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Acres for America Supports Land Conservation Projects in Eight States

\$3.8 million in grants will protect forests, watersheds and support local economies

WASHINGTON, D.C. (November 15, 2017) – Acres for America, one of the most effective public-private partnerships in the history of U.S. conservation efforts, today announced \$3.8 million in grants to protect and connect wildlife habitat across more than 100,000 acres in California, Hawaii, Michigan, Minnesota, Montana, North Carolina and Texas. These grants will leverage an additional \$81.2 million in matching contributions, pushing the total conservation investment to more than \$85 million.

Acres for America was established by Walmart and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) to conserve lands of national significance, protect critical fish and wildlife habitat, and benefit people and local economies.

“Since 2005, the Acres for America program has supported conservation projects in communities across the country. The 2017 grants announced today include some of the nation’s most important forest and water resources for wildlife and local communities,” said John Clarke, vice president of Walmart store planning. “Walmart is proud to support these local efforts of national significance as part of our efforts to conserve natural habitat and strengthen local communities.”

Forests figure prominently in this year’s grant slate, including a rare native forest on the island of Oahu in Hawaii, old growth redwood stands in California, longleaf pine in Texas, and the oldest known tree in the eastern United States – a 1,600-year-old bald cypress in eastern North Carolina. In addition, projects in Minnesota and Montana will conserve working timberlands that provide important wildlife habitat, as well as hunting, fishing and wildlife viewing opportunities while securing the economic base of rural communities that rely on timber production and recreation.

The grants also focus on the protection of water resources, including more than 100 miles of rivers and streams, several entire watersheds that provide drinking water for local communities, and 4 miles of Lake Huron’s shoreline in Michigan.

“These eight projects represent some of the best of aspects of conservation in America, including the protection of exceptional wildlife habitat, creation of new outdoor recreational opportunities, and the generation of economic benefits to local communities,” said Jeff Trandahl, executive director and CEO of NFWF. “We are proud to support these projects and appreciative of Walmart’s commitment to help conserve our nation’s unique natural heritage for generations to come.”

Acres for America began in 2005 when Walmart made an initial 10-year, \$35 million commitment to purchase and preserve one acre of wildlife habitat in the United States for every acre of land developed by the company. The program has surpassed that initial goal, with more than 1.3 million acres protected – an area comparable in size to Grand Canyon National Park. In 2015, Walmart renewed its commitment to the program by contributing an additional \$35 million over 10 years, with a goal of protecting an additional one million acres across the nation. Now in its 13th year, Acres for America has leveraged more than \$45 million in contributions from Walmart, in addition to more than \$434 million in matching contributions from grant recipients.

This year's Acres for America grant recipients include:

Acquisition of the Waimea Native Forest on the Shores of Oahu, Hawaii

The Trust for Public Land will receive a \$600,000 grant to help acquire the rugged 3,716-acre Waimea Native Forest on the North Shore of Oahu, Hawaii to complete the protection of the entire Waimea watershed from mountaintop to ocean. The project will secure suitable habitat for rare birds, including the Newell's shearwater and the Oahu elepaio, along with numerous other threatened and endangered wildlife and plant species. The forest will also protect the headwaters of two major streams which flow directly to Waimea Bay and the Humpback Whale National Marine Sanctuary.

Conservation of Mailliard Ranch Redwood Forests in Northern California

Save the Redwoods League will receive a \$250,000 grant to help place a conservation easement on the 14,898-acre Mailliard Ranch working forest. The grant will help conserve high-quality redwood, oak woodland and riparian forests, including 1,000 acres of old-growth redwoods. The ranch also hosts 28 miles of streams that provide habitat for migrating salmon and steelhead, and will connect with another 82,000 acres of contiguous protected lands.

Acquisition of Temescal Ranch in Southern California

The Trust for Public Land will receive a \$500,000 grant to help acquire the 6,006-acre Temescal Ranch, which will be the largest conservation project in Los Angeles County history. The grant will conserve native forest and shrub habitats, and wildlife corridors that support sensitive species like the California condor and Southern California steelhead and expanding outdoor recreation opportunities.

Conservation of the Swift Creek-Stillwater Linkage Area of Montana

The Trust for Public Land will receive a \$645,000 grant to acquire 13,398 acres of critical watershed and forestland in the Swift Creek–Stillwater Linkage Area of Montana. The project will prevent subdivision and development in the rapidly growing Flathead Valley, enhance landscape-scale connectivity for species such as grizzly bear, elk and bull trout, and ensure public recreational access.

Conservation of Texas' Longleaf Ridge

Texas A&M Forest Service will receive a \$270,000 grant to restore and protect a portion of Longleaf Ridge connecting the Angelina and Sabine National Forests north of Beaumont. The project will use a conservation easement to permanently protect 5,500 acres of managed timberland containing longleaf pine woodlands, beech slope forests, spring-fed creeks, pitcher plant bogs and other rare plant species.

Acquisition for Minnesota's Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness in Superior National Forest

The Conservation Fund will receive a \$500,000 grant for Phase 1 of this project to serve as a key catalyst toward the ultimate goal of acquiring 50,000 acres of land within and around the Boundary Waters Canoe Area Wilderness, which spans one million acres within the Superior National Forest of northeastern Minnesota. The grant will help protect habitat for moose, bald eagles, Canada lynx, spruce grouse, Connecticut warbler and boreal owl, among other species. This project will also enable up to an additional 50,000 acres of privately held land to be transferred to the State of Minnesota to provide wildlife habitat, recreational uses and sustainable timber production.

Conserving Michigan's North Point Peninsula

In Michigan, The Nature Conservancy will receive a \$500,000 grant to help purchase 1,384 acres on the North Point Peninsula, including four miles of Lake Huron's shoreline. The acquisition will safeguard this pristine area which includes habitat for migratory birds and coastal wetlands that are important habitat for fish, wildlife and rare plants. In addition, the project will significantly augment the eco-tourism, educational and youth programs of the neighboring Thunder Bay National Marine Sanctuary.

Blackwater River Land Protection in North Carolina

The North Carolina Coastal Land Trust and The Nature Conservancy, as part of a regional partnership, will receive a \$550,000 grant to purchase 5,200 acres of longleaf pine and bottomland hardwood forest habitat along the Waccamaw and Black rivers in eastern North Carolina. This effort will safeguard more than 11 miles of river, provide habitat for dozens of at-risk wildlife species, and create public access for hiking, hunting and boating. This grant will also secure the protection of a stand of 1,600-year-old bald cypress, the oldest known trees east of the Rocky Mountains.

For additional information about Acres for America, please click [here](#).

About Walmart

Wal-Mart Stores, Inc. (NYSE: WMT) helps people around the world save money and live better - anytime and anywhere - in retail stores, online, and through their mobile devices. Each week, over 260 million customers and members visit our 11,723 stores under 59 banners in 28 countries and e-commerce websites in 11 countries. With fiscal year 2017 revenue of \$485.9 billion, Walmart employs approximately 2.3 million associates worldwide. Walmart continues to be a leader in sustainability, corporate philanthropy and employment opportunity. Additional information about Walmart can be found by visiting <http://corporate.walmart.com> on Facebook at <http://facebook.com/walmart> and on Twitter at <http://twitter.com/walmart>.

About the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) protects and restores our nation's wildlife and habitats. Chartered by Congress in 1984, NFWF directs public conservation dollars to the most pressing environmental needs and matches those investments with private contributions. NFWF works with government, nonprofit and corporate partners to find solutions for the most intractable conservation challenges. Over the last three decades, NFWF has funded more than

4,500 organizations and committed more than \$3.8 billion to conservation projects. Learn more at www.nfwf.org.

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