

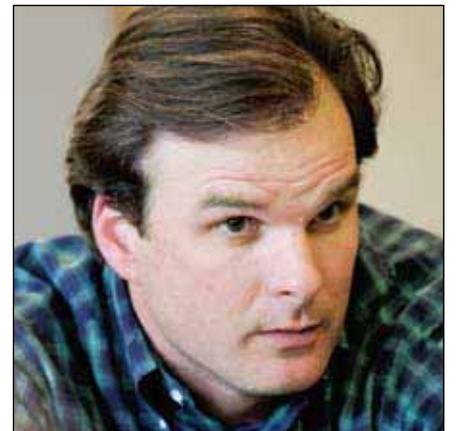
# ECOSYSTEMS



## WHY WE WORK ON WILDLIFE

“Habitat loss on private lands is the greatest threat to clean water and biodiversity. Through incentives, we are making conservation pay for landowners.”

**Robert Bonnie**  
VP Land Conservation and Wildlife



“Safe Harbor is a breath of fresh air – the first concerted effort to work with landowners by a national organization I’ve seen.”

**Kerry Russell**  
Texas rancher

## HOW WE MAKE PEACE BETWEEN LANDOWNERS AND WILDLIFE

“Every year we would go out and listen for the birds: nothing. This year, suddenly birdsong was everywhere.” That’s how Environmental Defense Fund ecologist David Wolfe described his thrilling encounter with endangered black-capped vireos on Kerry Russell’s ranch in central Texas this spring.

Russell has worked with us to restore habitat for the tiny songbird on his 130-acre ranch, which sits just beyond the reach of Austin sprawl. He participates in Safe Harbor, our program that encourages landowners to protect species without incurring additional federal restrictions as a result of their efforts. EDF conceived Safe Harbor and convinced the U.S. government to use it broadly.

Before Safe Harbor, landowners sometimes destroyed valuable habitat to avoid federal regulations. Today, the owners of more than four million acres nationwide are welcoming endangered species under Safe Harbor agreements. Groups ranging from The Nature Conservancy to local government agencies have turned to Safe Harbor as a prime tool to save endangered species. “We’ve learned we can be more effective by being flexible and listening to landowner concerns,” says Wolfe.

In Texas, dozens of ranchers signed on to Safe Harbor and today their efforts are paying off: Vireos are nesting in restored habitat from which they’ve been absent for decades. “Many ranchers may not call themselves conserva-

tionists,” says Russell, “but I believe our love for the land makes us natural allies with those wanting to leave a positive legacy for future generations.”

Now, conservation-minded landowners also can get federal tax relief. A provision we won in the recent Farm Bill gives them a tax deduction for money they spend preserving rare ecosystems. The measure garnered support from across the political

spectrum—from the American Farm Bureau to the Sierra Club.

“Farmers, ranchers and forest landowners manage two-thirds of America’s land, so they are critical to protecting wildlife,” says our wildlife attorney Michael Bean. “They deserve help for doing the right thing.”

**▶ ONLINE:** See more of our work with landowners at [edf.org/eco08](https://edf.org/eco08)



Unlikely birdwatching pair: rancher Kerry Russell with EDF ecologist David Wolfe

**4 million** Acres enrolled by landowners in our wildlife habitat protection programs

**5,000** Acres lost to development and sprawl in the United States each day

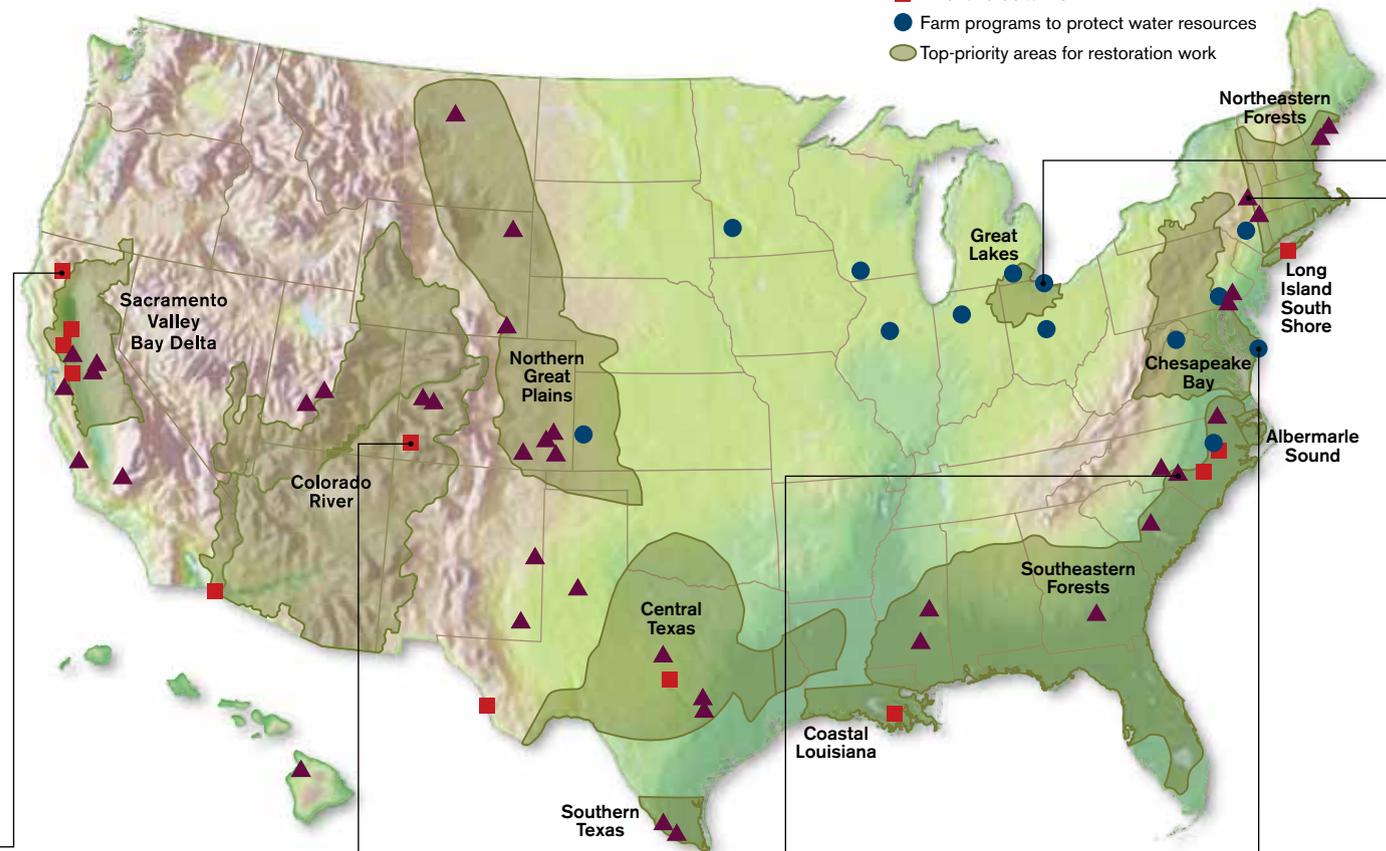
## SAFEGUARDING VITAL HABITATS

Across the country, Environmental Defense Fund staff works with farmers, ranchers and businesses to protect America's natural resources. We mobilize financial, technical and legal incentives to restore major rivers and deltas, reverse the decline of wildlife habitat and safeguard endangered species. Our work provides models of success that can lead to better policies nationwide.

**ONLINE:** Explore an interactive version of this map at [edf.org/places08](http://edf.org/places08)

### WHERE WE WORK

- ▲ Landowner projects to protect wildlife
- River and delta work
- Farm programs to protect water resources
- Top-priority areas for restoration work



### A CALIFORNIA RIVER RUNS WILD AGAIN

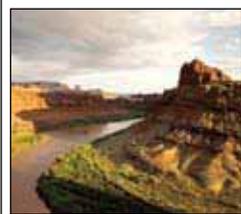


The epic journey of Chinook and coho salmon became easier thanks to a restoration plan that EDF helped win on the Trinity River.

The cities of Sacramento, Palo Alto and Alameda had been blocking the river restoration in court.

We convinced the cities to withdraw from the case and helped an Indian tribe defend the river's renewal. Now, restored spawning beds allow endangered salmon to spawn, and increased river flows help their migration to the Pacific Ocean.

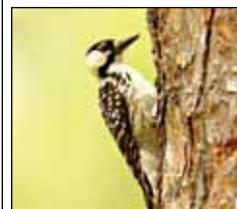
### PROTECTING AMERICA'S SPECIAL RIVERS



We are working to restore river flows and native riverbank habitat that is vital to clean water and biodiversity. With a coalition

of sports groups, water authorities and ranchers, our Rocky Mountain office helped pass a Colorado law that gives landowners a new reason to conserve water. The law encourages owners to lease their unused water rights and help revive the state's rivers.

### EXTENDING A WELCOME MAT TO WILDLIFE



In the Southeast, nesting populations of endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers have rebounded, thanks to our

Safe Harbor projects with landowners who volunteer to aid wildlife on their property. Nationwide, 63 rare species are aided by Safe Harbor.

### A CLEANER, HEALTHIER CHESAPEAKE BAY



Declining water quality has created a vast dead zone in the Chesapeake, threatening the nation's largest and most

productive estuary. So we've teamed up with 130 farmers managing 30,000 acres to help them use fertilizer more efficiently and reduce runoff into rivers and streams emptying into the bay.

## WHY WE WORK ON RIVERS AND DELTAS

“One of our greatest challenges is to restore the health of America’s rivers and coastal deltas in the face of climate change and other stresses. Investing in the vitality of these natural systems is crucial.”

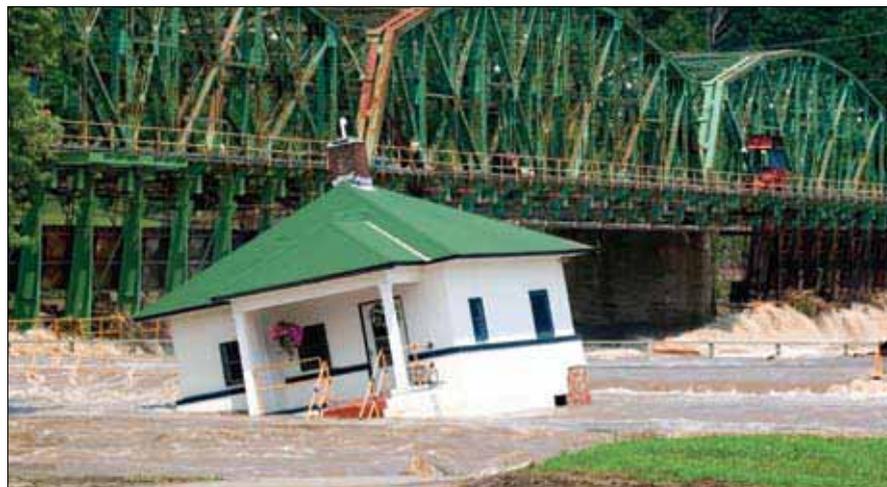
**Mary Kelly**  
VP Rivers and Deltas



### HELP FOR THE GREAT LAKES



EDF launched a multi-state effort to improve water quality and curb polluted runoff to Lake Erie, the most biologically productive of the Great Lakes. We built on one of America’s most successful conservation programs, the Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program, and added other innovative incentives for area farmers who want to preserve clean water and wildlife habitat.



## LESSONS FROM THE FLOOD

Three years after the punishing lesson of Hurricane Katrina, New Orleans remains open to catastrophic flooding. The summer of 2008 offered a picture of what the future might hold in store: Hurricane-fed storm surges devastated coastal communities in Louisiana and Texas.

Environmental Defense Fund has long worked to revitalize America’s natural defenses against flooding, including wetlands and riverside forests that absorb floodwaters. This

year, we made widespread progress. In Louisiana, EDF helped secure more than \$100 million of state funding for coastal restoration, and we brought together oil companies and local governments to accelerate the large-scale rebuilding of protective cypress wetlands.

Nationwide, half of all wetlands have been eradicated. No clearer symbol of harmful destruction exists than the Mississippi River Gulf Outlet, a little-used shipping channel that

funneled Katrina’s storm surge into the heart of New Orleans. This year, after we assembled the evidence and persuaded Congress to act, engineers began disassembling the channel and restoring surrounding wetlands.

“EDF and its partners have been in the vanguard of this,” says Dr. Donald Boesch, chair of the Louisiana Coastal Area Science Board.

We also worked with allies to convince EPA to block the Yazoo Pumps, an ill-conceived farmland creation scheme that would have destroyed 200,000 acres of protective wetlands in the lower Mississippi Delta. Messages to EPA from more than 40,000 of our supporters helped carry the day.

Scientists warn that with global warming, hurricanes and floods may grow in intensity.

“Revitalizing America’s natural defenses against extreme weather has never been more important,” says our VP for Rivers and Deltas Mary Kelly.

**▶ ONLINE:** Learn about our work with one Louisiana coastal community at [edf.org/wetlands08](http://edf.org/wetlands08)

### A WAY TO COEXIST



Proving that grazing livestock can coexist with threatened species, we are partnering with landowners in the Northeast to restore vanishing wetlands that are home to America’s smallest turtle, the bog turtle.

“Environmental Defense Fund has been a tireless friend to Louisiana communities that want to rebuild, helping us with science, policy and awareness in Washington.”

**Pam Dashille**  
Director of the Lower Ninth Ward Center for Sustainable Engagement and Development, New Orleans, LA