

**MOUNTAIN PRAIRIE REGION'S  
PARTNER-IN-MISSION RECOVERY CHAMPION**

**Name of nominee:** Elaine York  
The Nature Conservancy  
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Elaine York has been instrumental in the listed species protection and land conservation in south-western Utah. Over the past decade, her efforts have resulted in direct conservation, protection, and recovery goal achievements for four listed plant species: dwarf bear poppy, Holmgren milk-vetch, Shivwits milk-vetch, and Siler pincushion cactus.

While her achievements are too numerous to discuss individually by project, they have included partnerships and funding for protective fencing, research, restoration, land acquisition, surveys, recovery planning, data collections, and even having the mayor of the City of St. George proclaiming an official dwarf-bear poppy day! She routinely asks what kind of conservation is needed and works toward achieving those conservation goals. Often when she hears of a need, she heads to her organization, The Nature Conservancy, and others to find funding and/or support.

She also has been actively involved in public planning and facilitated discussions on endangered species while working with citizens, government employees, and elected officials within long-term planning programs. Noteworthy is her work with Vision Dixie, which integrates sound data into future land use and transportation decisions. Through her leadership skills, she successfully negotiated a letter of intent between Utah's School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration and a consortium consisting of five government agencies and The Nature Conservancy for the identification, creation, and maintenance of three preserves.

One of the many important projects Elaine has been intimately involved with includes the development and acquisition of the White Dome Nature Preserve. This preserve, which is in the city limits of St. George, Utah, will provide habitat for wildflowers, reptiles, birds and mammals, including two endangered plants: the dwarf bear poppy and Siler pincushion cactus; and five State-sensitive species: burrowing owl, loggerhead shrike, kit fox, zebra-tailed lizard, and sandpaper bush. Coordinating with the State of Utah, Elaine has sought and achieved funding matches for grants from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (2005, 2007, 2008) to purchase over 250 acres in the estimated 800-acre White Dome nature preserve. Elaine is in the midst of a habitat restoration project on 55 acres within the preserve.

Elaine has shown a tremendous perseverance in her goal of ensuring long-term protection of southern Utah's threatened and endangered species. She is a highly effective facilitator and has brought together a diverse partnership focused on a common goal of designing, developing, and acquiring the White Dome Nature Preserve. She has used scientific data that has been collected over the past 15 years, largely by Dr. Harper and Dr. Van Buren, to aid in the acquisition and restoration of the White Dome Nature Preserve. The State of Utah, Utah's School and Institutional Trust Lands Administration, Utah Department of Transportation, the Federal Highway Administration, Utah Valley University, Washington County, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service are among a few partners of the many partners that are making the White Dome Nature Preserve a success, all of whom are indebted to Elaine's vision, facilitation, and enthusiasm.

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The requested photos are included on the attached CD.