

New Mexico Habitat Stamp Program 2022 Implementation Report



August 2022

New Mexico Department of Game and Fish

in conjunction with cooperators in the

United States Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management

SUMMARY

For project year 2022, the NMDGF's HSP was given authority through game commission approval and state legislative appropriation for a budget of \$750,000 to implement habitat restoration and conservation projects on federal lands. Partners were able to utilize \$716,130 to help support 19 projects on publicly accessible federal lands throughout the state of New Mexico.

Through the continued financial support of anglers and hunters utilizing federally managed public lands in New Mexico, the State's wildlife resources continue to benefit through a user supported fund dedicated to proactive wildlife management and conservation. Since its inception in 1986, the HSP has helped provide funding for over 2,500 habitat enhancement and wildlife management projects in New Mexico, with HSP Fund expenditures of more than \$25 million.

INTRODUCTION

The HSP is a collaborative effort between anglers, hunters, NMDGF, Bureau of Land Management (BLM), and Forest Service (USFS) that is implemented under authority of the Sikes Act (16USC670) and the New Mexico State Game Commission (NMAC 19.34.6). The State Game Commission renewed the Rule in 2021, allowing for the continuation of the HSP through March 2031. The rule renewal included several changes to the program structure, including the elimination of regional boundaries allowing for the creation of a single Citizen Advisory Committee (CAC) with statewide purview, a new requirement that 50% of program project expenditures averaged over 5 years are allocated to projects that benefit fish, and establishing the HSP stamp purchase price at \$10, which is linked to the consumer price index for automatic adjustment for inflation.

HSP requires the maintenance of accurate records and the filing of annual reports setting forth the amount and disposition of the fees collected from habitat stamps. The purpose of this document is to provide that report to the program partners, and to provide an annual record of accomplishments to all HSP stakeholders.

FUNDING

The annual budget is approved by the State Game Commission and appropriated by the Legislature. Projects are implemented within the State's fiscal year of July 1 to June 30 each year.

UNITS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT

For this reporting period, 19 projects were prioritized by the CAC and recommended to be funded by the HSP budget (\$750,000). \$33,870 in HSP funds was not expended by cooperators. HSP strives to minimize unexpended funds through close communication and coordination with agency cooperators to identify potential project implementation shortcomings and reallocate funds within the state fiscal year. Table 1 depicts projects completed in project year 22 and total HSP expenditures.

PROJECT EXPENDITURES

For this cycle, the HSP budget expenditures to project types was: Forested Habitat Restoration - 37%, Riparian and Wetland Restoration - 29%, Water Infrastructure - 19%, and Wildlife Habitat Connectivity - 15%.



Forested Habitat Restoration 37% (\$268,524)



Wetland and Riparian Restoration 29% (\$205,790)

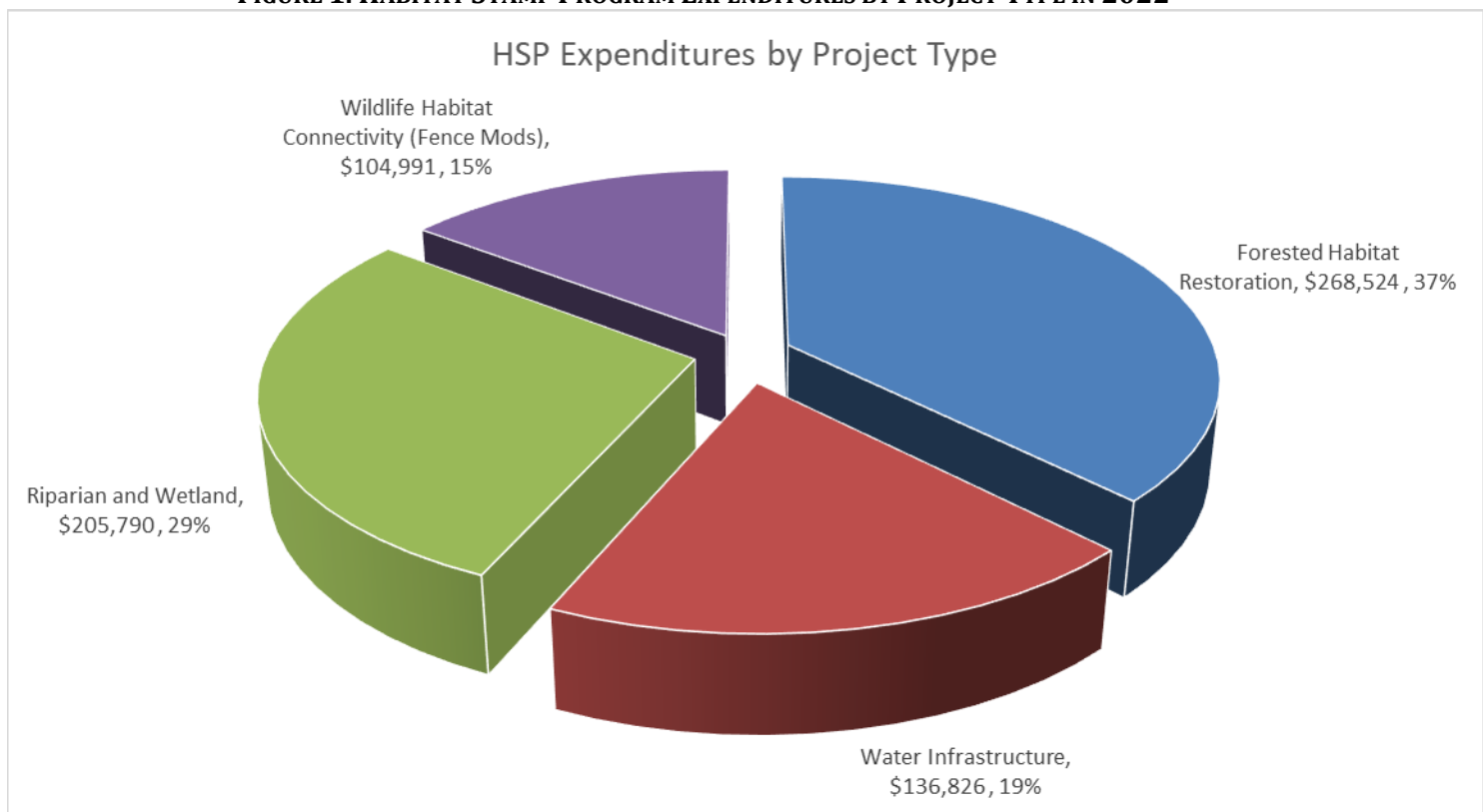


Wildlife Water Infrastructure Rebuilds/Renovations 19% (\$136,826)



Wildlife Habitat Connectivity/Fence Modifications 15%, (\$104,991)

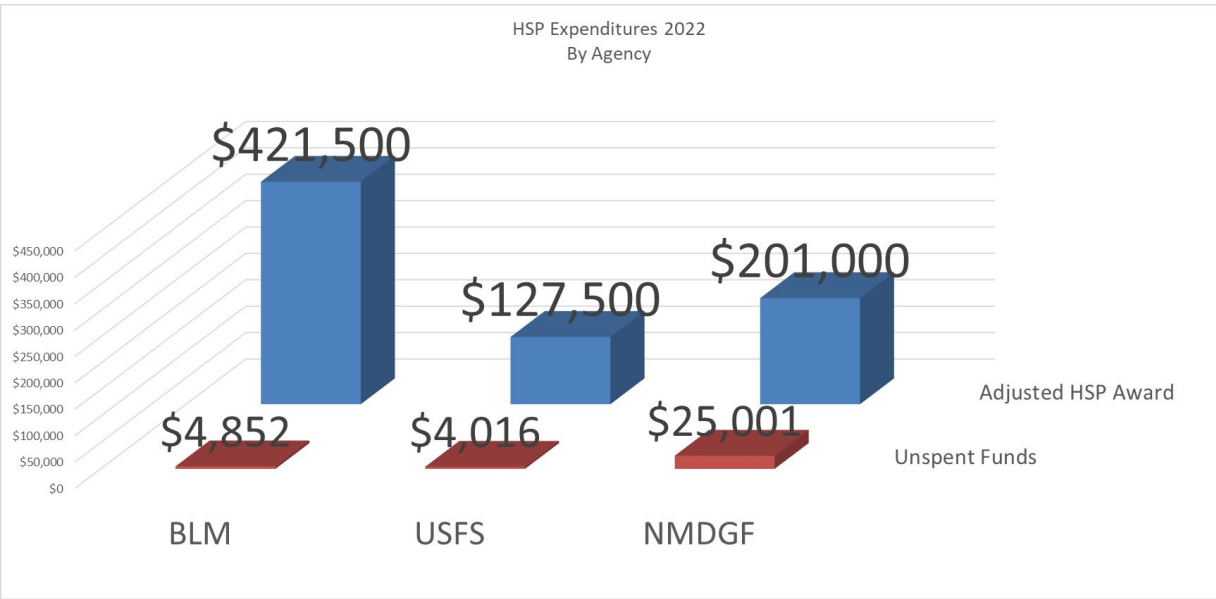
FIGURE 1. HABITAT STAMP PROGRAM EXPENDITURES BY PROJECT TYPE IN 2022



Total project expenditures, including reported partner contributions, for all projects completed in project year 2022 have been compiled in Table 1 at the end of this document.

The greatest source of unspent HSP funds came from the Mount Taylor Fence Modification project which was put on hold as a result of the acquisition of the LBar property which shares borders with the project area of project. Because of the management potentials that now exist, it was determined that it would be better to develop a new plan that incorporated the whole picture of the new ownership of adjacent lands. Funds from this project were not re-allocated. In 2022, the HSP allocated \$750,000 to agency partners and collaborators for habitat conservation projects. Table 3 explains the budget adjustments that occurred after the initial allocation. Budget adjustments are only carried out when an agency partner or collaborator informs the HSP manager that a project has a budget surplus or otherwise cannot be completed. Upon such notice, every effort is made to re-allocate the remaining balance to an eligible, prioritized project. Despite these efforts, some funds are still left unspent, typically due to a lack of notice of the budget surplus due to a project becoming unachievable. In 2022, \$33,870 in HSP funds were left unspent, accounting for 4.5% of the overall budget. Figure 3 depicts the adjusted allocations that each agency was responsible for spending, along with the funds that each agency was unable to spend.

FIGURE 3. HABITAT STAMP PROGRAM EXPENDITURES BY AGENCY IN 2022



CONCLUSION

Anglers and hunters continue to supply funding for a program from which they can see positive impacts. The program’s use of a collaborative decision-making process that allows a diverse level of involvement though its Citizen Advisory Committees also separates it from typical government programs. With nearly 2,000 structures built by or adopted into the HSP, maintenance has become an extraordinary task. Agency leaders, cooperators and the citizens they serve understand that the costs for implementing and maintaining HSP projects have increased dramatically over the years and that resources are limited to accomplish all project work. Cooperators are achieving the HSP’s mission to provide diverse wildlife habitat for the benefit of current and future generations. It is hoped this effort will meet the interests of all citizens and the wildlife we seek to conserve. With continued agency coordination and support from the purchasers of the Habitat Stamp, future prospects are bright for providing continued accomplishments funded by the Habitat Stamp Program.

For more information about the Habitat Stamp Program please contact:

Habitat Stamp Program Manager
New Mexico Department of Game and Fish
1 Wildlife Way Santa Fe, NM 87507

TABLE 1. UNITS OF ACCOMPLISHMENT COMPLETED IN THE 2022 PROJECT YEAR

Project Type	# of Projects	HSP Spent *	USFS/BLM Spent	Volunteer/ Other	Total Spent Federal, State, and other Partner
Water Infrastructure	4	\$136,826	\$195,500	\$20,000	\$352,326
Forested Habitat Restoration	6	\$268,524	\$1,076,500	\$200,000	\$1,545,024
Riparian and Wetland	6	\$205,790	\$80,000	415,000	\$700,790
Wildlife Habitat Connectivity	3	\$104,990	\$45,000	\$160,500	\$310,491
Totals	19	\$716,130	\$1,397,000	\$795,500	\$2,908,630
Match Ratio		\$1.00	\$1.95	\$.90	\$2.85 match for every \$1.00 HSP

Figure 4. 2022 Habitat Stamp Program Project Locations

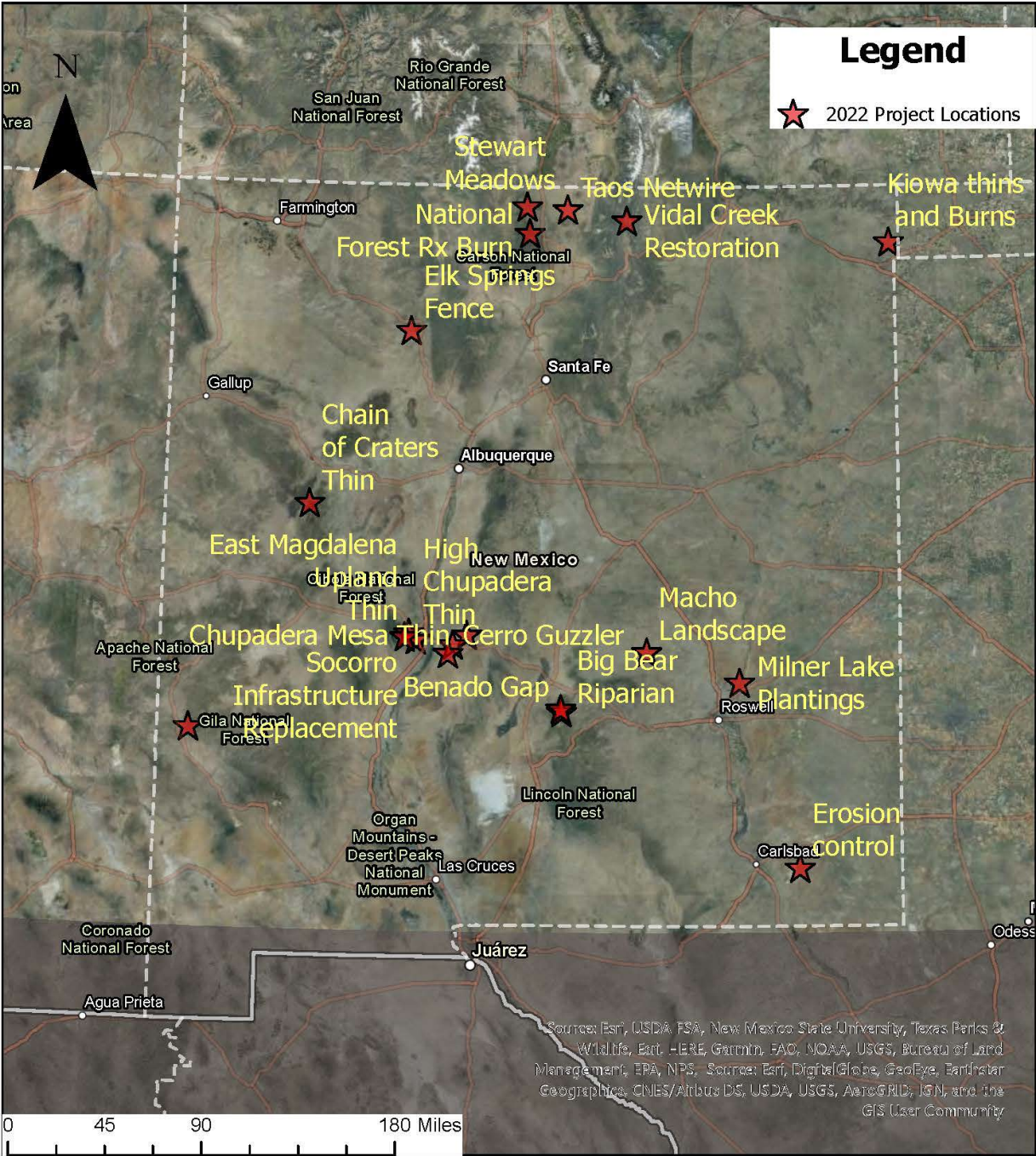


Table 2. 2021 Habitat Stamp Program Tracking Report

Project No.	Project Name	Agency Cost Share	Other Partner	Total Project Budget	HSP Funding	HSP Funds that were not spent
CB-2022-02	Elk Springs ACEC Fence construction/Maintain	\$15,000		\$30,000	\$15,000	\$0
CB-2022-03	Chain of Craters - Landscape level mechanical thinning	\$75,000		\$100,000	\$25,000	\$0
CBS-2022-006	High Chupadera Thin	\$50,000		\$100,000	\$50,000	\$0
CBS-2022-003	Chupadera Mesa Thin	\$25,000		\$65,000	\$40,000	\$0
CBS-2022-007	East Magdalena Upland Thin	\$50,000		\$100,000	\$50,000	\$0
CBS-2022-001	Taylor Game Waterl	\$25,000		\$53,000	\$28,000	\$0
CBS-2022-002	Cerro Guzzler Replacement	\$25,000		\$39,500	\$14,500	\$0
NEB-2022-002	Net Wire Fence Modification	\$20,000	\$153,000	\$213,000	\$40,000	\$0
SEBC-2022-006	Erosion Control Work	\$10,000		\$14,674	\$9,000	\$4,326
SEBR-2022-001	Macho Landscape	\$45,500		\$115,491	\$70,000	\$9
SEBR-2022-003**	Milner Lake Cottonwood Planting	\$8,500		\$13,657	\$5,200	\$43
CBS-2022-004**	Socorro Infrastructure Replacement	\$50,000	\$20,000	\$144,326	\$74,800	\$474
NMDGF-2022-005	Vidal Creek Headwater Restoration	\$50,000	\$300,000	\$450,000	\$100,000	\$0
NMDGF-2022-001	National Forest Rx Burn	\$900,000	\$200,000	\$1,200,000	\$100,000	\$0
NMDGF-2022-003	Carson NF West Zone Riparian Restoration	\$10,000	\$105,000	\$164,999	\$50,000	\$1
SEF-2022-001	Big Bear Riparian Improvement	\$20,000	\$10,000	\$49,960	\$20,000	\$40
NEK-2022-001	Kiowa HSP Thins and Burns	\$8,000		\$11,524	\$7,500	\$3,976
SEF-2022-002	Benado Gap	\$10,000	\$7,500	\$43,500	\$26,000	\$0
NMDGF-2022-002	Mt. Taylor Fence Mod	\$0	\$ -	\$0	\$25,000	\$25,000
Totals		\$1,397,000	\$795,500	\$2,908,630	\$750,000	\$33,870

- ** Denotes a project that had its original budget adjusted, see Table 3
- NMDGF-2022-002 was a project that was put on hold. See project expenditures section of this report for more information.

Table 3 Habitat Stamp Program Budget Adjustments Post Allocation

Project No.	Project Name	Initial Funding Award	Funding Change (+) (-)	Funding Source / Destination	Adjusted Funding Award	HSP Funds that were not spent
SEBR-2022-003	Milner Lake Cottonwood Planting	\$ 9,000	\$ (4,800)	CBS-2022-004 Socorro Infrastructure Replacement	\$5,200	\$43
CBS-2022-004	Socorro Infrastructure Replacement	\$ 70,000	\$ 4,800	SEBR-2022-003 Milner Lake Cottonwood Planting	\$74,800	\$474

The budgets for the above projects were adjusted as depicted. The “Initial Funding Award” column shows the original HSP allocation, the “Funding Change” column shows the net change in the budget (green for addition, red for subtraction), the “Funding Source / Destination” column shows the source (red) of the additional funding or the destination (green) of the budget surplus. The “Adjusted Funding Award” shows the net HSP funds that were allocated post budget adjustments.