

FINAL PERFORMANCE REPORT



ESA SECTION 6 RECOVERY LAND ACQUISITION

FEDERAL AID GRANT NO. F08AP00139 (E-67-RL-1)

RED-COCKADED WOODPECKER HABITAT ACQUISITION

OKLAHOMA DEPARTMENT OF WILDLIFE CONSERVATION

JUNE 1, 2008 through DECEMBER 31, 2012

Final Performance Report

State: Oklahoma

Grant Number: F08AP00139 (E-67-RL-1)

Grant Title: Red-cockaded Woodpecker Habitat Acquisition

Grant Programs: Endangered Species Recovery Land Acquisition

Grant Period: June 1, 2008 – December 31, 2013

Project Leader: Russ Horton

A. OBJECTIVES:

Acquire approximately 160 acres of pine-oak forest habitat adjacent to the McCurtain County Wilderness Area to enhance habitat management for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker.

B. RESULTS AND DISCUSSION:

Since the initiation of this grant in 2008, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation (ODWC) has worked with the Gene and Carol Mixon family toward the acquisition of a tract of land adjacent to the McCurtain County Wilderness Area. The Mixon family held the title to the NE/4 of Section 15, T03S, R25E1M in McCurtain County, Oklahoma and maintained an interest in selling this tract to the ODWC. There was a restriction on the title that prevented the family from selling the property before May of 2012, and the ODWC was not aware of that when we prepared and submitted the proposal for this Endangered Species Act Section 6 Recovery Land Acquisition grant. As a result of the title restriction, there were few grant activities other than maintaining communication with the Mixon family.

This property is important to ODWC and the management of the endangered Red-cockaded Woodpecker in Oklahoma because of its location. The Mixon property is approximately one quarter of a Section (160 acres) in size and shares its north and east boundaries with the McCurtain County Wilderness Area, which is owned by the ODWC and supports Oklahoma's only remaining population of Red-cockaded Woodpeckers. The property's west and south boundaries are shared with the Broken Bow District of the Ouachita National Forest and the property functions like an in-holding within these two conservation areas. The habitat on the Mixon property, and the land immediately surrounding it, is comprised of upland forest that is dominated by shortleaf pine, several species of oaks and two species of hickories. Active Red-cockaded Woodpecker clusters occur on the McCurtain County Wilderness Area

within a half mile of the property and the property appears to fall within the foraging area that is used by two woodpecker groups. Additionally, the property encompasses part of a small ridge that may provide a connection between at least two Red-cockaded Woodpecker clusters. The acquisition of this tract would facilitate management activities such as prescribed winter burning that would restore pine woodland structural characteristics and improve foraging habitat conditions for the Red-cockaded Woodpecker and its insect prey base.

In the fall of 2012, the Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation acquired fee title to the surface estate of the property and fulfilled all of the legal requirements and stipulations for acquiring the property with federal funding assistance. The closing documents associated with the fee-title purchase of the subject property are included as an attachment to this report.

C. SIGNIFICANT DEVIATIONS:

There were no significant deviations from the grant's objective.

D. COST: \$132,065.61


F. PREPARED BY: Russ Horton, Private Lands and Wildlife Diversity Section Supervisor
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation

E. DATE: April 29, 2013

F. APPROVED BY:



Wildlife Division Administrator
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation



Andrea K. Crews, Federal Aid Coordinator
Oklahoma Department of Wildlife Conservation