

## Other things you should know:

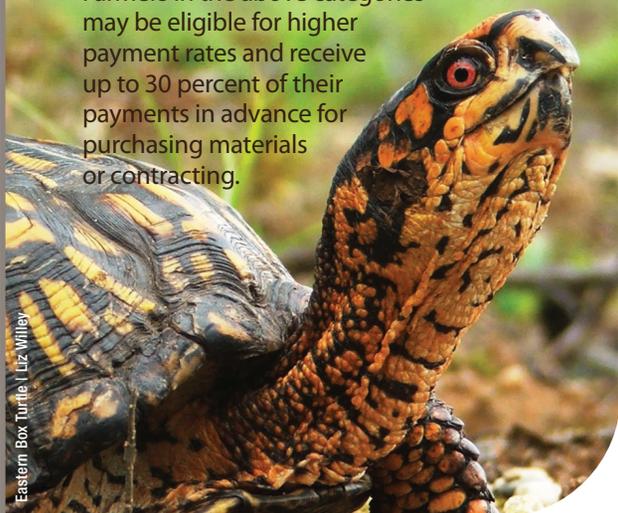
- WHIP contracts can last from two to 10 years. In some cases, a 15 year contract may be used for essential habitat agreements.
- Payments are limited to \$50,000 per participant annually.
- There is no minimum acreage requirement, however, projects that address significant resource concerns are more likely to receive funding.
- You will be reimbursed after the practices have been installed.

Financing may be available through the USDA Farm Service Agency (FSA), or private lending agencies.

## What's new in WHIP?

- NRCS has partnered with the Massachusetts Division of Fisheries and Wildlife to provide biological technical assistance to help identify, plan and implement wildlife projects.
- The 2008 Farm Bill provides greater assistance to beginning, socially disadvantaged and limited-resource farmers.

Farmers in the above categories may be eligible for higher payment rates and receive up to 30 percent of their payments in advance for purchasing materials or contracting.



Eastern Box Turtle | Liz Willey

## Contact us

- **Barnstable Field Office**  
Serving Barnstable, Dukes and Nantucket counties  
270 Communications Way, Hyannis, MA 02601  
508-771-6476
- **Greenfield Field Office**  
Serving Franklin County  
55 Federal St., Greenfield, MA 01301  
413-772-0384 ext. 3
- **Hadley Field Office**  
Serving Hampden and Hampshire counties  
195 Russell St., Hadley, MA 01035  
413-585-1000 ext. 3
- **Holden Field Office**  
Serving Worcester County  
52 Boyden Rd., Holden, MA 01520  
508-829-4477 ext. 3
- **Pittsfield Field Office**  
Serving Berkshire County  
78 Center St., Suite 206, Pittsfield, MA 01201  
413-443-1776 ext. 3
- **Westford Field Office**  
Serving Essex, Middlesex and Suffolk counties  
319 Littleton Rd., Westford, MA 01886  
978-692-1904 ext. 3
- **West Wareham Field Office**  
Serving Bristol, Norfolk and Plymouth counties  
15 Cranberry Hwy., West Wareham, MA 02576  
508-295-5151 ext. 2

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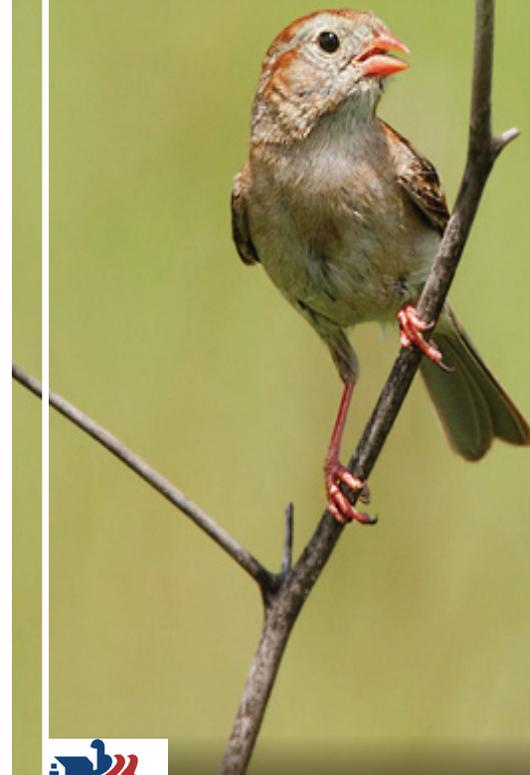
4/7/2010

H. ligatus, female | Michael Veit



Massachusetts

# Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP)



Field Sparrow | Axel Hildebrandt © 2009



Helping People Help the Land

## What is the Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program?

The Wildlife Habitat Incentive Program (WHIP) is a voluntary program that provides technical and financial assistance to people who want to improve fish and wildlife habitat or restore natural ecosystems on their land.

### What's in it for you?

NRCS will provide compensation for part of the cost of establishing and maintaining conservation practices that enhance and improve wildlife habitat and restore natural ecosystems.

When you apply to WHIP, you'll begin by working with an NRCS conservation professional to develop a conservation plan that identifies natural resource concerns and conservation practices that best address specific conditions on your land.

WHIP funding can help pay for implementing your planning decisions.

### These are just a few of the conservation practices eligible for WHIP funding:



In Massachusetts, there are about **30 different conservation practices** eligible for funding through WHIP. Visit our website, or call your local NRCS office for a full list of eligible conservation practices and payment rates.

## Are you eligible for WHIP?

### WHIP participants must:

- be an individual, entity or joint operation.
- have control of the land for the term of the proposed contract.  
Renting or leasing land is fine, as long as you have documented control of the land.
- have an average adjusted gross income of \$1 million dollars or less annually.

### Land enrolled in WHIP must:

- be farmland, grassland, non-industrial forest land, capable of growing trees or other land that NRCS determines is suitable for wildlife habitat.
- be privately owned. Publicly owned lands are not eligible for WHIP assistance.
- not receive other USDA program payments for the same conservation practice.

### How to apply:

Contact your local NRCS field office to begin the application process.

- **Creating a conservation plan is one of the first steps in applying for WHIP.**
  - Developing a plan will qualify you to apply for USDA financial assistance to install the recommended practices.
  - There is no charge for conservation planning.
- **You'll need to file several forms to determine if you're eligible for federal programs.**
  - Forms are available on our website.
- **Applications may be submitted anytime.**
  - Applications will be evaluated periodically in a competitive ranking process as funding becomes available. Ranking criteria for each program is available on our website.