

**For More Information Contact**

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# FAQ

## Frequently Asked Questions

- Q: What is mitigation?**  
**A:** Steps taken to avoid or minimize negative environmental impacts.
- Q: What is included in mitigation?**  
**A:** Mitigation can include: avoiding the impact; minimizing the impact; rectifying the impact by repairing or restoring the affected environment; reducing the impact by protective steps required with the action; and/or compensating for the impact by replacing or providing substitute resources.
- Q: What is a conservation (mitigation) credit?**  
**A:** A conservation credit is a defined environmental benefit that can be sold on the open market, a scientifically derived measure of habitat quality. Companies sometimes have to mitigate for the environmental impacts of their projects by purchasing conservation credits. Also known as compensatory mitigation.
- Q: What is a regulatory incentive?**  
**A:** Incentives for program participation are realized in the form of government regulation/policy “regulatory assurances” instead of a monetary payment.
- Q: What opportunities exist for creating conservation credits?**  
**A:** Mitigation needs may be short or long term, large or small. Credits can be developed for term or perpetual contracts, and credits arising from habitat enhancement or from protecting existing good habitat.
- Q: Why would a conservation credit be of value?**  
**A:** Negative habitat impacts from habitat disturbing activities may require being adequately offset through compensatory mitigation—one option being a conservation credit purchase.

*Developed by Leanne Correll of SunAgri, LLC for WSGA Landowner Outreach Program*

*"Ranching is our business and to be sustainable you have to be good stewards of the land. Good ranching practices leads to good wildlife habitat. Having an opportunity to participate in a program to get recognition for providing good wildlife habitat is a plus."*  
 — Jack Berger, Berger Ranches

# Conservation Opportunities for Wyoming Private Landowners

*Included are some of the more common programs currently available*



**Joint Outreach Effort by  
 Wyoming Stock Growers Association and the  
 USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service**



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**Conservation Opportunities for Wyoming Private Landowners (this is not an exhaustive list & all program criteria are subject to change)**

Program	Eligible Land	Contact Entity (ies)	Length of Agreement / Contract	Payment Info	Landowner Commitments	Other Notes
<b>Regulatory Incentives</b>						
Greater Sage-Grouse Umbrella Candidate Conservation Agreement with Assurances (CCAA) for Wyoming Ranch Management	Private and state owned land with sage-grouse habitat.	U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or any other participating agency	Voluntary agreement for up to 20 years. May be extended an additional 20 years.	None	No fragmentation of enrolled lands; implement agreed upon Conservation Measures; Develop/ Implement an approved Conservation Plan; Develop / Implement a range monitoring plan.	Proactive, voluntary program. Provides "assurances" to the lands enrolled. Incidental take permit issued and becomes effective if species is listed. Complementary with SGI. May be eligible for mitigation as evaluated on a case by case basis.
<b>Technical and/or Financial Assistance</b>						
Sage Grouse Initiative (SGI)	Private Land with sage-grouse habitat	Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS)	Varies from 1 to 10 years depending upon tailored agreement. Endangered Species Act predictability for up to 30 years.	Financial Assistance payments are based on the level of conservation stewardship.	One or more selected specific agricultural conservation practices, abide by the conservation plan developed, and meet SGI standards.	Only landowners implementing a conservation plan consistent with the NRCS/USFWS Conference Report have regulatory predictability for up to 30 years as long as the participant continues to implement selected conservation practices. Complementary with CCAA.
NRCS - Farm Bill Conservation Programs	Private, State, Federal, and other public lands	NRCS	Varies, depending on program	Cost share or financial assistance based on specific program	Dependent on specific program requirements	See local NRCS office for programs available for your specific needs.
<b>Financial Incentives</b>						
i2 Capital Co-Op Conservation Bank Model: Upper Green River Conservancy	Current program is limited to lands in the Upper Green River Basin of Southwestern Wyoming.	i2 Capital / Upper Green River Conservancy	If regulations allow, the agreements will mirror the length of the projects they mitigate against - typically 20-30 years.	Payments will be market driven and designed to provide equitable distributions to landowners negotiated in advance of land commitments.	Landowners must commit to management practices that protect the habitat at value negotiated with regulators.	UGRC is a co-op conservation bank designed to enter into close partnerships with landowners that deliver equitable economic benefits to all partners.
Catalyzing Private Investment in Habitat Mitigation Markets	Private Land in California, Colorado, Idaho, Montana, Nevada, Utah, or Wyoming. Minimum of 3,000 acres located in priority sage-grouse habitat or mule deer crucial winter range or designated migration corridor.	K-Coe Isom, LLP Conservation Services	Term or perpetual agreement depending on the specifics of the agreement.	Conservation Credits are generated through an assessment of the habitat conditions and then marketed to companies needing credits for mitigation purposes.	Landowners will receive funds up to \$35,000 for early-stage credit development to be repaid if credits are eventually sold. Landowners must be willing to undertake either an enhancement, restoration, or preservation project on their property.	Eligible for habitat mitigation.  A conservation easement is not required but is one agreement option.
Sweetwater River Conservancy	Any land that meets the state credit framework is eligible to be enrolled, subject to approval of Sweetwater and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Conservation Bank Review Team.	Sweetwater River Conservancy	All lands must be available for enrollment in perpetuity.	Payments will be negotiated with the individual landowner at the time of the agreement.	Lands approved for program inclusion would have an initial deed restriction. Upon associated land credit sale, permanent conservation easement agreement.	Eligible for habitat mitigation.
Wyoming Conservation Exchange	Private Land Potential for State Land Investigating Federal Land	Wyoming Conservation Exchange	Term or perpetual agreement depending on the project and compliance with the State mitigation framework.	Private-market financial incentives are provided to landowners.	Landowners must demonstrate and agree to maintain conservation status as measured with appropriate resource assessment methods. Term or perpetual easement contract required.	Tailored conservation contracts would assure monitoring and maintenance of conservation status for the term of the agreement. Hope to serve as a market platform for other credit needs in the future.