

RAINWATER BASIN JOINT VENTURE

Balancing the needs of agriculture and conservation



OUR MISSION:

To support our agricultural communities while providing habitat conservation for millions of migratory waterfowl, shorebirds, and other wildlife through cooperation and sound science. We work with landowners, conservation agencies, researchers, agriculture associations, and others, in pursuit of our shared vision. Together we demonstrate that wildlife and agriculture can not only co-exist, but thrive together.

950,000

acres of wetlands and grasslands positively impacted by RWBJV partners on public and private lands in 2022

20 YEARS

bringing private and public partners together to leverage resources



\$81 MILLION

in on-the-ground habitat conservation leveraged by partners since 2006

10:1

 ratio of leveraged funds to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service base funding allocation

ENTREPRENEURIAL APPROACH: Our business structure, Management Board composition, and diverse financial portfolio embodies our entrepreneurial approach to conservation.

NON-REGULATORY SOLUTIONS: We support voluntary, strategic, and highly organized conservation to prevent the need for regulatory actions.

PROVEN MODEL: Our strategic, partnership-driven approach and demonstrated track record of success serves as a conservation model for the future.

PROFITABLE OPERATIONS: Seamless adoption of conservation solutions into working farm and ranch operations to help provide wildlife habitat, increased profitability, and improved water quality and quantity.


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We foster collaborative conservation to positively impact playa wetlands and grasslands in Nebraska's mixed-grass prairie ecoregion. Our focus is on solutions that conserve working lands for fish and wildlife, agricultural producers, and rural communities.

97% of Nebraska is privately owned

These working farm and ranch operations provide habitat for over 350 species of resident and migratory birds

PARTNERING FOR PLAYAS

Since 2010, our public-private partnership has played a key role in playa wetland conservation. To-date the partnership has delivered 4,300 acres of wetland conservation on public and private lands. These projects have impacted nearly 10% of the playa wetlands in the Rainwater Basin Wetland Complex. Over 12 million migratory birds rely on wetlands in the Rainwater Basin Joint Venture during spring migration. These projects are estimated to recharge 4.9 billion gallons of water or sufficient groundwater to irrigate 30,100 acres (250 pivot irrigation systems).



Photo Credit: Ryan Askren

Photo Credit: Chris Helzer

97% of Nebraska's grasslands are privately owned

Nebraska's Sandhills are the largest intact grassland in the world



Photo Credit: Krystal Bialas

GRASSLAND CONSERVATION

19.4 million priority grassland nesting depend on Nebraska's grasslands. As a suite of species these grassland bird populations have declined by over 53%. The expansive grasslands found in Nebraska provide some of the last strongholds. In 2022, the RWBJV partners worked with landowners to impact 845,00 acres through mechanical removal of eastern red cedar, install grazing infrastructure, implement prescribed fire, and develop grazing management plans. These projects are helping provide habitat for grassland nesting birds, support profitable farm and ranch operations, and sequester significant amounts of carbon.