priority landbirds, including Olive-sided Flycatcher, Northern Harrier, Canada Warbler, and Wood Thrush. It is one of only six sites in Maine that State-Endangered box turtles (and other reptiles of Special Concern) are known to occupy. This property would be a key acquisition for a planned corridor of protected lands linking the White Mountain National Forest and the Saco River, which already has many public and private conservation lands and is a state wildlife focus area. The surrounding landscape is largely intact but has very high development threats, including the approved subdivision on the subject property.

Projects Pending Approval from the MBCC

Maryland

Title: *Restoration of Riparian Wetland Corridors along Streams in the Allegheny Mountain/Northern Ridge and Valley*

State(s): *Maryland, Virginia, West Virginia* **BCR:** *Appalachian Mountains (28)*

Agency or Organization: *U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Appalachian Partnerships Office*

Grant Request: *\$75,000* **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** *\$130,589*

Acres: *1(E), 434(R)*

This project would pull together eight matching partners, all new to NAWCA and generous match to restore riparian wetland corridors in the Allegheny Mountains and Northern Ridge and Valley portions of the Appalachians Mountain Bird Conservation Region. This project is the first NAWCA project to address the wetland and wetland-associated bird priorities in this BCR and if successful will be a catalyst for a great deal more future riparian work in this area. The project will provide benefits to species such as Louisiana Waterthrush and in some of the bigger wetland complexes such as Canaan Valley (an ACJV focus area) to American Black Duck and Wood Duck.

Massachusetts

Title: *Buzzards Bay Wetlands Project*

State(s): *Massachusetts* **BCR:** *New England - Mid Atlantic (30)*

Agency or Organization: *Coalition for Buzzards Bay*

Grant Request: *\$35,000* **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** *\$35,000*

Acres: *10(P)*

This project would build upon the nine standard grant projects already funded in the Buzzards Bay Watershed from the NAWCA portion of the Bouchard Oil Spill settlement.

Title: *Wetland Habitat Restoration at Woodbridge Island*

State(s): *Massachusetts* **BCR:** *New England - Mid Atlantic (30)*

Agency or Organization: *Ducks Unlimited*

Grant Request: *\$58,740* **Non-Federal Partner Contributions:** *\$63,500*

Acres: *20 (E), 3(R)*

This project would enhance and restore a salt marsh island in the North Shore Marshes focus area, one of the most important areas for shorebirds in the U.S. Atlantic Coast (WHSRN site) and important nesting and foraging area for waterbirds and endangered species (Piping Plover and Roseate Tern). The project would not only enhance the marsh through control of Phragmites but also restore the pan and pool habitat that is critical for waterfowl, shorebirds and wading birds. This project would have a direct benefit to the Common Tern, a priority species in this area that uses the island as a nesting colony.

New Hampshire

Title: Wapack Wilderness Conservation Campaign

State(s): New Hampshire BCR: Atlantic Northern Forest (14)

Agency or Organization: Northeast Wilderness Trust

Grant Request: \$75,000 Non-Federal Partner Contributions: \$1,010,000

Acres: 1,400(P)

This project represents an exceptional opportunity to protect a large, intact block of habitat in southern New Hampshire—including fifteen different natural community types—within a landscape of matrix forests, hills, lakes, ponds, mountains, and many small wetlands which already contains several large contiguous blocks of protected land (e.g., one 4,500 acre block if this project is funded). The property's 147 acres of wetlands include an array of marshes, fens, and swamps that provide breeding habitat for American Black Duck and Wood Duck, stopover habitat for a variety of waterfowl, and many habitats not typed as wetlands that support wetland-associated priority birds in BCR 14 (e.g., Canada Warbler, Olive-sided Flycatcher, Rusty Blackbird). This project's upland acreage also buffers many other small and large wetlands that are immediately adjacent to the property boundary. The project area also includes the headwaters of the Millers River, an important tributary of the Connecticut River. Development pressures in this part of the northeast are high and growing faster than most places, so there are fewer opportunities to protect large, continuous habitat blocks in landscapes that are largely unspoiled.

South Carolina

Title: Bear Island Club, Inc. Wetlands Restoration

State(s): South Carolina BCR: Southeast Coastal Plain (27)

Agency or Organization: Bear Island Club, Inc.

Grant Request: \$50,000 Non-Federal Partner Contributions: \$218,434

Acres: 500(E)

This project occurs in the heart of the ACE Basin adjacent to the Bear Island Wildlife Management Area and the ACE Basin National Wildlife Refuge. Enhancement of this privately-owned site will enhance the overall value of the adjacent public lands for wildlife. This project proposes to construct a new cross dike in an existing impoundment, install a new "Edisto" era rice trunk (water control structure), and retop a portion of an existing dike. This area is managed for waterfowl, migrating shorebirds, and waterbirds, and is extremely important to the complex of freshwater managed wetlands in the ACE Basin. The South Atlantic Migratory Bird Initiative (SAMBI) identifies these activities in these habitats as a priority in achieving the goals of bird conservation in this focus area and this region.