



News Release

For Immediate Release

Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust and the Habitat Improvement Team (HIT) Announce \$900,000 Investment to Conserve Wildlife Habitats in Southeast Idaho

A recent \$700,000 contribution by Itafos Conda LLC (and previously unused HIT funds) combined with funding from other state, federal, and private partners demonstrates power and potential of industry investment in conservation

POCATELLO, IDAHO – Feb, 13 2025: The Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust (SSLT), dedicated to bringing conservation options to landowners in Southeast Idaho, and the Habitat Improvement Team (HIT), a committee of natural resource, land management, and Tribal trustees, announce the distribution of \$900,000 for habitat restoration projects near the Itafos Husky 1 /North Dry Ridge Mine.

Since fund inception in 2017, Itafos Conda LLC has provided roughly \$1.9 million to sustain the Southeast Idaho Wildlife Mitigation Fund. The goal of the mitigation fund is to offset mine impacts to wildlife by funding habitat restoration and conservation projects. Over the course of two previous funding cycles, the HIT evaluated numerous projects and ultimately awarded over \$1.2 million from the mitigation fund to 10 separate projects. Additional state, federal, and private monies were then combined to put almost \$4.8 million of habitat restoration and conservation work on the ground.

In previous years, the Idaho Department of Fish and Game, Trout Unlimited, SSLT and the U.S. Forest Service were awarded funding for projects to improve aquatic habitat and function, enhance aspen habitat quality and facilitate a conservation easement with a willing landowner. These projects benefit game and non-game wildlife species, including Yellowstone cutthroat trout, a variety of native aquatic species including Northern leopard frogs, sandhill cranes, a variety of waterfowl and migratory songbirds, moose, mule deer, and elk.

“It has been a pleasure to work with the HIT and the SSLT through this process,” said Jon Goode, Special Projects Manager at Itafos Conda LLC. “This initiative is a terrific example of collaboration among industry, government and environmental organizations and we are excited to once again contribute to this fund and watch it grow and flourish.”

Mark Gamblin, Board President of SSLT commented, "It is an honor for SSLT to participate in this partnership of industry, government and non-government conservation organizations to restore and conserve our rich legacy of wildlife and wildlands in east Idaho. The Habitat Improvement Team is an example of how partnership and collaboration can sustain the economic, cultural and recreational values that make east Idaho the great land it is."

The open application period for project proposals is April 1 – May 30.

To learn more about the restoration work being done and submitting a project to the Southeast Idaho Wildlife Mitigation Fund, visit: <http://seidahomitigationfund.com/>

An open house event will be held on March 4 at the Pocatello IDEQ offices (444 Hospital Way) from 4pm-7pm for stakeholders and the public to ask questions about this process.

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About Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust

The Sagebrush Steppe Land Trust works to protect and enhance wildlife habitat and working farms and ranches in Southeastern Idaho, now and for future generations. The private, non-profit organization works with willing landowners in Bannock, Bear Lake, Bingham, Caribou, Franklin, Oneida, and Power counties to conserve and protect land while keeping it in private ownership. To learn more about SSLT, or to become a member, visit: <http://sagebrushlandtrust.org/>.

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