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## Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds: Making Cities Better for Birds

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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

# Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds

## *Making Cities Better for Birds*

### Migratory Bird Management

#### Mission

*To conserve migratory bird populations and their habitats for future generations, through careful monitoring and effective management.*



#### Why an Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds?

For the vast majority of people, birds represent their most frequent contact with wildlife. Birds are a valuable resource, contributing aesthetically, culturally, scientifically, and economically to America's citizens. Urban areas are critical for migrating birds. Large concentrations of birds migrate along flyways or routes on which many large urban centers have developed. Important bird habitat is often found within these metropolitan areas. With an environmentally aware citizenry dedicated to conserving and enhancing their natural resources, cities can be sanctuaries for migratory birds and other wildlife.

#### What Is an Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds?

An Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds is a partnership agreement between a U.S. city and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) to conserve migratory birds through education and habitat improvement. The Service provides challenge grants and technical assistance. The Treaty city develops and

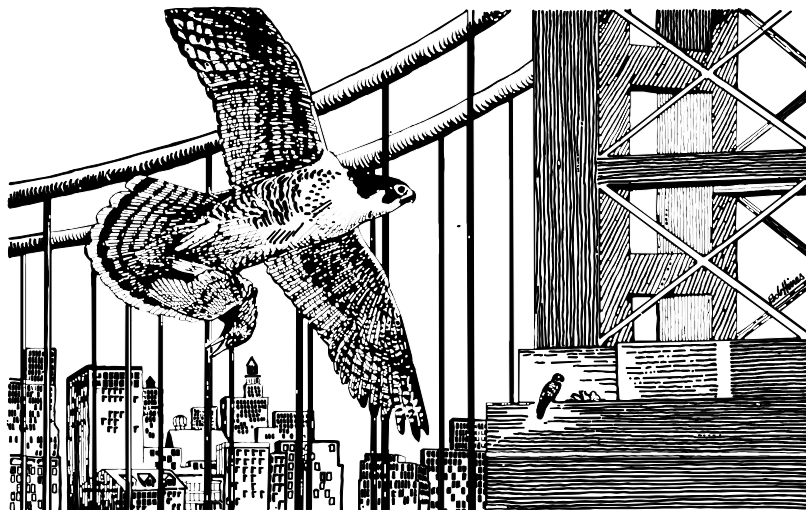
implements bird conservation projects, provides matching dollars and in-kind support, and develops additional partnerships.

#### What Type of Funding Is Provided?

Cities are awarded Service "challenge" grants from \$10,000 to \$150,000, depending on the scope of projects proposed by city and Service project leaders. The Treaty city is "challenged" to raise an amount equal or greater than the amount of funds awarded by the Service. The match may consist of cash or "in-kind" contributions of goods and services from the Treaty city or third party donors.

#### What Are the Main Components?

The focus areas of the Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds are Habitat Creation, Protection, and Restoration; Education and Outreach; Hazard(s) Reduction; and Non-native, Invasive, or Nuisance Animal and Plant Species Management. Each city will work with the



*The Peregrine Falcon is a notable example of a wildlife species able to adapt to the urban environment. credit: Bob Hines*

Service to develop a customized action plan that specifies goals and objectives in the four focus areas. Some cities may choose to emphasize education programs through teaching bird-focused curricula or constructing schoolyard habitat sites. Others may choose to reach out to individuals in the workplace or owners of tall buildings by providing incentives for dimming or turning lights off at night during peak migration to reduce fatal bird collisions. In all cities, there will be efforts to raise awareness of the public's role in conserving declining species by creating, protecting and restoring habitat.

#### **What Is the Selection Process?**

An Urban Conservation Treaty Team, made up of Service personnel from several regions within the U.S., is accepting recommendations from agency field locations near metropolitan areas, and reviewing formal letters of interest from municipalities around the country to determine appropriate locations for Treaty cities.

A guideline booklet to apply for an Urban Conservation Treaty for Migratory Birds is available on-line at <http://birds.fws.gov/urbantreaty.html> or from the Division of Migratory Bird Management at 703 358 1714.

#### **Is There a Recognition Program?**

Yes, at the completion of action plan initiatives, a city will receive a national "Golden Wing Award" to recognize its ongoing commitment to urban migratory bird conservation. There will also be opportunities for the Treaty cities and the

Service to promote their program throughout the extent of the grant period, and for established Treaty cities to mentor newer fledgling Treaty cities as they develop their action plans, and to team together on national awareness campaigns.

#### **Where Are the Treaty Cities and Why Were They Selected?**

The Treaty cities are selected based on the intent of their proposal and for their commitment to provide habitat for wildlife, particularly migratory birds. Other criteria are a city's location along a major migratory flyway, and its proximity to Service personnel who are able to provide technical assistance and guidance in achieving the Treaty activities.

##### New Orleans, Louisiana

Mayor Marc H. Morial

Date: June 13, 1999

Grant Amount: \$50,000

##### Chicago, Illinois

Mayor Richard M. Daley

Date: March 25, 2000

Grant Amount: \$120,000

##### Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

Mayor John F. Street

Date: May 8, 2002

Grant Amount: \$75,000

##### Houston, Texas

Mayor Lee P. Brown

Date: April 18, 2003

Grant Amount: \$120,000

Portland, Oregon will sign a Treaty in May 2003.



*credit: Bob Hines*

*The Urban Conservation Treaty Program capitalizes on the increasing public interest in migratory birds and the national trend toward increasing the livability of urban areas.*

#### **What Else Is Needed for the Program?**

A permanent source of funding will be required to meet the growing demand for this ambitious new program. Wildlife managers in the Service and in cities and conservation organizations welcome the focus on urban conservation and are clamoring to be included.

**For More Information:**  
**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Division of Migratory Bird Management**  
**4401 N. Fairfax Drive, MS: 4107**  
**Arlington, VA 22203**  
**703 358 1714**  
**<http://birds.fws.gov>**

**April 2003**



*People and birds can co-exist in many settings.*

*credit: Bob Hines*