Landowner Incentive Program
Grassland Protection and Management
Pre-application and Instructions
Request for Applications
Round 3

Pre-application must be submitted by:

February 1, 2013
Landowner Incentive Program
Grassland Protection and Management
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Section I: Purpose of the Program

The Landowner Incentive Program for Grassland Protection and Management is administered by the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). This program has been successful in enrolling over 2,500 acres of high-quality grassland habitat into protection and management contracts. The program encourages private landowner participation in habitat management and protection by providing technical advice and financial incentives for the protection of at risk wildlife and habitats; specifically grassland birds and their habitat (see Attachment A). The DEC recognizes the assistance provided by Audubon New York, a recognized authority in ornithology and habitat conservation, in establishing this program.

DEC ecologists and Audubon NY ornithologists have determined that grassland birds are a key statewide conservation focus. Because the vast majority of grassland habitat is privately owned, involving private landowners is the best way to ensure viable populations and long term survival of grassland birds. This is also the most cost effective way of protecting at risk species, because it doesn’t require the State to purchase and manage extensive land parcels.

If you are an eligible private landowner and are selected to receive a State Assistance grant for the protection of grassland bird habitat, DEC will provide you with technical assistance in the form of a Site Management Plan (SMP).
**Ecological and Geographical Focus:** Financial assistance is currently available for the protection and management of grassland habitat on private land. The geographical range of the program is limited to grassland within the focus areas shown on this map.

Grassland focus areas were determined by analyzing the 2000 New York Breeding Bird Atlas data for grassland birds for the entire state. To further refine the focus areas, the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) and Audubon NY conducted point counts during the spring and summer of 2005.

The target grassland bird species are: northern harrier, upland sandpiper, short-eared owl, horned lark, sedge wren, vesper sparrow, grasshopper sparrow, Henslow’s sparrow, bobolink, eastern meadowlark and savannah sparrows. The last three species listed are native grassland birds, and although their populations have declined significantly, they remain fairly widespread and abundant in New York; for now their populations appear secure. Consequently, DEC concentrated on the rarer species and larger unbroken expanses when determining the grassland focus areas.
Section II: What Applicants Need to Know

The DEC has apportioned approximately one million dollars from its portion of State Wildlife Grants funding from the Department of the Interior, United States Fish and Wildlife Service, for new projects that protect and manage grassland bird habitat within the grassland bird focus area (see Figure 1).

WHO IS ELIGIBLE TO APPLY? To be eligible to apply for financial assistance, an applicant must be a "private landowner" and must own at least twenty-five acres of contiguous grassland (or shrubland the landowner is willing to convert into grassland) located within one of the grassland focus areas identified on Page 4 of this Request For Applications (RFA). Private landowners having appropriate habitat on properties located just outside but contiguous to a focus area will be generally eligible to apply for grant funding under this program.

- “Private Landowner” is defined as and includes individuals, non-governmental organizations, and privately-owned businesses.

- “Private Land” is defined as any non-government-owned land.

- “Not-for-profit corporation” means an organization formed pursuant to the Not-for-Profit Corporation Law and qualified for tax-exempt status under Section 501(c)(3) of the Federal Internal Revenue Code. A not-for-profit (NFP) corporation must submit proof of incorporation (or equivalent documentation) from the NYS Department of State, and a charities registration number from the NYS Office of the Attorney General. Not-for-profit corporations must be up-to-date on their charities reporting requirements with the Attorney General’s office.

WHO IS NOT ELIGIBLE TO APPLY? Municipal agencies at all levels of government (federal, state, county, town, city, etc.) are not eligible to apply, and any type of government owned land is excluded from funding under this Program. Acres of land already enrolled in this program or enrolled in similar incentives (e.g. USDA Farm Bill programs) are not eligible for funding.

DEC employees and their immediate families are not eligible to apply for funding. Former DEC employees are not eligible to apply for funding within two years of leaving DEC employment.

IS THERE A MINIMUM ACREAGE REQUIREMENT? Yes. Unbroken or connected grassland parcels twenty-five acres and greater in size are eligible for funding. Scientific research has shown that grassland birds need large, open and uninterrupted habitat patches to thrive. Parcels greater than 30 acres in size will receive priority points in DEC’s project evaluation and scoring process. DEC’s established project evaluation and scoring process is required to determine the best selection of eligible projects for funding.

IS THERE A MINIMUM GRANT AMOUNT? Grant amounts are based on the acreage of habitat accepted and enrolled into the program. The minimum grant amount corresponds to twenty-five acres, at a rate of $110/acre, paid over five years, or $13,750. Large unbroken parcels of high-quality habitat are most desirable for species conservation.

HOW WILL SELECTED LANDOWNERS RECEIVE STATE ASSISTANCE PAYMENTS? A landowner will receive annual contract payments only after performing the activities specified for that year in their
SMP and after a state representative has verified through an on-site inspection that the SMP tasks and activities have been completed.

**WHAT DETERMINES PROGRAM PAYMENT RATES?** DEC has calculated payment rates by evaluating the highest and best agricultural use for eligible properties, determined to be corn production. This is a standard method of evaluating fair property rental rates for conservation and has been approved by the United States Fish and Wildlife Service. Private landowners that are selected to receive financial assistance under this program will be compensated at the rate of $110 or $113 per acre per year to conduct the prescribed site management. The higher rate will be applied for parcels of land located within 25 miles of large urban areas (populations of more than 100,000), reflecting higher soil rental rates near population centers.

**IS THERE A LANDOWNER MATCH REQUIREMENT?** Yes, the payment rates described above have a 50-percent reduction factored in, in the form of reduced land rental rates. This 50-percent reduction fully accounts for the landowner’s match requirement.

**ARE PROGRAM STATE ASSISTANCE CONTRACT PAYMENTS TAXABLE?** Yes, state assistance payments are taxable. The State Department of Taxation and Finance will send you a 1099 form for moneys you receive from this grant program. Landowners are advised to consult their tax advisor or accountant to determine their individual tax liability.

**WHAT IS THE PROGRAM FUNDING PERIOD?** Applicants selected to receive grant funding will be required to sign a state assistance contract that will carry a term of five years.

**HOW WILL LANDOWNERS BE NOTIFIED OF A GRANT AWARD?** If your application scores high enough to receive a grant award, you will be sent an official award letter from the Commissioner of the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation. Shortly thereafter, DEC will send you a state assistance contract that will include a SMP and a contract payment schedule. You will be required to sign and return all required contract documents to DEC for final approval.

**ARE THERE OTHER PROGRAM REQUIREMENTS OR INFORMATION FOR THE APPLICANT?** Yes. The following eligibility requirements, criteria and information apply to all applicants:

1. Land must be privately owned. Landowners will be required to provide proof of ownership in the form of a deed if their pre-application project scores high enough to be further reviewed under Stage 2 of the evaluation process. Landowners will be notified in writing by the DEC if their project scores high enough to continue on to Stage 2 evaluation, at which point the landowner will be required to submit a copy of a their deed.

2. Landowners must be willing to enter into a state assistance contract to receive contract payments. The contract will carry a five-year term and the landowner must perform all the activities identified in the contract SMP. Concurrent with signing a contract, landowners will also need to sign a Memorandum of Agreement (MOA) that will be filed at the corresponding county clerk’s office to indicate that the property is enrolled in a five-year habitat protection program.
3. Properties with multiple owners are eligible to apply. However, the owners must designate a lead owner (applicant) on the pre-application form. The lead applicant will be the sole owner responsible for implementing the SMP and the owner to receive annual contract payments. If a project is selected to receive grant funding, all owners of the property must agree to one of the following two options before a contract can be fully approved by DEC and any other applicable state agency:

   a. All landowners listed on the deed must sign both the state assistance contract and the Memorandum of Agreement. However, one individual landowner must be designated in writing to DEC as the lead applicant. A document designating the lead applicant must be signed by all persons on the deed before DEC and all other applicable state agencies can fully approve a contract.

   OR

   b. All landowners listed on the deed will need to sign a Power of Attorney - the New York State Short Form:
      designating a lead applicant to act on their behalf and sign the contract and MOA. Only the person designated as the lead applicant will sign the contract and MOA.

4. Property must be located in one of the grassland focus areas. Properties that have appropriate habitat and are contiguous but just outside of a focus area generally will be considered eligible. The focus areas include portions of the following counties:


5. Acres of land already enrolled in similar incentive programs (such as, the Conservation Reserve Program and other USDA Farm Bill programs) are not eligible for funding under this Program. However, other acreage is eligible as long as the acreage has not been funded from a previous DEC LIP grant round, or any other incentive program. Landowners currently under contract with DEC for enrolled acreage that is currently being managed as the result of a previous DEC LIP grant round, may apply for funding as long as the parcels are separate parcels that are not under contract with DEC or enrolled in other programs.

6. Landowners must allow DEC staff or their representatives to enter the eligible property at reasonable hours and after notification.

7. All NFP organizations must include their Federal Employer ID number and New York State Charities registration number with their application. A NFP must also submit a Resolution of Support (see Attachment C for sample resolution) identifying the person authorized on behalf of the organization to submit an application and sign legal documents. This person will receive official notification from DEC about decisions regarding the NFP application.
8. All privately-owned businesses must include their Federal Employer ID number. They must also submit a Resolution of Support (see Attachment C for sample resolution) identifying the person authorized on behalf of the organization to submit an application and sign legal documents. This person will receive official notification from DEC about decisions regarding their application.

9. Once a project proposal has been selected for funding, DEC will notify the landowner of the need to provide additional information necessary to complete the state assistance contract. Landowners will be required to submit, within 30 business days of receipt of such notice, the following items:

a. Applicants that receive a grant award/contract will be subject to a vendor responsibility review by the DEC to ensure public dollars are being spent appropriately with responsible vendors. A vendor responsibility review will determine whether a potential vendor has the financial capacity, the legal authority, record of business integrity, and a satisfactory history of past performance. Applicants that receive a grant award of $100,000 or more will be required to complete a Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire. Additional information on how to complete the Vendor Responsibility Questionnaire can be found at: http://www.osc.state.ny.us/vendrep/info_vrsystem_vendor.htm

b. A signed and notarized NY state assistance contract which will include a DEC approved SMP, payment schedule, and standard State and DEC contract clauses. The grant recipient will be subject to all appropriate state rules, regulations and reporting requirements.

WHAT IS A SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN (SMP)? A SMP is a document that details management activities that a landowner must perform on the proposed project site. If a project proposal is ultimately selected to receive grant funding, the DEC will work with the landowner to complete a SMP which will be included in a state assistance contract. The SMP provides the landowner with clear instructions for management of their grassland habitat, and provides DEC with a way to track and evaluate the progress of a project. State assistance contract payments will be provided to a landowner only after DEC or its representative(s) verifies that the work performed by the landowner complies with the SMP.

WHAT KIND OF ACTIVITIES WILL LANDOWNERS BE REQUIRED TO PERFORM AS SPECIFIED IN THE SITE MANAGEMENT PLAN (SMP)? Eligible private landowners will be required to manage their land to benefit grassland birds. Required management will include not mowing the enrolled grassland between April 23 and August 15 (the nesting season), mowing a portion of the grassland after the nesting season and removing some shrubs, certain invasive species, trees, and hedgerows. In addition, some seeding may be needed. Activities that will not be compatible with this program are high density rotational grazing; production of row crops; wind energy production; and mining on enrolled acres. Excessive disturbances, such as frequent travel through the field or loud noises, such as fireworks or frequent motorized vehicle and ATV use, are also not compatible with the goals of the program. These activities are generally compatible outside of the enrolled fields as long as they do not cause an excessive disturbance and may need to be reviewed on an individual basis. Hunting and trapping legal game during the applicable seasons are generally compatible with grassland bird management. All management requirements will be specified in the SMP.
WHAT ARE BEST MANAGEMENT PRACTICES (BMPs) FOR GRASSLAND BIRD MANAGEMENT? BMPs are habitat management guidelines used by persons wishing to improve grasslands or create suitable grassland habitat. They were developed for the Landowner Incentive Program for Grassland Protection and Management, but can be applied to any grassland. These guidelines form the basis of the SMPs, and may be found in Attachment D of this RFA.

MINORITY AND WOMEN BUSINESS ENTERPRISES: Non-governmental organizations, privately owned businesses and not-for-profit corporations must comply with Article 15A of the Executive Law, Minority and Women-owned Business Enterprises/Equal Employment Opportunity. For additional information on M/WBE and EEO requirements, please review http://www.dec.ny.gov/about/48854.html.

PROCUREMENT OF CONTRACTORS/SUBCONTRACTORS:
Not-for-profit corporations must follow procurement policies that ensure prudent and economical use of public money. Failure to comply with these requirements could jeopardize your annual contract payments.

IRAN DIVESTMENT ACT: By submitting an application in response to this solicitation or by assuming the responsibility of a Contract awarded hereunder, Applicant/Grant Recipient (or any assignee) certifies that it is not on the “Entities Determined To Be Non-Responsive Bidders/Offerers Pursuant to The New York State Iran Divestment Act of 2012” list (“Prohibited Entities List”) posted on the OGS website at: http://www.ogs.ny.gov/about/regs/docs/ListofEntities.pdf and further certifies that it will not utilize on such Contract any subcontractor that is identified on the Prohibited Entities List. Additionally, the Applicant/Grant Recipient is advised that should it seek to renew or extend a Contract awarded in response to the solicitation, it must provide the same certification at the time the Contract is renewed or extended. During the term of the Contract, should the Department of Environmental Conservation (Department) receive information that a person (as defined in State Finance Law §165-a) is in violation of the above-referenced certifications, the Department will review such information and offer the person an opportunity to respond. If the person fails to demonstrate that it has ceased its engagement in the investment activity which is in violation of the Act within 90 days after the determination of such violation, then the Department shall take such action as may be appropriate and provided for by law, rule, or contract, including, but not limited to, seeking compliance, recovering damages, or declaring the Contractor in default.

The Department reserves the right to reject any bid/application, request for assignment, renewal or extension for an entity that appears on the Prohibited Entities List prior to the award, assignment, renewal or extension of a contract, and to pursue a responsibility review with respect to any entity that is awarded a contract and appears on the Prohibited Entities list after contract award.
Section III: Overview of the Application, Review, and Selection Process

HOW WILL GRASSLAND PROJECTS BE SELECTED FOR FUNDING? To fund the best projects, allot funds most effectively and provide the greatest ecological benefit for our at risk species, DEC will rank proposals through a three stage process that considers both quantitative and qualitative factors, placing each proposal into a priority funding level. The cost effectiveness of a proposal will be determined by the number of grassland bird species that can be protected through grant funding. (A sample pre-application and project score sheet are shown in Attachment B.)

STAGE 1 - SUBMISSION OF PRE-APPLICATIONS
Interested applicants must complete and submit a pre-application post-marked by February 1, 2013. Pre-applications will be reviewed and scored by the DEC using criteria specific to grassland bird ecology and natural history (See Stage 1-Pre-application Quantitative Scoring). Applications having a pre-application score of 50 points or higher will move on to Stage 2 – Qualitative Scoring. Applications that score below 50 points in the pre-application stage will be returned to the applicant and will not be considered eligible for further review and evaluation.

To obtain a Landowner Incentive Program Pre-application:
See Insert, in this packet; or Call 518-402-8943 to request one; or Download on the DEC website at http://www.dec.ny.gov/pubs/32891.html; or E-mail: F&WLIP@gw.dec.state.ny.us to request an application for the LIP Grasslands Program.

Documents you must include with your pre-application are:
(1) Map(s) of project area. Please include a locator map(s) of the project area(s) within NY State, and map(s) or aerial photographs of actual project area.

(2) Original, signed letters of permission from all involved landowners. Copies of deeds are not required at this time, however proof of property ownership will be required if an application scores high enough to proceed to Stage 2. All deeds will be verified by DEC through the contracting process.

Documentation for No. 3 apply to not-for-profit organizations only:
(3) Copy of 501(c)(3) tax-exempt determination letter from the IRS with Federal EIN number, NYS charities registration number, and a copy of a resolution of support. A sample resolution is attached to this RFA as Attachment C. All resolution documents must be submitted to DEC within 30 days after the pre-application deadline or the pre-application will be disqualified.

Documentation for No. 4 apply to privately-owned businesses only:
(4) Copy of a resolution of support. A sample resolution is attached to this RFA as Attachment C. All resolution documents must be submitted to DEC within 30 days after the pre-application deadline or the pre-application will be disqualified. Applicants must also provide their Federal EIN number.

Please send your signed, completed pre-application form and additional required documents to:
Wildlife Services
Attn: LIP Grassland Protection and Management Program
NYSDEC
625 Broadway
Albany, NY 12214-0334
PRE-APPLICATION QUANTITATIVE SCORING:
All pre-applications received by the deadline will be scored by the DEC program coordinator (the coordinator) using quantitative criteria specific to grassland bird ecology. In addition to the basic information provided by an applicant in the pre-application, data relating to these criteria will be gathered from DEC’s 2000-2005 Breeding Bird Atlas surveys and through current high definition aerial photography of New York State. These data will be used to calculate a point score for each of the following criteria:

Diversity: Number of species from the at risk species list (see Attachment A) documented as possibly, probably or confirmed breeding in the 2000-2005 Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) block(s) in which the proposed project is located. The Breeding Bird Atlas is a state-wide comprehensive survey that shows the distribution of bird species that breed in New York State. For more information about the Breeding Bird Atlas, including a map delineating the blocks, please refer to http://www.dec.ny.gov/animals/7312.html

- Score for endangered, threatened or special concern species – each species present x 10 points
- Score for non listed species -- each species present x 3 points

Colonization Potential: Number of additional species (not identified above) from the at risk species list documented as possibly breeding (or higher) in the BBA blocks contiguous to the one in which the proposed project is located. These neighboring species would serve to colonize the subject parcel after habitat management.

- Score for endangered, threatened or special concern species -- each species present x 5 points
- Score for non-listed species - each species present x 1 point.

Size: Grassland acreage to be enhanced or maintained; the greater the contiguous acreage, the better for grassland birds.

- Score for less than 25 acres* - Not Eligible
- Score for 25-30 acres - number of acres x 1 point
- Score for 31-50 acres - number of acres x 1.1 points
- Score for 51-100 acres - number of acres x 1.5 points
- Score for 101 or more acres - number of acres x 1.75 points
*Area will be rounded to the nearest acre

Perimeter/Area Ratio: This ratio is calculated by comparing the perimeter, or edge, of a parcel to the area or interior. Interior habitat is preferable for many grassland bird species as there are generally fewer disturbances, predators and social parasites such as the brown-headed cowbird, which lays its eggs in the nests of other birds in an interior location as opposed to on the edge of a parcel. Therefore, a low perimeter/area ratio has greater habitat value. This is another way of considering the shape of a grassland parcel. Thus, a perfectly square parcel is preferable to a long and thin rectangular one of the same area.

- Score: Good: Perimeter/Area less than 0.015 = 25 points
- Neutral: Perimeter/Area greater or equal to 0.015 but less than 0.030 = 0 points
- Bad: Perimeter/Area equal to or greater than 0.030 = -25 points
Surrounding Beneficial Landscape Ratio: This is a measure of the suitability of the surrounding habitat for grassland birds. If a project site is adjacent to other grasslands or other non-forested or undeveloped habitat, it increases the value of the parcel to the target species, increasing the score for the project. For this score, habitat within one kilometer (a little over half a mile) of the edge of the parcel will be considered.

- Score: Good: Beneficial area/Total area is equal to or greater than 0.5 = 10 points
- Neutral: Beneficial area/Total less than 0.5 but greater than 0.25 = 0 points
- Bad: Beneficial area/Total less than or equal to 0.25 = -10 points

Based on the above criteria, a total number of points will be tallied. Scores that total below the sum of 50 will be categorized as "low," scores between 50 and 100 will be categorized as "medium," and scores greater than 100 will be categorized as "high." Pre-applications categorized as "low" will be returned to the applicant with an accompanying letter stating their score and will not be considered eligible for further review. Pre-applications categorized as "medium" and "high" will move on to the Stage 2 qualitative evaluation.

**Stage 1-Quantitative Scoring**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Point Range</th>
<th>Evaluation Rating</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>101+</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50-100</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Less than 50</td>
<td>Low</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The DEC review panel will evaluate each application in the Stage 2 evaluation process identified below.
STAGE 2 – QUALITATIVE SCORING - EVALUATION of PROPOSED PROJECTS:
The proposed project will be evaluated by a DEC review panel using the following criteria and Best Management Practices for grassland birds to assess the project in each of the following three categories:

• Project Conservation Benefit: Will the proposed project significantly improve ecological conditions for the target species at the site?
  ▪ Is the project near or adjacent to other protected grasslands?

• Threats Assessment: If the project is not done, what is the probability that the site will become crop land, developed or otherwise become unsuitable for the target species?
  ▪ Are there local development threats or factors that may affect the success of the project?
  ▪ Is there biofuel/wind energy production nearby?

• Feasibility of Success: How likely is it that the project will be successful in accomplishing grassland bird protection and management?
  ▪ Do large unbroken thick hedgerows with mature trees divide the fields?
  ▪ Does the interior of the grassland contain a large expanse of shrubs or other woody material?
  ▪ Does the landowner have the capability to carry out the required management?

Each member of the review panel will individually rate each application in three qualitative categories as "high," "medium," or "low." An overall rating will be assigned for each category based on a simple plurality of the team.
STAGE 3 - METHOD of AWARD and ASSIGNMENT OF FUNDING PRIORITIES:

Combining the quantitative and qualitative scores

Once DEC has finished the quantitative scoring and qualitative evaluation for all eligible proposals, projects will be classified into priority levels according to the following matrix:

### Stage 3-Project Prioritization

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Stage 1: Quantitative Score</th>
<th>Stage 2: Qualitative Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>High (101+)</td>
<td>Priority 1</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Medium (50-100)</td>
<td>Priority 2</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Low (Less than 50)</td>
<td>N/A¹</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

¹N/A=Proposals that were ranked “Low” during Quantitative Scoring will not be considered for selection.

- Projects will be selected for funding in descending score order within each priority level, beginning with Priority Level 1, then 2, then 3, until available funding is exhausted.

- In the unlikely event that two projects receive the same score and sufficient funds remain for only one of the projects, DEC will decide which project to fund based on the cost efficiency of the projects and the need for protection of specific species cited in the projects.

- If there is insufficient funding to pay for all Priority Level 3 projects, they will be selected in descending order based on project score.

- Projects classified as Priority Level 4 will be considered individually and will be funded only if the total amount awarded for priority 1 through 3 projects for that year is 10 percent or less of the total available funds remaining for the program.

- Applications that are not funded in Priority Level 4 and those in Priority Levels 5 and 6, will be returned to the applicant with an explanation of why their application did not score well. Applicants may revise their unfunded applications and resubmit them during the next available open application period.
Attachment A. Grassland Bird At-Risk Species

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Species</th>
<th>NY Natural Heritage Rank 1</th>
<th>NYS Status</th>
<th>Breeding</th>
<th>Wintering</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northern harrier</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Upland sandpiper</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Short-eared owl</td>
<td>S2</td>
<td>Endangered</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Horned lark</td>
<td>Spec. Concern</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td>X</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sedge wren</td>
<td>S3</td>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vesper sparrow</td>
<td>Spec. Concern</td>
<td></td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Grasshopper sparrow</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>Spec. Concern</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Henslow’s sparrow</td>
<td>S4</td>
<td>Threatened</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobolink</td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>not listed*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Eastern meadowlark</td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>not listed*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah sparrow</td>
<td>S5</td>
<td>not listed*</td>
<td>X</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Footnote 1: Natural Heritage Program Status:

- S2 Typically 6 to 20 occurrences; few remaining individuals, acres or miles of stream, or factors demonstrably making it very vulnerable in New York State.
- S3 Typically 21 to 100 occurrences; limited acreage or miles of stream in New York State
- S4 Apparently secure in New York State
- S5 Demonstrably secure in New York State

Although these species are native grassland birds that are fairly widespread and abundant in New York, they are still included as target species due to significant population declines in recent years and because they share similar grassland habitat with the more threatened species.
Attachment B. Sample Pre-Application and Proposal Scoring

PART A. Lead Applicant Information
Applicant (Last Name, First Name, MI) Landowner, Janice, L

Street 1 PO Box 53

Street 2

City/Town Grassland State NY Zip 10101

Email Address Jlandowner@email.com

Home Tel. 315-555-5555 Work Tel. Cell Tel. Fax Tel.

Classification of Applicant: (check option that applies to you)

☒ Individual ☐ Not-For-Profit ☐ For-Profit

If a Not-For-Profit or For-Profit Organization, Provide federal ID number and/or NYS Charities Registration below:

Federal ID: NYS Charities Registration (if applicable):

CONTACT PERSON (If different from above):

Name (Last Name, First Name, MI) Title:

Business (Name of Building)

Street, Suite, PO Box

City/Town State Zip

Email Address

Home Tel. Work Tel. Cell Tel. Fax Tel.

PART B. Project Location (Required):
You must include an aerial photograph (preferred), highway, local, tax or other map clearly showing the project location and the contours of the field(s) you wish to apply to enroll.

Is the project located at the above address? ☑ Yes ☒ No

If not, please provide Address (Street) 1642 Bobolink Lane

City/Town Grassland State NY Zip 10101

Coordinates (if available): N: W: Or UTM:
PART C. Site Information *(Required)*:

| Tax Lot ID: 15.56-04-57 | Total Parcel Size *(acres)*: 106 |

| Total field Acreage you are applying to enroll in LIP *(acres – 25 acre minimum)*: | 52 |

If more than one contiguous field, please break down acreage here:


Please do not include forested, developed or water acreage in this calculation. 

**You must be prepared to manage this acreage as a grassland largely devoid of shrubs, trees or crops.**

Do you maintain the grassland yourself with a brush-hog, haybine or other equipment?

☑ Yes ☐ No

Do you have a standing agreement with another individual for maintenance of your grasslands?

☐ Yes ☑ No

Are you willing to remove trees and shrubs from in and around the grassland, if required?

☑ Yes ☐ No

Is there any additional information you would like us to know about your property?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

PART D. Ecological Information *(Optional)*:

Please place a check next to the predominant habitat types of the property. If known, please estimate the approximate percentage of each:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grass or low herbs</th>
<th>35%</th>
<th>Wetland</th>
<th>5%</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pasture</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Lake/Open Water</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Row Crops</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>River Stream</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Brush</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Developed</td>
<td>X 5%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Forest</td>
<td>X</td>
<td>Other</td>
<td>0%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(All habitat types combined should = 100%)
Are you aware of any endangered, threatened or special-concern species that use the property?

☑ Yes

What Kind:

**Northern harriers**

---

**Part F. Affirmation (Required):**

I affirm under penalties of perjury that all statements made on this form (including any attached papers) are true. I affirm that I meet the eligibility criteria as listed herein. I understand that all statements made by me in connection with this pre-application are subject to investigation and verification and that a material misstatement or fraud may disqualify me from being eligible for the Landowner Incentive Program or lead to the revocation of my award.

**May 20, 2012**  
**Janice L. Landowner**  
Date  
Signature of Lead Applicant  

**Janice L. Landowner**  
Please Print Your Name
Map of Property:
### STAGE 1 - PRE-APPLICATION QUANTITATIVE SCORING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Criteria</th>
<th>Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Diversity:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of E/T/SC species</td>
<td>29</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of other spp. from list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species: Grasshopper sparrow (prob. breeding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E. Meadowlark (confirmed breeding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bobolink (confirmed breeding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Colonization Potential:</strong> (From adj. BBA blocks) (not identified above)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of E/T/SC species</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Number of other spp. from list</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Species: Vesper sparrow (confirmed breeding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Barn owl (probable breeding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Savannah sparrow (confirmed breeding)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Size:</strong></td>
<td>78</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Acres to be enhanced or maintained (# of acres x multiplier)</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>52</strong> acres x (1.1) =</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Perimeter to Area Ratio - perimeter (m)/area (m2):</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good &lt; 0.015</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.015 ≤ Neutral &lt; 0.030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad ≥ 0.030</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Surrounding Beneficial Landscape Ratio:</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Good ≥ 0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0.25 &lt; Neutral &lt; 0.5</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Bad ≤ 0.25</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Overall Project Score __123__ points
Stage 2: Qualitative Evaluation of Proposed Projects

Project Conservation Benefit:
- Is the project near or adjacent to other protected grasslands? NO

Threats Assessment:
- Are there local development threats or factors that may affect the success of the project? YES
- Is there biofuel/wind energy production nearby? NO

Feasibility of Success:
- Do large unbroken thick hedgerows with mature trees divide the fields? NO
- Does the interior of the grassland contain a large expanse of shrubs or other woody material? NO
- Does the landowner have the capability to carry out the required management? YES

Stage 3: Assignment of Funding Priority

This project has received a quantitative score of 123 (high) and a qualitative score of high. From the funding priority matrix, this project is categorized as funding priority 1, as shown below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Qualitative Scoring:</th>
<th>Evaluator A</th>
<th>Evaluator B</th>
<th>Evaluator C</th>
<th>Consensus Plurality</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Project Cons. Benefit</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Threats Assessment</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Low</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>Medium</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feasibility of Success</td>
<td>Medium</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
<td>High</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Funding Decision: This project is placed in the Priority 1 category, and provided there is sufficient funding, will be funded under the Landowner Incentive Program.
Attachment C. NFP Resolution of Support/Endorsement

A resolution authorizing the not-for-profit Corporation to sponsor/conduct the project as described in the pre-application must be passed at an official meeting of the not-for-profit corporation governing body. The resolution must be prepared on the not-for-profit corporation stationery. The name and title of the person authorized to sign the contract for the not-for-profit Corporation must be included in the resolution. A signed original or certified copy of the resolution should be submitted with this pre-application or within 30 days of the pre-application deadline. See sample resolution below:

Not-for-Profit Corporation Governing Body Resolution of Support Authorizing Submission of Grant Pre-application

RESOLVED:
That [name], as [title] of [not-for-profit corporation name] is hereby authorized and directed to file an application for funds from the Landowner Incentive Program on behalf of [not-for-profit corporation name] in an amount not to exceed $ [grant amount], and upon approval of said request to enter into and execute a State Assistance Contract with the New York State Department of Environmental Conservation for such financial assistance to [not-for-profit corporation name] for [grant project name] and further, to carry out and comply with the terms of such contract.

Date __________________________

I, [name], [the duly elected and qualified secretary] of the [not-for-profit corporation name] of [place], New York, do hereby certify that the preceding resolution was adopted at a [regular] OR [special] meeting of the [governing body] held on [date], and is [incorporated in the original minutes of said meeting] OR [on file and record], and that said resolution has not been altered, amended or revoked and is in full force and effect.

(Signature of Secretary)
Seal of Not-for-Profit Corporation
Attachment D. Best Management Practices for Grassland Birds

**General Purpose:** These Best management practices (BMPs) should be used to guide habitat management on grassland habitat or habitat to be converted into grassland. The management goal of these BMPs is to maintain the open, grassy conditions necessary for successful breeding by grassland birds and to avoid disturbance to nesting birds. Techniques to be used may include seeding, mowing, and removal of trees and shrubs. Land should be managed for a minimum of 5 years to begin showing benefits for grassland birds.

Although developed for the Landowner Incentive Program (LIP) for Grassland Protection and Management, these BMPs can be applied to any sizable grassland to benefit grassland birds. These BMPs will form the basis for specific 5-year SMPs for landowners selected to receive technical and financial assistance through LIP.

**A. Target Bird Species:** The management recommendations in these BMPs are aimed towards grassland birds. Target birds are those listed as “probably” or “confirmed” breeding in the 2005 Breeding Bird Atlas (BBA) Block where the subject field is located. Birds registered in BBA blocks adjacent to the block where the field is located could colonize the subject field once the habitat becomes suitable for them.

**B. Timing:**

1) Nesting Restrictions: Grasslands should not be disturbed by mowing, planting, harvesting, driving, or by any other mechanized means from 23 April to 15 August, inclusive (the nesting season) of every contract year.

2) Wintering Restrictions: Excessive disturbance such as frequent high speed snowmobile, ATV, or motorized vehicle operation or loud noises such as fireworks should be avoided from 1 November to 1 March, inclusive for the protection of wintering raptors.

3) Mowing window: All mowing must be done between 16 August and 1 October.

**C. Preliminary site management:**

1) Between 16 August and 1 November of the first year of management, reduce fragmentation of the grassland by eliminating hedgerows, shrubs, and trees within the boundaries of the LIP Field (see Mowing Layout Map, below).

2) Between 16 August and 1 November and to the extent possible, eliminate woody vegetation, especially hedgerows within and bordering the field. Hedgerows split up habitat and function as predator corridors for coyote, foxes, cats, raccoons, etc; thereby degrading the overall quality of the site for breeding.

**D. Management Schedule:**

**General:** The landowner or land manager should mow as early within the mowing window as circumstances and conditions allow to prevent the maturation and release of seeds from forbs, especially the species listed below. At least 1/3 of mowed vegetation should be chopped up and left on site after each mowing. Thatch will provide nesting habitat for birds as well as attracting moles and voles which are prey for raptors and owls.
Invasive or Undesirable Species: The following species, if present, may require spot-mowing after August 15th of any year to control their encroachment into the field: spotted or brown knapweed, pale swallow-wort, burdock, or goldenrods.

Years One-five
1) Conduct Preliminary Site Management as described above.
2) Divide the field into 1/3s (approximately) if total acreage is 30 acres or more, or into 1/2s if field is less than 30 acres. Mow the first 1/2 or 1/3 of the grassland to a height no shorter than 6 inches (8 inches is preferred). Rotate the portion mown every year.

E. Additional Recommendations:
Prevent disturbance of nesting birds by feral or outdoor cats, dogs, fireworks, recreational vehicles or ATVs, etc.
'A land ethic, then, reflects the existence of an ecological conscience, and this in turn reflects a conviction of individual responsibility for the health of the land. Health is the capacity of the land for self-renewal. Conservation is our effort to understand and preserve this capacity.' - Aldo Leopold, A Sand County Almanac