



MISSOURI BIRD CONSERVATION INITIATIVE

Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative Grant Program FY2024 Request for Proposals

**Proposals due September 29, 2023, by 5:00pm CT
Work Period July 1, 2024 – June 30, 2025**

The Missouri Bird Conservation Initiative (MOBCI) is requesting proposals for its annual grant program. Funding is available to partners who help deliver bird conservation projects across Missouri, with an emphasis on native habitat or projects that have a bird-centric education focus. Our partnership with the Missouri Department of Conservation (MDC) has enabled us to invite public and private organizations, non-profits, and Government entities to apply for up to \$25,000 per proposal to help MOBCI further their mission of working together to conserve bird populations and their habitats.

Projects should benefit an array of bird species (e.g., Appendix A: grassland, woodland, young forest, savanna, forest, wetland, special occurrence birds) wherever possible. An acceptable project may target one or more high priority bird species, but should include benefits to other bird species, involve habitat and ecosystem level planning and management, and engage partners with shared goals and objectives. Missouri's priority species are outlined in the Missouri Bird Conservation Plan's Technical Section [Missouri Bird Conservation Plan's Technical Section](#) on page 16. A checklist of Missouri species and communities of conservation concern can be found at [Missouri Species and Communities of Conservation Concern](#). Bird species are listed on page 49. The [Missouri Comprehensive Conservation Strategy](#) also has a list of Species of Greatest Conservation Need (Appendix, H, starting on page 474). A list of the bird species in this table are on pages 516 – 521 of Appendix H. (<https://mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/2022-Missouri-CCS.pdf>).

This year, we will offer 2 different grant categories: a Natural Community/Habitat Grant based on MDC's Natural Community/Habitat Management Prioritized Landscape Tiers, and a Community Conservation and Engagement Grant that focuses on MDC's Community Conservation Tiers. They are described below:

Natural Community/Habitat Grant

Missouri's conservation partners have identified key landscapes of priority across the state based on varying respective interests. This grant prioritizes habitats based on the Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) identified in the 2020 State Wildlife Action Plan:

<https://mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/2022-Missouri-CCS.pdf>. Habitat priority tiers can be found in an interactive online map at the following link:

<https://mdcgis.maps.arcgis.com/apps/webappviewer/index.html?id=6c7434bc026c469da59fe90889b37095>. This grant is focused on the restoration, reconstruction, enhancement, and protection of lands that are key for Missouri's native birds and reflect MOBCI's more traditional habitat projects. Outreach and education projects will not be funded under this opportunity.

Community Conservation and Engagement Grant

Community Conservation is the process of engaging local governments, citizens, and private organizations within municipalities and adjacent developing areas to:

- 1) connect people with nature,
- 2) raise awareness of the community environmental and health benefits provided by healthy fish, forest, and wildlife resources,
- 3) promote conservation of the natural resources through technical assistance, and
- 4) encourage development that protects native fish, forest, and wildlife diversity.

MOBCI is looking to reflect these principles, while keeping a focus on the needs of Missouri's birds, in the Community Conservation and Engagement Grant. Examples of projects include planting native tree species to help with heat islands while providing habitat, encouraging participation in International Dark Skies programs, working with cities on sustainability planning, developing, and implementing programs to decrease window strikes, designing citizen science projects, encouraging sustainable agriculture, supporting market-based conservation, recruiting new birders, and delivering programs that promote landscaping with native plants. These projects should result in an increase in visibility of our native birds and help address their needs.

Eligible Projects

Projects should be designed to meet the needs of native birds across all habitats of Missouri and focus on MOBCI's priority areas.

The Natural Community and Habitat Tiers can be found [here](#) from the Missouri Comprehensive Conservation Strategy. Eligible Projects may include habitat protection; habitat enhancement or implementation of Best Management Practices (BMPs); native habitat restoration or reconstruction; and other creative projects that effectively conserve native habitat for birds.

Community Conservation Tiers may be found [here](#) for this grant. Eligible Projects may include habitat protection; habitat enhancement; native habitat restoration or reconstruction; training events for bird conservation practices; addressing community identified resource concerns that negatively impact birds; and other creative projects that effectively conserve native bird populations.

Ineligible for Funding

MOBCI grant funds cannot assist applicants with administrative overhead costs or cover salaries. MOBCI funds may not be used to purchase equipment. Applicants may include their administrative overhead costs as match, provided it is directly related to the bird habitat improvement project or monitoring of the project being proposed through this current Request for Proposals. MOBCI will only provide funding for projects in which monitoring comprises 10% or less of the project costs. Outreach/Education projects are not eligible for the Natural Community/Priority Geography Grants.

Project Scoring

All projects will be scored by a team of reviewers to help determine awardees. Points will be awarded in the review process for projects that place a strong emphasis on partnerships as well as those that address habitats found in the priority habitats. Priority habitats are based on the Conservation Opportunity Areas (COAs) identified in the 2020 State Wildlife Action Plan: <https://mdc.mo.gov/sites/default/files/2022-04/2022-Missouri-CCS.pdf>. If your project is within a priority tier (e.g., priority geography, natural area, other COA, CCT), please include the name of the geography within your proposal. Higher tiers equate to higher points.

Ranking Criteria

Natural Community/Priority Geography Grant

- Priority and non-priority bird species addressed in Appendix A (15 points)
- Priority tier & habitats conserved (e.g., Tier 1 or 2; Priority Geography/Natural Area, other COA, Quail Restoration Landscape; see interactive map link above) (20 points)
 - Tier 1, 20 pts
 - Tier 2, 15 pts
 - Tier 3, 5 pts
 - Tier 4, 2 pts
 - Outside tiers, 0 pts
- Purpose of grant (detailing goals and objectives) and project description/narrative (15 points)
- Partnerships (30 possible points)
 - 1 partner, 10 pts
 - 2-3 partners, 20 pts
 - 3+ partners, 30 pts
- Budget: detailed to include costs for individual tasks by each partner and overall cost/acre (15 points)
- Bonus for first-time MOBCI proposal from an organization (5 points)

Community Conservation and Engagement Grant

- Priority and non-priority bird species addressed in Appendix A (15 points)

- Priority tier & habitats conserved (e.g., Tier 1 or 2 in the CCT; see interactive map link above) (20 points)
 - Tier 1, 20 pts
 - Tier 2, 15 pts
 - Tier 3, 5 pts
 - Outside tiers, 0 pts
- Purpose of grant (detailing goals and objectives) and project description/narrative (15 points)
- Partnerships (30 possible points)
 - 1 partner, 10 pts
 - 2-3 partners, 20 pts
 - 3+ partners, 30 pts
- Budget: detailed to include costs for individual tasks by each partner and overall cost of the project (15 points)
- Bonus for first-time MOBCI proposal from an organization (5 points)

Grant Awards & Match

Individual grant awards are available for a minimum award of \$1,000 to a maximum award of \$25,000 annually.

MOBCI grants require a one-to-one match of funds that DO NOT originate from the Missouri Department of Conservation (including Wildlife Diversity Funds, Habitat Challenge match, or any other Department sources). Both monetary and in-kind match are eligible. A monetary match contribution is only applicable as a match requirement once it is expended on a cost or activity identified in your work plan. In-kind match is a non-cash contribution of value provided by the project coordinating entity, such as the value of any donated real estate property, equipment, goods, or services contributed to a project that would have been paid for by recipient/subrecipient to complete the project.

The match may include, but is not limited to:

- Acquired realty, either fee title or an easement, for up to 50% of the requested funds
Please see below for requirement details.
- Partner financial contributions, monetary or in-kind.
- Monitoring and evaluation costs, monetary or in-kind.
- Stewardship costs. This may include hiring a contractor, purchasing supplies, or renting equipment.
- Volunteer time. An hourly rate is applicable for all volunteer hours that are tracked. If your organization does not have a fixed volunteer rate, the current national rate for 2023 is \$31.80/hr. (<https://independentsector.org/resource/value-of-volunteer-time/>)

- MOBCI is open to considering all forms of match that do not originate from MDC. If unsure of eligibility of match, please contact one of the grant administrators listed at the end of the RFP prior to submission of grant proposal.
- Projects which include a significant amount of overhead as match (i.e., indirect administrative expenses) are strongly discouraged.

Requirements for realty match:

Donated or acquired property or easements may be included as part of the project match for a maximum of 5 years if the following conditions are met:

- A copy of the appraisal is included (not included in the page length limit) to document the valuation (must be provided from a non-recipient of the property or easement).
- A table documenting each year and value that the property/easement has been used as match toward MOBCI funding, the cumulative value already used as match toward MOBCI funding, and the current year’s requested match provided by the property/easement to document the total use of the property/easement as match and relation to its total value (see example in Table 1).
- The property/easement may not be used as match if the cumulative value of the match claimed toward MOBCI projects exceeds the value of the property/easement.
- At least 50% of the match toward MOBCI funding should be from sources other than donated or acquired property or easements.

Match Plan Partner	Proposal I	Proposal II	Proposal III	Proposal IV	Proposal V	Total \$
XYZ Easement	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$12,500	\$62,500
Totals	\$62,500	\$50,000	\$37,500	\$25,000	\$12,500	\$0

Table 1. An example of a spend-down table for the “XYZ Easement” valued at \$62,500 used as match over five years.

Application and Review Process

Grant applications should include the information listed in the *General Requirements* section below to be considered eligible. The MOBCI Grants Subcommittee will review, score (based on the ranking criteria seen above) and provide funding recommendations to the MOBCI Steering Committee. The MOBCI Steering Committee will make recommendations for final approval to MDC.

General Requirements

- Maximum length is six pages for the entire proposal, including maps, and at least an 11-point font.
- Grant Title
 - Clearly indicate which funding opportunity the grantee is seeking in the application.
- Purpose of Grant (Clearly define goals, objectives, or activities to be achieved with applicable timelines.)
- Project Location (include map)
- Indicate at the beginning of the proposal if this is a first-time application for the organization.
- Project Description including narrative and any pertinent tabular information.
- Habitat types, birds, and other wildlife benefited.
- Project Calendar (work period is July 1, 2024, through June 30, 2025)
- Measurable Outcomes (Identify specific and measurable outcomes that will be used for tracking progress.)
- Measurable Deliverables (Describe products or services that will be provided by the grantee.)
- Reporting and Monitoring Plan (Describe process for monitoring and reporting progress and identify a point-of-contact with e-mail address.)
- Lead Organization, point-of-contact, and capacities (Provide names, titles, addresses, electronic addresses, and phone numbers of parties to answer questions relating to the agreement; if applicable, include a list of NGO Board members and officers.)
- List of Partners involved in the project and point-of-contact for those other partners (same as above for Lead Organization).
- Fiscal Responsibility/Management (Describe fiscal management and identify grantee fiscal agent.)
- Budget will include a table including Grant Request Amount and columns for funds requested from MOBCI and funds provided as matching dollars (see Table 2). Please include cost per acre in the budget table (if applicable). A detailed narrative of how the funding will be used is also necessary.
- Note- Mandatory Deliverables will include
 - 3-5 good quality digital pictures of project implementation,
 - 3-5 good quality digital pictures of completed project and/or event,
 - Reports must be sent to the contacts below, Allison Vaughn and Kristen Heath-Acre.
- Semi-annual and annual financial and progress reports are also mandatory deliverables.

Task	MOBCI Funds Requested	Match Source & Amount	Total Costs
Cut and remove cedar trees	\$7,500	\$3,500 (paid by landowner)	\$11,000

Burn crew		\$2,500 (from partnership volunteer hours)	\$2,500
Pre- and post-monitoring of birds		\$1,500 (from Missouri University)	\$1,500
Sum of Costs	\$7,500	\$7,500	\$15,000
		Summary cost per acre: \$200/acre	

Table 2. Sample budget table for restoring glade habitat.

Deadlines

All grant proposals **must be received by Jean Favara at jpouf1@swbell.net and Allison Vaughn at allison.vaughn@dnr.mo.gov no later than 5:00 p.m. September 29, 2023.**

Only electronic applications in pdf format will be accepted. Please type “**MOBCI GRANT PROPOSAL (Your organization’s name)**” in the subject line of your submission email.

The MOBCI Grants Subcommittee will notify applicants of their status within three months of due date and indicate recommendation for funding made to Missouri Department of Conservation or reasons for rejection and/or suggestions for making the proposal more competitive. Grantees will be required to complete a cooperative agreement with the funding agency (i.e., Missouri Department of Conservation).

For Grant Assistance Contact:

Allison Vaughn, MOBCI Committee Chair
 Allison.vaughn@dnr.mo.gov
 Phone: 573-522-3260

Kristen Heath-Acre,
 Wildlife Ecologist, Ornithologist
 Missouri Department of Conservation
 1@swbwill.Kristen.HeathAcre@mdc.mo.gov
 Phone: 573-522-4115 ext.3262

To learn more about MOBCI go to www.mobci.net

Appendix A: Missouri Bird Conservation Plan's priority bird species.

Natural Community	Common Name	MO Concern Score ¹	Population Trend, MO	Threats to Breeding, MO	Relative Density - Breeding, MO	Population Size, Global	Breeding Distribution, Global
GRASSLAND BIRDS	Eastern Kingbird	15	5	3	4	2	1
	Grasshopper Sparrow	15	5	4	3	2	1
	Henslow's Sparrow	17	2	4	5	4	2
	Bobolink	11	1	4	2	2	2
	Eastern Meadowlark	17	5	4	5	2	1
	Dickcissel	16	4	3	5	2	2
SAVANNA, WOODLAND, AND YOUNG-FOREST BIRDS	Northern Bobwhite	16	5	4	4	2	1
	Yellow-billed Cuckoo	16	5	3	5	2	1
	Chuck-will's-widow	16	5	3	4	2	2
	Eastern Whip-poor-will	18	5	3	5	3	2
	Chimney Swift	16	5	4	4	2	1
	Red-headed Woodpecker	17	5	3	5	3	1
	Eastern Wood-Pewee	14	3	3	5	2	1
	Bewick's Wren	17	5	5	3	2	2
	Brown Thrasher	15	4	3	5	2	1
	Eastern Towhee	15	4	3	4	2	2
	Field Sparrow	17	5	3	5	2	2
	Yellow-breasted Chat	13	3	3	4	2	1
	Orchard Oriole	13	2	3	5	2	1
	Blue-winged Warbler	15	3	3	4	3	2
	Prairie Warbler	18	5	3	5	3	2
	FOREST BIRDS	Blue Jay	14	4	3	4	2
Wood Thrush		14	3	3	4	2	2
Worm-eating Warbler		15	2	3	5	3	2
Prothonotary Warbler		13	3	3	2	3	2
Kentucky Warbler		15	2	3	5	3	2
Cerulean Warbler		18	5	4	4	3	2
WETLAND BIRDS	Green Heron	15	5	3	3	3	1
GENERALIST BIRDS	Common Grackle	16	5	4	5	1	1
SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE BIRDS ²	Ruffed Grouse	-					
	Greater Prairie-Chicken	-					
	King Rail	-					
	Bachman's Sparrow	-					
	Brown-headed Nuthatch *extirpated	-					

¹ MO Concern Score = sum of other five scores: MO Population Trend, MO Threats to Breeding, MO Relative Density, Global Population Size, and Global Distribution.

² Special Circumstance Birds were not scored due to extremely low breeding populations caused by various circumstances. See SPECIAL CIRCUMSTANCE BIRDS section of the Missouri Conservation Bird Plan for more info.