

Private Lands Stewardship: Connecting People, Birds and Land

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Reversing the decline of bird populations in North America requires creative solutions that transcend fence lines, funding sources, and individual agency goals. Bird Conservancy of the Rockies partners with federal, state, non-governmental agencies, and private landowners to conserve birds and their habitats through an integrated model of science, education and private lands stewardship. Private lands stewardship is vital to bird conservation, as more than 70% of land in the U.S. is privately owned. Due primarily to habitat loss both bird abundance and wetland and riparian habitats have significantly declined since the mid-1900s. We present a collaborative model for addressing declines of wetland and riparian habitats on private lands by connecting landowners with conservation planning, funding opportunities, and other resources to mutually benefit their agricultural operations, land, water and wildlife habitat. We will present examples of collaborative solutions including prescribed riparian grazing plans, wetland restorations and management, invasive species control, and educational workshops. Our biologists achieve increased conservation as integrated members of their agricultural communities, where they build relationships that influence hearts and minds. Together we can provide a world where birds are forever abundant, healthy landscapes persist, and humans can be inspired by their curiosity and love of nature.