



For Immediate Release
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Steve Jester Hired as First Executive Director of Partners for Conservation

The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) and Partners for Conservation (PFC), are pleased to welcome Steve Jester as Partners for Conservation's first Executive Director. The Executive Director is a joint position supported by NWRA and PFC together to promote the successful tools, models, policy and programs that support collaborative conservation efforts involving private landowners and public agencies, and to build PFC's capacity as an independent non-profit organization.

"We are thrilled to welcome Steve to the NWRA and PFC team. Steve brings outstanding leadership and sensibility to the role of Executive Director of Partners for Conservation," said David Houghton, President of NWRA. "He has a broad base of experience working with landowners and agencies on collaborative conservation projects nationwide, and has demonstrated success conserving wildlife and working lands."

Prior to joining the staff at NWRA, Steve was the Executive Director of the Guadalupe-Blanco River Trust, the first nationally accredited land trust in Texas. Before working at the Trust, Steve was on the staff of The Nature Conservancy for almost a decade leading community-based conservation projects first in Texas and later in Wyoming. Additionally, he has worked with state fish and wildlife agencies in Florida and Texas. He has worked with private landowners throughout his career and has come to appreciate their critical importance in conserving working landscapes that provide some of the most important wildlife habitats in the United States.

"Partners for Conservation is a great example of ground-up conversations that will link landowners, businesses and partners across the country. We are proud to be taking the next step with Steve to bring this landscape vision to a reality," said Jim Stone, PFC Board Chair.

Steve earned a B.S. degree in Agriculture from Texas State University – San Marcos and a M.S. degree in Wildlife and Fisheries Sciences from Texas A&M University. He lives in Edwards Plateau region of Texas with his wife Suzanne and daughters Shelby and Shae.



More information about Partners for Conservation can be found here:

http://refugeassociation.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/01/PFC-NEW_low-res.pdf

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The mission of the **National Wildlife Refuge Association** is to conserve America's wildlife heritage for future generations through strategic programs that protect, enhance, and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System and the landscapes beyond its boundaries. NWRA works to amplify the impact of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by working with public officials, agencies, private landowners and grassroots groups to foster innovative landscape-scale habitat conservation initiatives that leverage many strengths toward common goals.

Partners for Conservation (PFC) is a national network of private landowners that promotes conservation practices on working landscapes through public-private coordination and partnerships. To achieve this mission, PFC aims to build trust and credibility between private landowners and federal agencies, including the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and USDA Natural Resources and Conservation Service (NRCS), by demonstrating the agricultural, biological and economic successes of specific on-the-ground conservation practice implementation with interested landowners and partners across the United States.