



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program **TEXAS**

Voluntary Habitat Restoration on Private Lands



The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people.



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

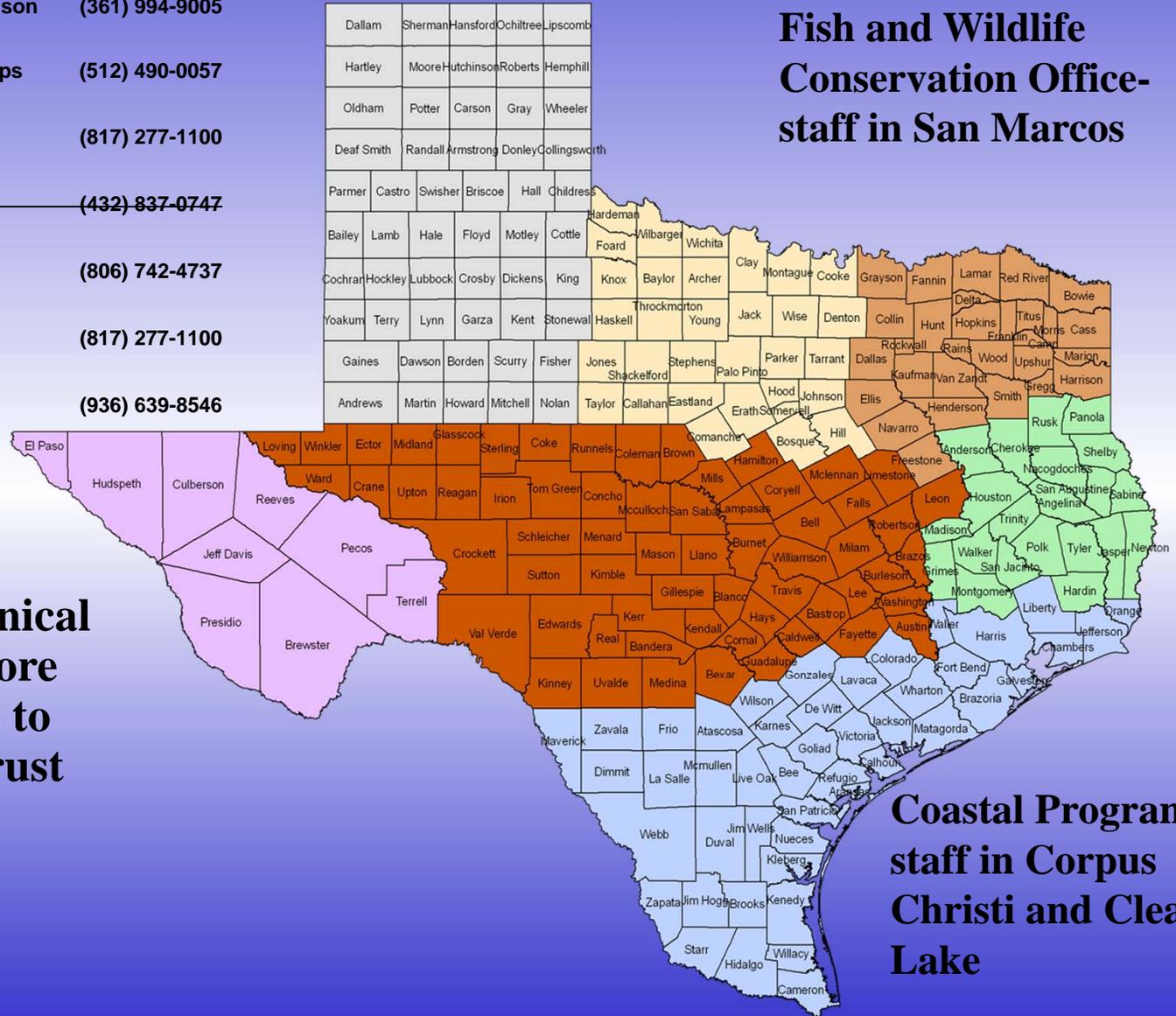
Texas

Partners for Fish and Wildlife

Area Point of Contact:

- Tim Anderson / Chad Stinson** **(361) 994-9005**
- Chris Harper / Doug Phillips** **(512) 490-0057**
- Catherine Yeargan** **(817) 277-1100**
- Aimee Roberson** **(432) 837-0747**
- Duane Lucia** **(806) 742-4737**
- Steve Arey** **(817) 277-1100**
- Jeff Reid** **(936) 639-8546**

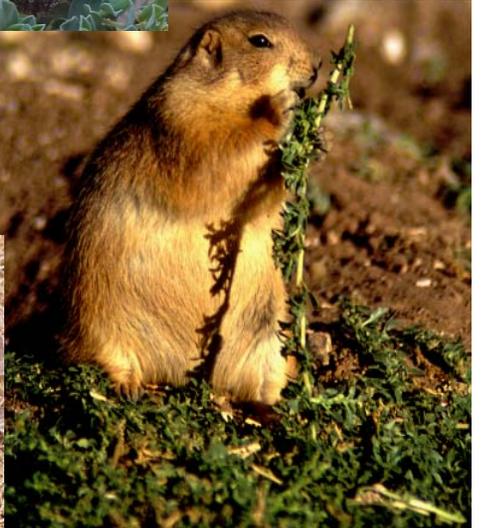
**Fish and Wildlife
Conservation Office-
staff in San Marcos**



**Financial and technical
assistance to restore
native ecosystems to
benefit Federal trust
resources**

<http://partners.fws.gov/>

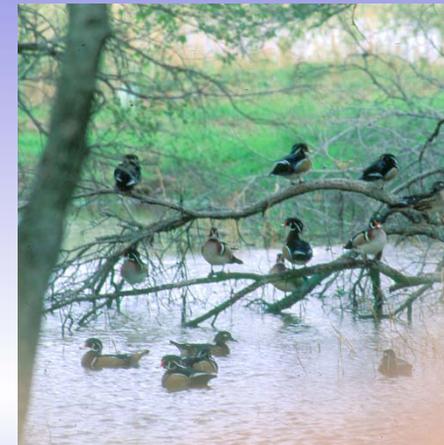
**Coastal Program –
staff in Corpus
Christi and Clear
Lake**



© Robert & Linda Mitchell

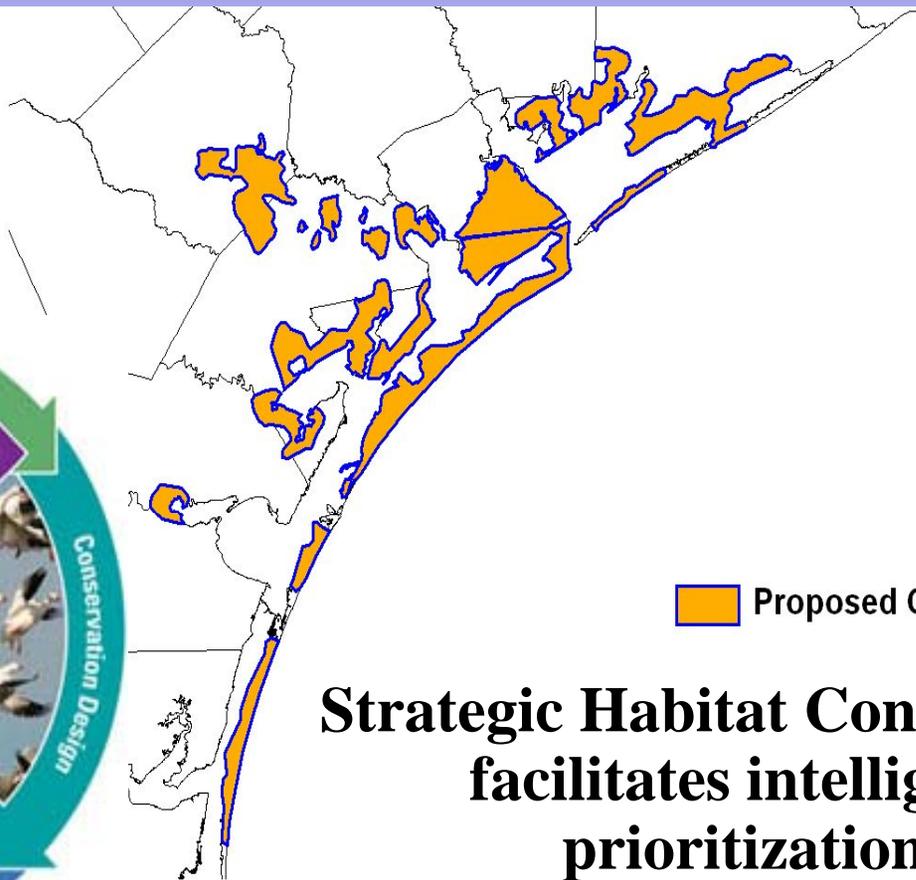


Keeping Common Species Common



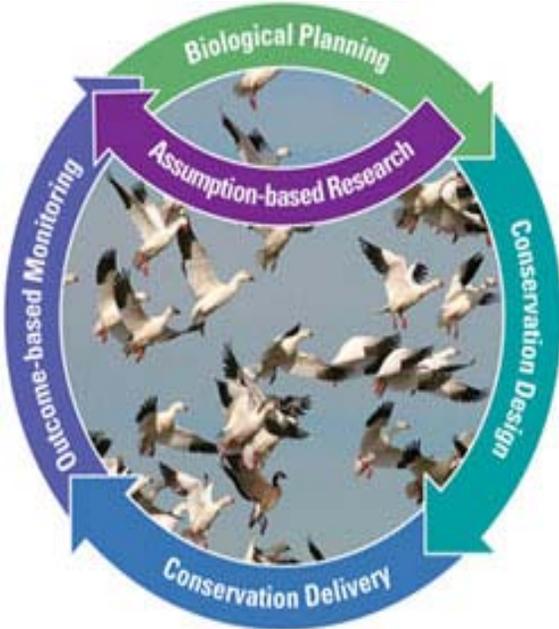


Strategic Habitat Conservation

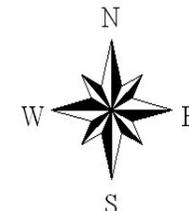


 Proposed CPCI Geographic Scope

Strategic Habitat Conservation facilitates intelligent prioritization

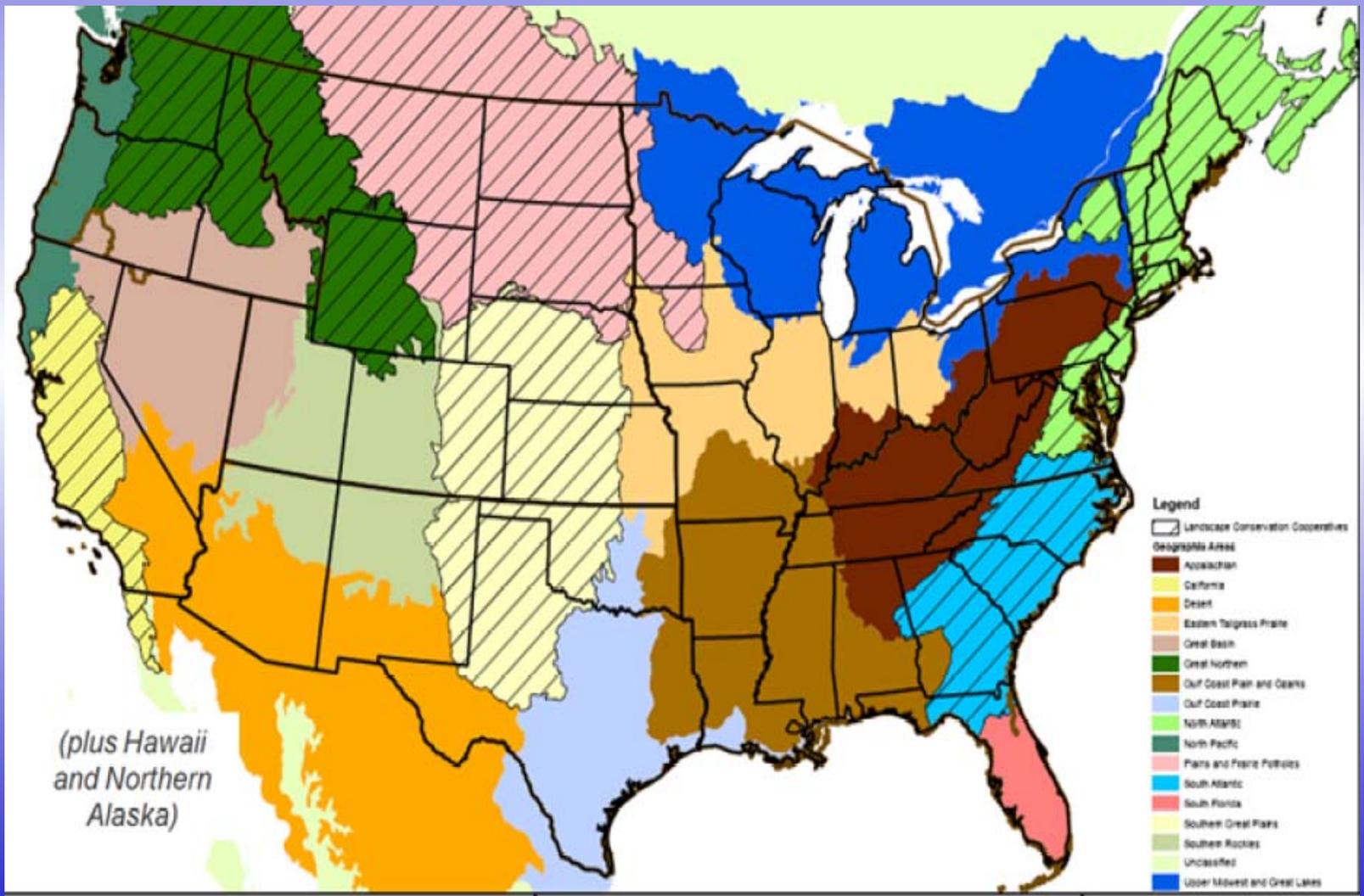


0 50 100 Miles





Landscape Conservation Cooperatives





Let's talk chicken...





LPC TIMELINE OF KEY EVENTS

October 1995
Petition to list the LPC

July 1998
12 month finding warranted but precluded

December 2012
Proposed Rule Published
December 11, 2012

July 2013
Final rule deadline extended to March 2014 to solicit additional scientific info

December 2013
Published revised 4(d) rule and re-opened comment period for 30 days

February 2014
Service issues CCAA for oil and gas activities

March 27, 2014
Final listing rule delivered to FR - T with 4(d)

July 1997
Positive 90 day finding

December 2008
LPN 8 - 2 due to increased magnitude of threats

May 2013
Published proposed 4(d) special rule

October 2013
Service endorsed WAFWA RWP

January 2014
Re-opened comment period for 14 days on revised proposed 4(d) rule

February 2014
NOI for EIS - AHC HCP; conduct scoping meetings in KS, OK, TX

<http://www.fws.gov/southwest/es/LPC.html>

There has been a tremendous amount of work done to provide many options for private landowners...

Lesser Prairie-Chicken Conservation Efforts - Texas		
LPC Conservation Program	States Covered	Plan Manager
Western Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies (WAFWA) Range-wide plan (RWP)/Oil and Gas CCAA	OK, NM, TX, CO and KS	WAFWA
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS), Working Lands for Wildlife, Lesser Prairie-Chicken Initiative (LPCI) with Conf Opinion/4d rule	OK, NM, TX, CO and KS	USDA-NRCS
USDA Farm Service Agency's Conservation Reserve Program (CRP)	OK, NM, TX, CO and KS	USDA-Farm Services Agency
Common Ground Capitol Programmatic Rangewide Conservation Bank (Pending)	OK, NM, TX, CO and KS	Wayne Walker, Common Ground Capital
Great Plains Wind HCP (pending)	OK, NM, TX, CO and KS	Wind Energy Whooping Crane Action Group (WEWAG) (17 wind energy



NRCS STAC Wildlife Subcommittee

TEXAS
PARKS &
WILDLIFE

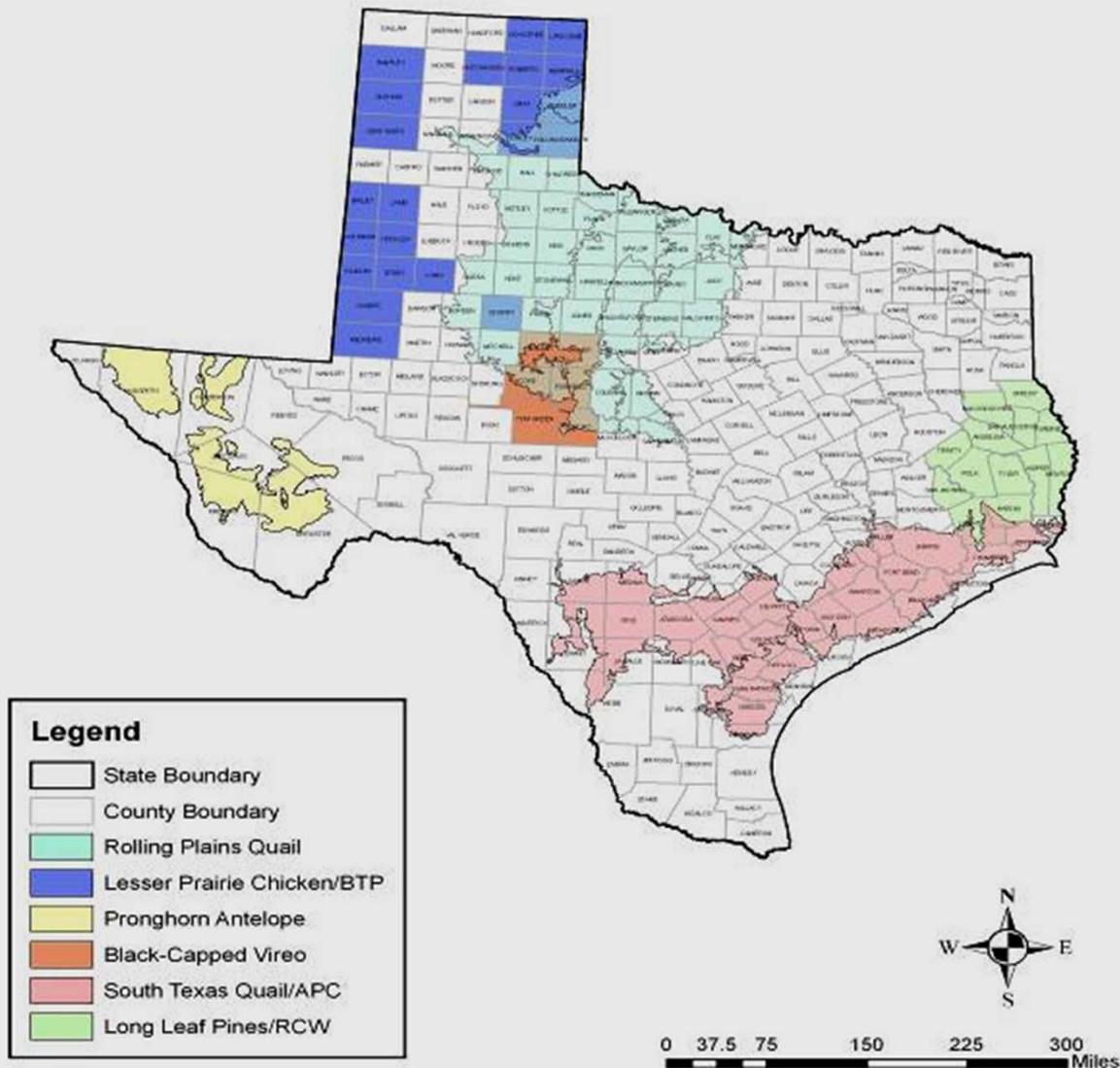
- **Busy year – met face-to-face quarterly; a few other conference calls to discuss important issues**
- **Speakers on the following topics:
Landscape Conservation Cooperatives;
Prescribed Fire; Gulf Coast BP Restoration Funding; Lesser Prairie Chicken**



Texas EQIP Wildlife Focus Areas

Past & Future

EQIP Wildlife Resource Concern Areas



Past Texas EQIP Wildlife Areas

Background

- **Prior to 2002 Farm Bill Texas received ~ \$12 million/yr in EQIP payments.**
- **To maximize benefits, EQIP signup limited to rotating regional concerns.**
- **Starting in 2003 Texas EQIP payments rapidly increased to \$60-\$70 million per year and coverage expanded to the entire state.**

EQIP Wildlife Areas

- **Original 4 Wildlife Areas (2003):**
 - **Lesser Prairie Chicken/Black-tailed Prairie Dog**
 - **Rolling Plains Grassland Birds/Bobwhite Quail**
 - **Attwater's Greater Prairie Chicken/Bobwhite**
 - **Longleaf Pine/Red-cockaded Woodpecker/Bobwhite/Louisiana Pine Snake**
- **In 2007 Black-capped Vireo added**
- **In 2008 Pronghorn Antelope added**
- **In 2009 Rolling Plains quail area expanded, Attwater's area dropped**

Accomplishments So Far

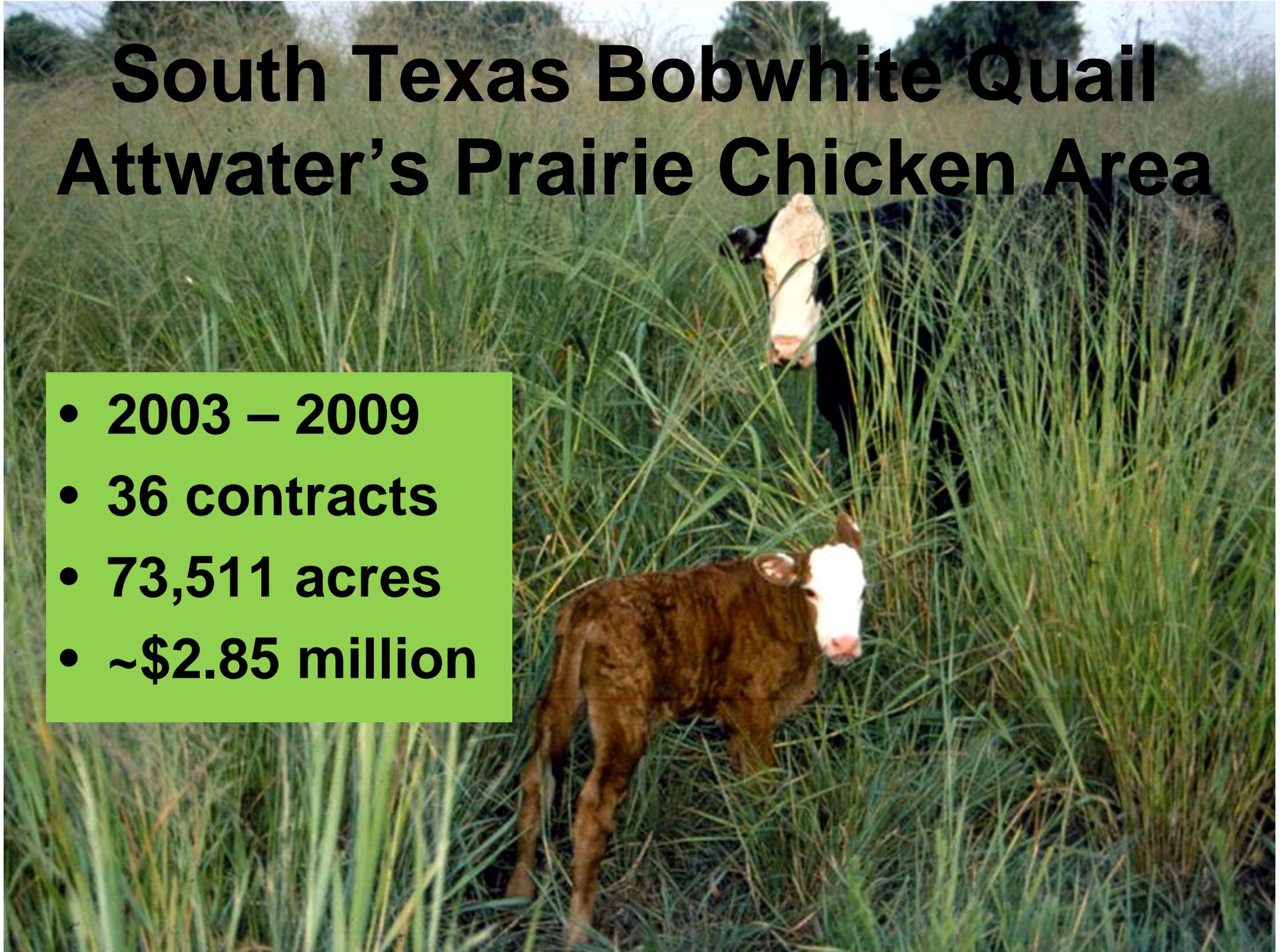
- Texas was one of the first states to target EQIP funding for wildlife concerns**
- Two of the original areas – longleaf and prairie chickens - have become national initiatives**
- To date - 1,208 contracts have been written covering 1,791,926 acres and providing \$35.3 M in payments & cost share**

Rolling Plains Grassland Bird/ Bobwhite Quail Area

- **2003 – Present**
- **Expanded to include much of Texas in 2009**
- **156 contracts**
- **246,412 acres**
- **~ \$5.4 million**

South Texas Bobwhite Quail Attwater's Prairie Chicken Area

- 2003 – 2009
- 36 contracts
- 73,511 acres
- ~\$2.85 million

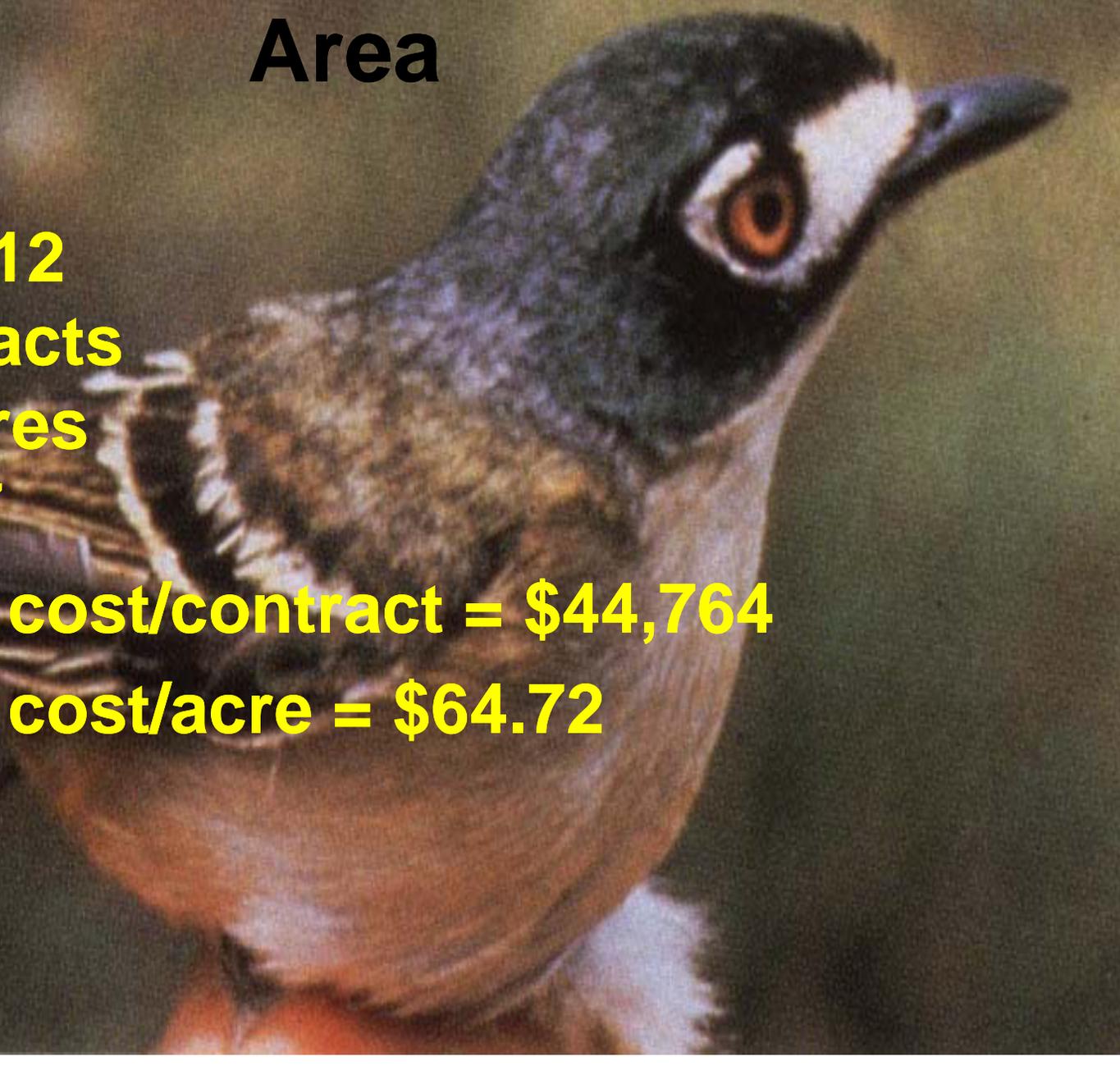


Lesser Prairie Chicken

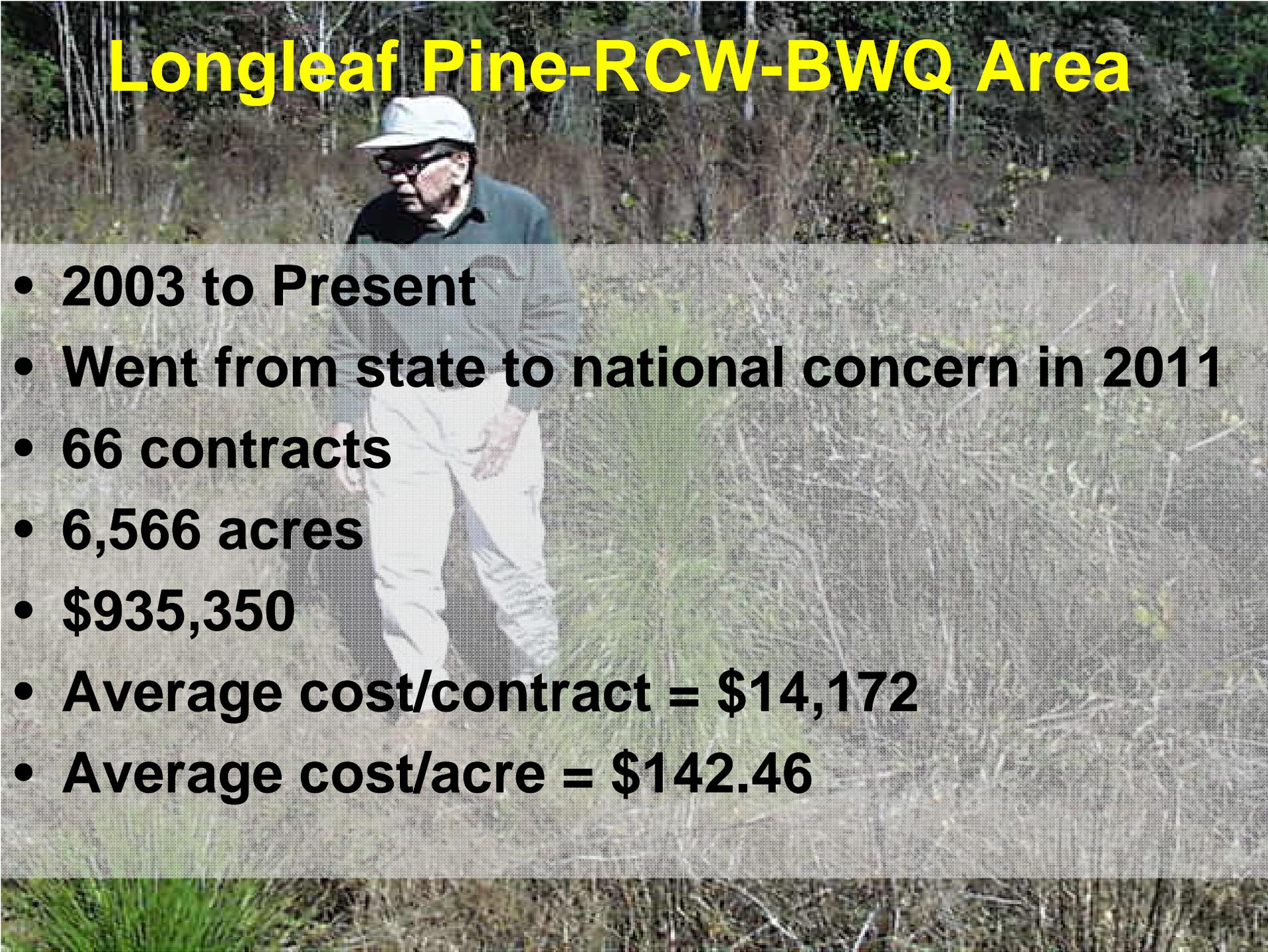
- 2003 – Present
- Went from state to national initiative in 2010
- 526 contracts
- 576,910 acres
- ~ \$14.63 million

Concho Valley Black-capped Vireo Area

- 2007- 2012
- 11 contracts
- 7,609 acres
- \$492,407
- Average cost/contract = \$44,764
- Average cost/acre = \$64.72



Longleaf Pine-RCW-BWQ Area

A man wearing a white cap, glasses, a dark shirt, and light-colored pants stands in a field of young longleaf pine trees. The background shows a dense forest of taller trees.

- **2003 to Present**
- **Went from state to national concern in 2011**
- **66 contracts**
- **6,566 acres**
- **\$935,350**
- **Average cost/contract = \$14,172**
- **Average cost/acre = \$142.46**

Pronghorn Antelope Area

- 2008-Present
- 63 contracts
- 536,890 acres

- ~\$2.78 million
- Average cost/contract = \$44,077
- Average cost/acre = \$5.17

Photo by Chuck Kowaleski

Where do we go from here?

- Existing wildlife areas have one common theme - restoring scarce or low quality native grassland habitat for declining species
- Aquatic species also in trouble
- Signup numbers are low
 - Need increased efforts to inform interested landowners of available programs
 - Current website and other outreach is limited
 - Better coordination on program specifics with staff and partners
 - Joint trainings where possible

FY15 STAC Wildlife Subcommittee Proposal

- **Create state-wide wildlife funding pools**
- **In FY15 – target declining grassland species**
 - **Combine current state wildlife resource concerns**
 - **Be available state-wide**
 - **Focus on native grassland restoration**
 - **Target areas with ongoing promotion and monitoring efforts to improve delivery**
 - **Adaptable to shift focus where needed in the future**
- **Consider developing a second statewide wildlife concern targeting declining aquatic species**





Multi-District Litigation (MDL)

In an effort to improve implementation of the Endangered Species Act, the FWS submitted a 6-year work plan to the U.S. District Court for the District of Columbia to:

- a. review and address the needs of more than 250 species listed on the 2010 Candidate Notice of Review**
- b. determine if they should be added to the Federal Lists of Endangered and Threatened Wildlife and Plants**

http://www.fws.gov/endangered/improving_ESA/listing_workplan.htm



Multi-District Litigation (MDL)

Decisions expected for **Texas** species include:

- FY 14 – sharpnose shiner; smalleye shiner;
- FY 15 – Sprague's pipit; Texas hornshell; Louisiana pine snake; Warton's cave meshweaver

[a.http://www.fws.gov/endangered/improving_ESA/FY13-18_ESA_Listing_workplan.pdf](http://www.fws.gov/endangered/improving_ESA/FY13-18_ESA_Listing_workplan.pdf)