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Coastal Prairie Conservancy and Partners Awarded \$25 million for the Texas Grasslands and Savannas Initiative to Conserve Lands in Texas

November 03, 2023 – Houston, Texas – The Coastal Prairie Conservancy (CPC) along with its partner organizations announced this week a \$25 million pledge from the Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) through its Regional Conservation Partnership Program (RCPP). This award will support the Texas Grasslands and Savannas Initiative, which aims to permanently preserve lands and improve soil health, leading to enhanced carbon sequestration and increased carbon stock as well as long-term protection of land under threat of conversion.

“We are so grateful for this award that will allow CPC and its partners to work with landowners to conserve and enhance grasslands and savannas, including working cattle ranches and natural lands,” said Mary Anne Piacentini, President and Chief Executive Officer of the Coastal Prairie Conservancy. “Preserving grasslands and savannas through this initiative protects the diverse wildlife that call these natural areas home. In addition to storing carbon and supporting producers, these lands enrich the lives of communities by offering recreational options and fostering well-being for both people and nature.”

The RCPP is an important NRCS program that addresses regional natural resource concerns and enables partners to implement solutions to conservation challenges. Texas has experienced rapid growth, resulting in the conversion of grasslands and savannas into other uses – consuming thousands of acres of natural lands. “This initiative will help CPC and its partners address one of our region’s primary natural resource concerns – the disappearance of grasslands and savannas,” explains Elisa Donovan, Vice President and General Counsel for the Coastal Prairie Conservancy. “After identifying priority lands with high carbon stock that are under threat of development or fragmentation, voluntary conservation easements with local landowners will be used to permanently protect these key conservation areas. The Texas Grasslands and Savannas Initiative will also connect area landowners with resources to better manage grazing lands and improve grassland biodiversity.”

The involvement of numerous partner organizations is an important aspect of this project that will ensure success. “By working together with many partners on the Texas Grasslands and Savannas Initiative, we will engage with local landowners to preserve natural lands. I am thrilled to be a partner in this well-timed work that will safeguard the grasslands and savannas that help slow climate change by capturing CO₂ from the air, while also providing surrounding communities with water quality enhancement, health benefits, and improved quality of life,” said Jill Bouillon, Executive Director of Bayou Land Conservancy.

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About the Coastal Prairie Conservancy

The Coastal Prairie Conservancy is a nonprofit land trust dedicated to sustaining resilient Texas by preserving coastal prairie, wetlands, farms, and ranches to benefit people and wildlife forever. Preserved lands play an important role in flood control, cleaner air and water, outdoor recreation, and wildlife habitat. To learn more about the Coastal Prairie Conservancy's conservation efforts, visit www.coastalprairieconservancy.org or find us on Facebook and Instagram @coastalprairieconservancy.

About Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)

The Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) is a federal agency that works hand-in-hand with the people of Texas to improve and protect their soil, water, and other natural resources. Click [here](#) to learn more.

Texas Grasslands and Savannas Initiative Partners:

Audubon of Texas
Bayou Land Conservancy
Coastal Prairie Conservancy
Environmental Institute of Houston @University of Houston-Clear Lake
Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust
Gulf Coast Joint Venture
Harris County Precinct 4
Harris County Flood Control District
Houston-Galveston Area Council
Houston Wilderness
Native Prairies Association of Texas
The Nature Conservancy
Texas Agricultural Land Trust
Texas A&M Natural Resources Institute
Texas Coalition of Rural Landowners
Texas Land Conservancy
Texas Parks & Wildlife Department
Texas Rice Industry Coalition for the Environment
Yardstick

Link to [photo here](#).

Photo caption: Grassland and savanna preservation protects the habitat of the scissor-tailed flycatcher. Photo courtesy of Greg Lavaty.