



Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP)

FACT SHEET

About the Program

- The Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program (WHIP) focuses on creating habitat uplift or net conservation gain for species of conservation need through wildlife or aquatic habitat restoration, rehabilitation, improvement or management projects
- Up to \$2M of state Habitat Legacy Account funds are available annually.
- Grant applications undergo competitive review, rank, and approval processes through an Advisory Council and FWP.
 - Grants can be up to 5 years in duration.
 - Grant application periods will be announced annually.

Project Requirements

❖ **Projects must address one or more of the following:**

- Improve, conserve, protect, or maintain terrestrial or aquatic habitats.
- Water enhancement projects to benefit aquatic habitat and allow for other watershed enhancements that benefit fish, wildlife, and water conservation.
- Improve, maintain, or restore range conditions and increase drought resilience.
- Address and mitigate detrimental impacts to wildlife habitat and the environment and improve the condition of the land due to noxious weeds, soil disturbance, or loss of diverse habitat communities.
- Mitigate conflicts and reduce the potential for disease transmission between wildlife and domestic livestock.
- Support activities and employees of the state tribal wildlife programs or create habitat uplift and net conservation gain for species of conservation need.

Minimum Criteria to Qualify

- The project area includes ecologically important wildlife habitat that needs improvement, enhancement, or restoration.
- The project would have a reasonable probability of habitat improvement or providing conservation gain to species of conservation need.
- If applicable, the proposal provides a detailed description of activities and a funding plan for any employees of state tribal wildlife programs that grant dollars will fund.
- If applicable, the proposal provides a detailed description and strategic plan for how grant funds will be used to mitigate conflicts and reduce potential disease transmission for wildlife and domestic livestock.
- The department may determine if the individual, organization, or agency can administer a grant or contract in the amount requested.
- Projects that allow **public access, include multiple project partners, and contain additional funding from partners or landowners** will receive higher scores in the ranking process.

WHIP Project Sponsors

- Project sponsors may include state, tribal, and federal agencies, as well as conservation districts, irrigation districts, grazing associations, weed control districts, other entities the department considers appropriate for wildlife habitat improvement projects, and nonprofit organizations exempt from taxation under section 26 U.S.C. 501(c)(3), may apply for project funding.

The WHIP program is defined in the Kelly Flynn Montana Wildlife Habitat Improvement Program and Legacy Act ([MCA 87-5-800](#)) and FWP administrative rules ([ARM 12.9.16](#)).

For more information and to apply for a WHIP grant, visit:

<https://fwp.mt.gov/aboutfwp/grant-programs/wildlife-habitat-improvement>

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