What is Project WINGS?

Project WINGS ("Wildlife Incentives for Non-game and Game Species") is a rights-of-way management campaign designed to create new wildlife lands along gas and electrical transmission lines. It offers cash grants and professional wildlife management advice to groups and individuals committed to rights-of-way brush control and habitat improvement. WINGS is a Georgia success story for both residents and wildlife. Versions of Project WINGS can now be found in several other states.

*Project WINGS logo is a registered trademark of Georgia Power

Why is it important?

Electric and gas utilities are essential to our economy and standard of living. Utilities power our homes, businesses, and factories through a vast network of transmission corridors or "rights-of-ways". These corridors vary from 50 to 500 feet in width, cover thousands of acres, and must be managed to prevent undesirable growth that could interfere with the normal delivery of power. Project WINGS is important since it helps people transform rights-of-ways into productive wildlife habitat, ensuring healthier wildlife populations, while providing the safe and efficient delivery of energy to more than 7.5 million Georgians.

Who can receive a grant?

Landowners, leaseholders, hunting clubs, wildlife organizations, and others committed to the conversion and management of electrical transmission rights-of-way may apply for a grant. Applications are accepted May 15 through July 15 of each year at all Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) offices. Grants are awarded on a competitive basis.

What type of commitment is involved?

Grant recipients have a three-year obligation to follow accepted wildlife practices and prevent the growth of tall brush.
Grant awards are based on the amount of rights-of-way to be managed. Monies are paid over three years at a flat rate of $50 per acre per year. Acceptable management practices include: mowing with follow-disking, annual plantings and permanent plantings. The maximum total payment for the three-year contract cannot exceed $1,500 per contract. Grants are paid within 60 days of work completion, as reported by the local NRCS office.

Who develops the wildlife management plan?
The USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) develops the plan once participants select from a menu of typical wildlife management practices. The plan may include: mowing with follow-disking, permanent wildlife plantings or annual wildlife plantings. Participants choose their own plan by selecting management practices from the menu.

Can I do the work myself?
Yes, as long as the practice is included in your wildlife management plan prepared by the Natural Resources Conservation Service, it doesn’t matter who performs the lab work.

Do I need proof of management expenses?
As long as the practice has been completed and then verified by NRCS, receipts are not necessary.

Can I re-enroll the same acres in the future?
Former WINGS acreage may be re-enrolled provided the original contract was completed and the three years have passed since the first contract expired. This renewed eligibility is referred to as the "In three years, out three years rule."

How do I get started?
Grants are offered May 15 through July 15 of each year. To apply, contact your local NRCS office.

NRCS staff accepts grant applications and develop management plans.