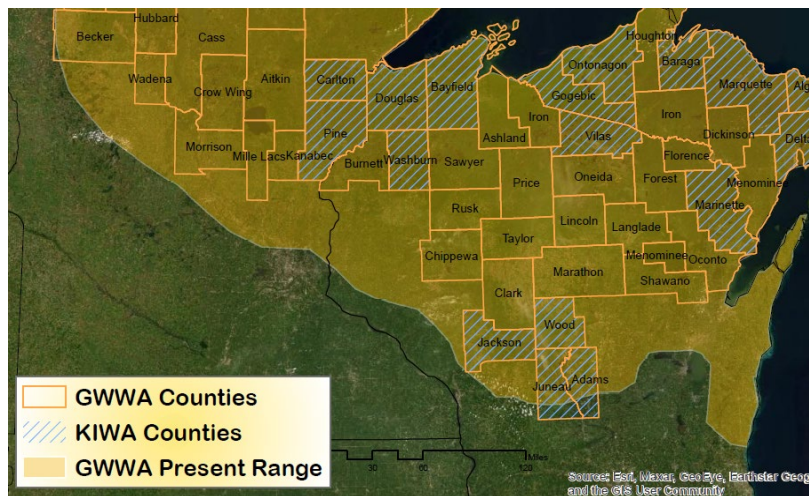


American Bird Conservancy: Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources in MI, MN, and WI – 2018 FB RCPP Project #2245

Project Description/Summary:

The Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) is a partnership that leverages capabilities and resources, targets assistance where it is most needed, cooperatively engages project partners, and works collaboratively with agriculture producers, forest land managers, and Tribes. Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources will promote voluntary, incentive-based conservation on private and Tribal lands. This project is part of a cooperative, full life-cycle, international initiative to restore Golden-winged (GWWA). Government agencies and private conservation organizations have a strong interest in preventing the unnecessary and potential listing of Golden-winged (GWWA) under the Endangered Species Act. Together, MI, MN, and WI have the largest remaining breeding population of GWWA in the world and have critical ecosystems to rebuild populations rapidly. The GWWA, identified as a species of greatest conservation need (SGCN) in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS), State Wildlife Agency, Joint Venture, and other conservation organization plans, needs quality young forest with mature forest nearby to breed and successfully raise young. Kirtland’s Warbler (KIWA) is a conservation-reliant SGCN recently listed as federally endangered. This project seeks to improve young jack pine stands to increase KIWA habitat. Objectives of this project are to implement focal species best management practices (BMPs) on private lands through RCPP technical and financial assistance from 2021 through 2025.

Approved Wisconsin participating counties and Species:



County	Golden-Winged Warbler (GWWA)	Kirtland’s Warbler (KIWA)
Adams	X	X
Ashland	X	
Bayfield	X	X
Burnett	X	
Chippewa	X	
Clark	X	
Douglas	X	X
Florence	X	
Forest	X	

American Bird Conservancy: Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources in MI, MN, and WI – 2018 FB RCPP Project #2245

County	Golden-Winged Warbler (GWWA)	Kirtland's Warbler (KIWA)
Iron	X	
Jackson	X	X
Juneau	X	X
Langlade	X	
Lincoln	X	
Marathon	X	
Marinette	X	X
Menominee	X	
Oconto	X	
Oneida	X	
Price	X	
Rusk	X	
Sawyer	X	
Shawano	X	
Taylor	X	
Washburn	X	X
Wood	X	X
Vilas	X	X

Note: As better habitat data is gathered the eligibility scope for KIWA will be focused within the eligible counties and will be communicated to the affected service centers and partners.

Eligible Land Use:

Eligible Land Uses include:

Crop*, Forest, Pasture, and Associated Ag Land

*Crop is eligible for the purpose of planting Jack Pine (cpc 612) to benefit KIWA.

Eligible Resource Concern Category:

Terrestrial Habitat

Eligible Practices:

The Schedule of Operations must include at least one of the applicable core practices, or must be completing a conservation system that supports core practices that are documented as already implemented on the land proposed in the application and identified in the CART assessment.

Practice Code and Name	Priority and Core, or Supporting Practice
106 Forest Management CPA	Priority and Core
165 Forest Management DIA	Priority and Core
160 Prescribed Burning DIA	Priority and Core
647 Early Successional Habitat	Priority and Core
666 Forest Stand Improvement	Priority and Core
612 Tree/Shrub Establishment	Priority and Core

American Bird Conservancy: Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources in MI, MN, and WI – 2018 FB RCPP Project #2245

314 Brush Management	Supporting
315 Herbaceous Weed Management	Supporting
338 Prescribed Burning	Supporting
384 Woody Residue Treatment	Supporting
394 Firebreak	Supporting
420 Wildlife Habitat Planting	Supporting
490 Tree/Shrub Site Preparation	Supporting
560 Access Road	Supporting
655 Forest Trails and Landings	Supporting

Application Processing:

RCPP is a stand-alone program and requires its own NRCS-1200 application separate from other NRCS FA programs. All 2018 Farm Bill (FB) RCPP applications will be continuously accepted and signup cut off dates will be publicly announced each year. For Land Management and Rental producer contracts the NRCS-1200 Application for Assistance will be marked “RCPP”.

For NRCS-CPA-1200s version 10/2021 follow NB 300-22-8 write in box 2a “2245 LM”

2. Interested in participating in the following (select all that apply):

- | | |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Conservation Easement Program-Wetland Reserve Easement (ACEP-WRE) | <input type="checkbox"/> Environmental Quality Incentives Program (EQIP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Agricultural Management Assistance (AMA) | <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Conservation Stewardship Program (CSP) | |

a) Program enrollment type, activity type, and/or project name, as applicable:

2245 LM or ABC 2245 LM

2018 FB RCPP applications will be managed through Conservation Desktop, not ProTracts. Follow additional guidance and process step documents. USDA Financial Assistance Eligibility will need to be determined manually with the Farm Service Agency’s Subsidiary Report.

Habitat Suitability Indexes:

A unique Habitat Suitability Index (HSI) has been developed for the Golden-Winged Warbler and another for the Kirtland’s Warbler.

American Bird Conservancy: Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources in MI, MN, and WI – 2018 FB RCPP Project #2245

Ranking Criteria:

Survey: Program Questions

Section: Program - WI - 2245 ABC RCPP v23		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
PQ1: This application is for 106 Forest Management CPA and/or 165 Forest Management DIA.	YES	200
	NO	0
PQ2: This application directly addresses the project resource concern Terrestrial Habitat for:*	1. Golden-winged Warbler	--
	2. Kirtlands Warbler	--
PQ2.1. The proposed total acres of Golden-winged Warbler habitat treated will be*	a. 100 acres or greater	20
	b. less than 100 acres and 50 acres or greater	40
	c. less than 50 acres and 21 acres or greater	30
	d. less than 21 acres and 5 acres or greater	20
	e. less than 5 acres	0
PQ2.2. The proposed total acres of Kirtland's Warbler habitat treated will be*	a. 300 acres or greater	40
	b. less than 300 acres and 80 acres or greater	20
	c. less than 80 acres	0
PQ3: The applicant has marked on the NRCS-CPA-1200 that they are a Historically Underserved participant.*	YES	40
	NO	0
PQ4: Did the applicant self-certify as a Veteran farmer or rancher on the NRCS-CPA-1200 "Conservation Program Application"??*	YES	32
	NO	0

Section: Program - WI - 2245 ABC RCPP v23		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
PQ5: The applicant has worked with a conservation planner through the conservation process to the extent that;*	all implementation requirements for all activities included in the application are complete and final.	48
	at least 1 practice in the application has an implementation requirement that is complete and final.	7
	no implementation requirements are complete and final.	0

American Bird Conservancy: Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources in MI, MN, and WI – 2018 FB RCPP Project #2245

Survey: Resource Questions

Section: Resource - WI - 2245 ABC RCPP v23		
Question	Answer Choices	Points
RQ1: This application is for 106 Forest Management CPA and/or 165 Forest Management DIA.	YES	200
	NO	0
RQ2: Wildlife Habitat - Will the proposed project improve wildlife habitat by implementing one or more of the following conservation practices - 612 Tree or Shrub Establishment planting scenarios ONLY, 647 Early Successional Habitat Development and Management, or 666 Forest Stand Improvement?*	YES	45
	NO	0
RQ3: Will the application result in the implementation of conservation practices that occur in a RCPP Kirtlands Warbler identified priority county?*	Yes	45
	Otherwise	0
RQ4: Will practices in the application result in a treatment area consisting of three or more age classifications?*	YES	10
	NO	0
RQ5: Conservation Implementation - Does the proposed project schedule all conservation practices in the contract on the CPA-1155 within 3 years of the date of obligation?*	YES	10
	NO	0
RQ6: Wildlife Habitat - The application is within the State Specific Focal Area, and will create early successional habitat, for the Golden Winged Warbler or Kirtlands Warbler resulting in -*	a. HSI post treatment score equal to or greater than .75	45
	b. HSI post treatment score equal to or greater than .625 and less than .75	25
	c. HSI Post treatment greater than .5 but less than .625	8
	d. HSI Post treatment will be .5 or less	0
RQ7: Wildlife Habitat - Percent of the application treatment acreage that involves jack pine management to benefit Kirtlands Warbler -	a. 75% and greater	45
	b. 50% and greater, but less than 75%	25
	c. 33% and greater, but less than 50%	15
	d. less than 33%	0

American Bird Conservancy: Improving Forest Health for Wildlife Resources in MI, MN, and WI – 2018 FB RCPP Project #2245

Workload Prioritization:

Beginning in FY2023 there will be a Workload Prioritization Tool. All High and Medium priority projects will be ranked.

Priority Determination – Select One:	
<p><u>High Priority Category:</u> Within the project scope, this application will address the Terrestrial Habitat resource concern by implementing a CPA 106 and/or DIA 165 on land beneficial to GWWA or KIWA habitat, OR</p> <p>will result in GWWA upland early successional habitat with a treatment block > or equal to 5 acres, has the potential to contain 2 or more age classes after treatment, and has a forest composition of northern hardwoods within the stand, OR</p> <p>this application will result in improved Kirtland’s Warbler breeding habitat of at least 40 acres in size and within, adjacent to, or very near 300 acres of suitable habitat for a Treatment Block.</p>	High
<p><u>Medium Priority Category:</u> Within the project scope, this application will address the Terrestrial Habitat resource concern by implementing shrub wetland early successional habitat with a treatment block > or equal to 5 acres, has the potential to contain 2 or more age classes after treatment, and has a shrub composition > 75% speckled alder with at least 50% of the surrounding forest of proposed treatment area comprised of deciduous trees.</p>	Medium
<p><u>Low Priority Category:</u> All other applications.</p>	Low

RCPP-ABC Project Contacts:

RCPP Project Coordinator: Ryan Gerlich, (608) 662-4422, ext 227, ryan.gerlich@usda.gov

ABC Technical Lead: Pat Weber, (715) 362-5491, pat.weber@usda.gov or pweber@abcbirds.org

ABC Great Lakes Private Lands Director: Linnea Rowse, (715) 362-5941, ext 107 linnea.rowse@usda.gov or lrowse@abcbirds.org

NRCS State Biologist: Steve Bertjens, (608) 662-4422, ext 267, steve.bertjens@usda.gov

Northwest Area Ruff Grouse Society Forester: Jared Elm, (715) 635-8228 jared.elm@usda.gov