



## FY 2024 Annual Operating Plan in the U.S.

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# Introduction

The Pacific Birds FY24 Annual Operating Plan in the U.S. defines the priorities, high-level activities, and spending plan for the Joint Venture’s 2024 fiscal year which runs from October 1, 2023 – September 30, 2024 (hereafter FY24). This plan is for the U.S. Steering Committee (USSC) of Pacific Birds. It is focused on achieving our mission as an inclusive, collaborative, partnership centered around the delivery of bird habitat conservation by advancing the priorities identified and approved by the US Steering Committee and International Management Board.

## Mission

Creating the Ideal Environment for Bird Habitat Conservation


## Vision

By working together in the Pacific Region, we ensure wild birds thrive in abundant and diverse habitats that are safeguarded for future generations. (updated in 2023)

## Service Pillars

Pacific Birds catalyzes conservation and advances towards the collective partnership vision through service pillars, defined below. Across all the services that Pacific Birds provides, the Joint Venture supports nature-based climate-resilient solutions, Indigenous and locally-led efforts, bipartisan solutions for working lands conservation, and diversity, equity, and inclusion.

# Pacific Birds Pillars - How we work

 Promote Collaboration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Identify and collaborate to advance the priorities and meet the goals identified by the Pacific Birds Partnership.</li><li>● Foster and sustain diverse partnerships.</li></ul>
 Advance Knowledge & Planning	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Initiate and facilitate partner-driven conservation planning.</li><li>● Support transfer of knowledge and applied science to practitioners</li><li>● Connect local planning to regional, national, and international objectives and strategies.</li></ul>
 Build Capacity	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Grow capacity for partnerships to advance bird habitat conservation.</li><li>● Increase partner capacity to find, secure, and leverage funding.</li></ul>
 Inform & Inspire	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Inspire action for birds</li><li>● Provide partners with opportunities, tools, and resources.</li><li>● Communicate collective conservation impact.</li></ul>
 Accelerate & Deliver Conservation	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>● Protect, restore, and enhance habitats to support birds and people.</li><li>● Mainstream conservation actions and activities that benefit birds, habitats, and people.</li><li>● Advance funding opportunities that support conservation priorities.</li></ul>



## FY23 Operations and Administration Accomplishments

Significant accomplishments and changes occurred in FY23 that solidify the foundation of support for partners as they implement conservation actions at scale. These accomplishments build upon Pacific Birds' strength in facilitating conservation planning and delivery across defined priorities and prepare the Joint Venture for continued growth. New members on the International Management Board, three on the US Steering Committee and one on the Canada Steering Committee, bring new perspectives, reinforce existing partnerships, and signify renewed commitment of partners to the collective success of the Joint Venture and conservation goals. Conservation Priority Committees provide a guiding force as conservation priorities renew, refresh, or develop new plans. The newly formed ad hoc Government Relations Working Group will foster additional board and partner participation and provide a spectrum of experience and engagement to guide conservation work.

Staff changes and growth are resulting in renewed energy and additional capacity to deliver conservation. Natalie Myers joined the Pacific Birds team in August 2023 after Lynn Fuller's retirement in May. A new collaboration around communications with the Sea Duck Joint Venture brings more formal engagement between this species Joint Venture and Pacific Birds. Continued success, rooted in a pilot effort with Natural Resource Conservation Service in Oregon, resulted in an expanded agreement that will continue to support an Oak-focused Partnership Liaison in the Umpqua Oak Partnership region and add new capacity for science to implementation and communication efforts. A new grant supports outreach and engagement with National Estuarine Research Reserves and Indigenous Communities across the Pacific Birds geography. In the last year, we have continued to support partners with pass-through dollars through both fiscal agents, Ducks Unlimited and Oregon Wildlife Foundation.

Conservation accomplishments from FY23 will be reported separately in a 2022-2023 Conservation Report.



Some of the Pacific Birds staff: Laura Farwell, Helen Raine, Monica Iglecia, Natalie Myers, Sara Evans-Peters.



## FY24 Funds

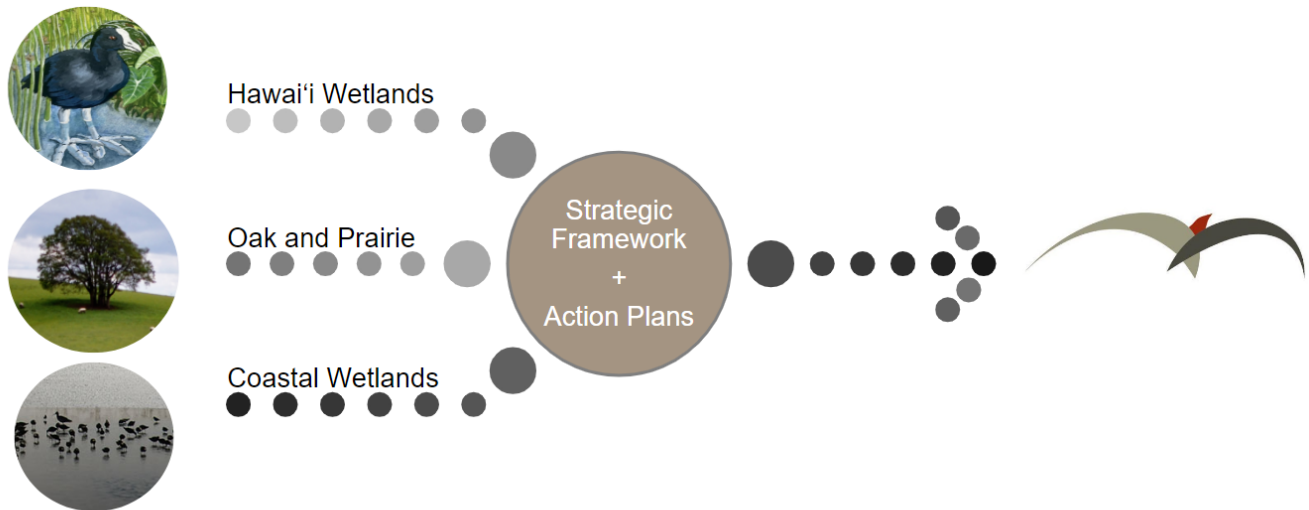
Funding sources include USFWS (84%), NRCS (10%), additional grants and agreements (6%), and private funds (1%).

## Catalyzing, Building, and Maintaining Momentum

Pacific Birds FY24 activities are centered on the completion of multiple plans including the Pacific Birds Strategic Framework, Coastal Wetlands Plan, Hawai'i Wetlands Plan, and Oak and Prairie Business Plan. This will include aligning staff work plans with the launch and subsequent start to implementation for the associated plans and continuing to support partners and partnership development to advance conservation. An emphasis in FY24 will be to support partners in gaining access to and the implementation of Inflation Reduction Act and Bipartisan Infrastructure Law funds. Further strengthening relationships with state and national agencies will build upon formalized relationships and previously identified strategies.

### A Strategic Framework

The Strategic Framework will communicate to existing and potential partners, and funders, what Pacific Birds does and why. It will include the recently updated Pacific Birds' pillars, which are the foundation of how Pacific Birds achieves its mission and are woven into the work of the Joint Venture. It will share our strategy for conservation and the current focus of the Joint Venture partnership. Each Conservation Priority plan, subsequent action plan, and staff work plan will tier to the Strategic Framework.



Each plan is different



Each plan relies on existing or developing core components

- Case for conservation
- Threat analysis
- Birds
- Strategies
- Goals / Objectives



Each plan is developed with and serves the needs of partners and the priority considering what has come before



## Filling a Niche Through Partnership Grants

Partnership Grants continue to provide valuable support to partners and advance Pacific Birds conservation priorities. Specifically, grants that fill a particular funding gap for partners has proven to be a unique opportunity to leverage small grants for large impact. Pacific Birds awarded seven grants totaling \$66,000 in the 2023 grant cycle. We plan to continue to strategically advance conservation priorities with a Request for Proposals in 2024. We expect a minimum of \$50,000 to be available for Partnership Grants in 2024.

[VIEW THE PARTNERSHIP GRANTS WEB PAGE](#)

## Advancing and Transferring Knowledge

Pacific Birds is committed to supporting applied science and knowledge transfer to inform actions to benefit our conservation priorities. Pacific Birds recognizes that both Indigenous Traditional Ecological Knowledge and conventional science are important to meeting our conservation goals and actively work to integrate diverse ways of knowing into the work of the Joint Venture.

In FY24, specific projects that advance and transfer knowledge to support conservation include:

### Multiple Conservation Priorities

- ❖ eBird and Joint Ventures flocking together – a collaborative project for objective setting and tracking.
- ❖ Integrating Indigenous Knowledge and NERR science and monitoring to improve estuarine stewardship and management, with shared benefits for birds and local communities.
- ❖ Inter-Tribal Ecosystem Restoration Partnership Peer-to-Peer Learning Summit

### Oak and Prairie

- ❖ Science to Implementation for private lands conservation of oak and prairie habitats.
- ❖ Prairie, Oak, and Riparian Tool scoping.
- ❖ Convening the *Fire as a Tool* working group.

### Hawai'i Wetlands

- ❖ Completion of a beneficial management practice document to support wetland birds and their habitats.
- ❖ Predator and Wetland Management Workshop

### Coastal Wetlands

- ❖ Mapping the historical extent and distribution of Pacific tidal wetlands to inform strategic conservation investments.
- ❖ Planning support and promotion of a region-wide symposium on *Effective Estuary Restoration*

## Communications

Pacific Birds communications in FY24 will increase engagement and readership of our target audience on our platforms, highlight conservation successes in all of our conservation priorities and support partner needs through storytelling, and refine our overall strategic communications approach. One focus will be on broad-



scale information sharing relevant to conservation partners. This includes soliciting and sharing news, resources, opportunities, and stories about Pacific Birds conservation priorities as well as broader topics in bird conservation. This will include the design and launch of the Strategic Framework, Conservation Priority plans, and annual Conservation Report. Communications occur through our primary communications platforms: a user-friendly website, a newsletter, and social media, as well as additional outreach tools such as videos, story maps or webinars. Focal content categories address long-standing Joint Venture topics as well as emerging national and international topics and include:

- ❖ Migratory Bird Joint Ventures
- ❖ Pacific Birds Conservation Priorities
- ❖ Celebrating Partners and the Collective Voice for Conservation
- ❖ Major Developments and Initiatives
- ❖ Bird and Habitat Conservation Needs and Actions at the Large Scale
- ❖ Connections: Birds and People

A second focus will center on strategic communications campaigns developed in collaboration with Pacific Birds staff and partners, to meet the needs of partnerships, and to address specific communications needs that can advance conservation. Underscoring all communications is the identified value and need to transfer knowledge across target audiences via compelling products and outlets.

- ❖ Enhance communications with and provide increased communications support for partners (*Promote Collaboration and Build Capacity*)
- ❖ Complete 1-2 strategic campaigns specific to each conservation priority (*Inform and Inspire*)
- ❖ Complete and deliver the 2023 Conservation Report (*Inform and Inspire*)
- ❖ Increase engagement on website & social channels with target audiences (*Advance Knowledge and Planning*)
- ❖ Continue and improve external strategic communications products and tools (*Accelerate and Deliver Conservation*)



## Leading Through Conservation Priorities

### Oak and Prairie



An Oak Titmouse

The focus of the coming year in Oak and Prairie is to effectively administer secured America the Beautiful Challenge grant funds, advance on-the-ground conservation capacity through the NRCS Cooperative Agreement, and continue securing additional funding for oak and prairie implementation.

In Oregon, continued partnership with Oregon NRCS will increase capacity for oak and prairie conservation delivery. This includes continuation of a Pacific Birds partnership liaison position in southern Oregon and communications support, as well as support for science-to-implementation capacity and an agricultural easement specialist. In addition, two oak-focused partner positions will be hired through a new collaboration with Pheasants Forever, which will add on the ground capacity in four Oregon counties.

The objectives for FY24 are centered on continuing to foster oak and prairie conservation in the Pacific Northwest with a focus on launching the new business plan, supporting the newly developed multi-state Pacific Northwest Oak Alliance, and continuing to advance support for conservation of these habitats.

Objective 1. Oak and prairie business plan 2.0 is completed, website is up, and partners are using the plan to outreach directly to funders and decision makers. (*Advance Knowledge and Planning, Accelerate and Deliver Conservation, Inform and Inspire*)

Objective 2. The Pacific Northwest Oak Alliance has a 'formal' structure and is activated. (*Promote Collaboration*)

Objective 3. Expand planning and coordination support for oak and prairie partnerships in B.C., Washington, Oregon, and California. (*Promote Collaboration*)

Objective 4. Help secure at least an additional 5 million dollars conservation priorities. (*Build Capacity*)

Objective 5. Support or advance new incentive programs on private lands. (*Accelerate and Deliver Conservation*)





## Hawai'i Wetlands



A Bristle-thighed Curlew

The focus of the coming year in Hawai'i Wetlands is to complete the Strategic Plan and work with partners to move towards implementation of key actions at priority sites. This will include continued work with the Moloka'i Wetland Partnership, with a focus on moving wetlands towards implementation stage. The advancement of 'Alae 'ula recovery statewide will remain a priority and we will work to further habitat improvements, particularly the installation of predator proof fencing which has benefits to all native wildlife.

Lastly, we intend to develop a new partnership either in Kaua'i or Maui, to work with local partners to further wetland conservation, dependent on partner needs.

The objectives for FY24 are centered on continuing to develop and maintain effective partnerships that provide our partners with what they need to plan and implement effective conservation work for birds that depend on wetland habitats in Hawai'i.

Objective 1. Create Hawai'i Wetland Partnerships to support wetland conservation efforts. (*Build Capacity*)

Objective 2. Expand and improve coordination among local partnerships in support of collective priorities. (*Promote Collaboration*)

Objective 3. Increase funding for local capacity and on-the-ground conservation work. (*Build Capacity*)

Objective 4. Support partners through networking and communications work to achieve conservation aims for wetlands. (*Inform and Inspire*)

Objective 5. Support partners to protect, create and restore wetland habitat for waterbird populations & other wetland species. (*Accelerate and Deliver Conservation*)

Objective 6. Assist wetland managers to reduce negative impacts of climate change on existing wetlands. (*Advance Knowledge and Planning*)

The conservation work underway in Hawai'i acknowledges the value of incorporating ecocultural strategies into restoration practices, in improvements to watersheds, and in supporting sustainable food systems.





## Coastal Wetlands



A flock of Marbled Godwits

The focus of the coming year in Coastal Wetlands is to complete the Coastal Wetland Strategic Plan and begin implementing priority conservation actions outlined in the plan. Key actions will include continuing to build shared momentum and supporting existing and developing partnerships for wetland conservation across the continental Pacific Coast.

The objectives for FY24 are centered on continuing to promote coastal wetland conservation on the Pacific Coast with a focus on rolling out the new strategic plan, building and supporting regional partnerships for coastal wetland conservation, promoting applied science and

knowledge transfer for effective management of coastal wetlands, and continuing to increase funding and capacity for conservation of these habitats.

Objective 1. Complete Bird Population and Habitat Objectives for Coastal Wetland (CW) Strategic Plan  
(*Advance Science and Planning*)

Objective 2. Build Partnerships to support CW conservation on continental Pacific Coast (Promote  
Collaboration)

Objective 3. Increase funding for local capacity and on-the-ground conservation work (*Build Capacity*)

Objective 4. Develop goals and strategies for Catalyzing and Transferring Science (*Inform and Inspire,  
Advance Science and Planning*)

Objective 5. Develop Coastal Wetlands communications approach (*Inform and Inspire*)

## Growth Area

### Western Forests

Birds that depend upon Western Forests are declining, particularly in areas where forests are stressed. The estimated loss of one billion forest birds in the last 40 years has sounded alarms that landscape-level conservation actions are needed now more than ever. The benefits of resilient forests and watersheds extend beyond forest-dependent birds—healthy forests result in clean air, increased freshwater availability, more resilient rural communities, recreation and tourism opportunities, more durable and stable carbon storage and sequestration, and biodiversity and habitat for species.

Informed by a data synthesis developed by Klamath Bird Observatory, we identify the following goals to drive change through co-produced, community-based approaches to benefit birds and people:

- ❖ *Migratory Birds*: Improve habitat to address the [29% decline of western forest birds](#) since 1970.



- ❖ *Ecological Forest Restoration*: Support conservation partners and communities in increasing forest health and resiliency and reducing wildfire risk, one of the highest-priority natural resources issues in the West.
- ❖ *Community Health*: Increase resilience of communities that rely on both economic and non-monetary benefits of the forest including clean water, air, and recreation.
- ❖ *Bring birds to the conversation*: Encourage the inclusion of birds into programmatic decision making by agencies and non-governmental organizations and promote forest planning and beneficial management practices on private and public lands.

Pacific Birds staff and partners continue to examine approaches for advancing Western Forest conservation with limited capacity. In FY24, Pacific Birds Staff and Board will consider strategies for continued investments. Staff will explore a ground-up, partner-driven approach where the combination of data synthesis and existing networks point to the greatest opportunities. This includes the public lands and surrounding private lands of the Umpqua, Rogue-River Siskiyou, Mt. Hood, and Gifford Pinchot National Forests. Pacific Birds will work with partners to assess the potential of foothill forest investments to support declining Western Forest birds, current capacity, and future capacity needs. We will also continue to engage at the state, national, and international level to further understand policy, funding, and capacity needs and opportunities.

## Dr. Fern Duvall Conservation and Collaboration Award



Dr. Fern Duvall

In spring 2023, Pacific Birds announced the [Raymond McGuire as first recipient of the Dr. Fern Duvall Conservation and Collaboration Award](#). This award will annually recognize individuals working in the Pacific Birds region who embody the innovative, inclusive, humble, and collaborative spirit that Fern brought to conservation endeavors. Nominations are open annually during the open period of the Pacific Birds Request for Proposals and are selected by a committee comprised of Pacific Birds Board and Staff.

## Operating and Administering an Effective Pacific Birds Habitat Joint Venture

The foci of the operations and administration of the Joint Venture over the next year are to support the implementation of secured large-scale grants, help secure future large-scale funds for conservation implementation, grow the value of Pacific Birds by successfully launching all three conservation priority plans, and advancing our mission by excelling in the delivery of our service pillars. This includes the following objectives:



Objective 1: Finalize, launch, and begin implementation of Pacific Birds Strategic Framework and strategic plans for conservation priorities, and support reassessment of status and plans for communications. (*Advance Knowledge and Planning*)

Objective 2: Enable partners to work together effectively to advance the joint venture's conservation priorities. (*Promote Collaboration, Inform and Inspire*)

Objective 3: Provide board-level leadership and support in pursuit of JV priorities and direction. (*Build Capacity*)

Objective 4: Raise sufficient funds sufficient to achieve the goals of this plan. (*Build Capacity*)

Objective 5: Effectively administer grants and agreements. (*Accelerate and Deliver Conservation*)



The International Management Board and Staff in British Columbia