

# Wildlife at work

Corporations are among the largest of the nation's private landowners, yet much of the land they own is unused in their operations.

Unused, but not useless. In fact, the open-space area surrounding corporate facilities can often serve as valuable wildlife habitat rather than be left only as an empty buffer zone. That is where the Wildlife Habitat Council (WHC) comes in.

Our mission is to help corporate landowners manage their unused property in an ecologically sensitive manner. Based on our expertise in ecology, wildlife environments and land-management practices, we work closely with business to develop and implement conservation practices that will preserve and protect the wildlife found in the acreage surrounding their facilities.

The Wildlife Habitat Council certifies companies for their efforts to manage wildlife programs at their places of work. To obtain certification, corporations undergo a stringent and regular review of the activities affecting the work site. In turn they become better stewards of their natural resources and good neighbors in their communities.

However, WHC's review and certification does not apply solely to company sites. We also build cooperative ventures with private landowners, federal agencies and conservation organizations to improve and manage wildlife habitat and refuges along rivers, bird migration flyways and water corridors. In many cases, environmental partnerships are formed with

local schools.

Here are some examples of WHC partnerships:

■ Rinker Materials Corporation's 474 Sand Mine is located in the environmentally sensitive Green Swamp area of central Florida. Rinker joined with WHC and local schools and businesses to improve the shoreline of a re-

claimed mine lake and create an award-winning environmental education program.

■ St. Mary's Island, in the Houston ship channel, was restored by ExxonMobil following a

pipeline project and now provides nesting for threatened migratory shorebirds.

■ The Beaverhead Ranch, in Montana, west of Yellowstone, is a prime example of how stewardship and careful ranch management can support both responsible cattle ranching and outstanding wildlife habitat. The ranch, operated by a subsidiary of Koch Industries, offers seasonal range for 4,000 elk and provides habitat for dozens of other animal species.

There are many other examples. Today, projects extend over 2 million acres in the United States, Puerto Rico and 15 other countries. Overall, more than 120 companies and two dozen conservation organizations have joined together to preserve and manage wildlife through WHC-assisted projects. The clear lesson is that cooperation among businesses and wildlife conservationists is thriving, based on a shared appreciation of our natural world.

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## Helping businesses preserve and protect wildlife

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