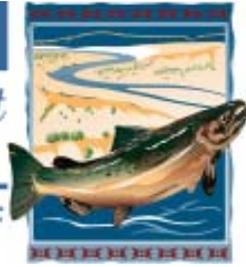


**U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service**  
*Hanford Reach National Monument*  
*Saddle Mountain National Wildlife Refuge*  
*... protecting the last of the free-flowing Columbia River.*



## May 13, 2004 Wahluke School District Partners with Hanford Reach



Cultural history, biology and geology came alive for students from the Wahluke School District on a sunny May 13th. Teacher Reed Benson organized the fourth annual Hanford Reach National Monument Field Trip, bringing 180 fourth grade students and their teachers from Mattawa to the Saddle Mountain Unit of the Monument which is open only for approved research and environmental education. The area holds a unique significance for these students, as some of their relatives were residents of the former Wahluke townsite and

were evicted by the government in 1943 for the construction of the Hanford Nuclear Reservation. The school district's goal is to keep alive the heritage, memories, and sacrifices of the area's Native Americans and early pioneers.

Students listened to opening comments by the school superintendent, county commissioners, and a tribal representative from the Wanapum people, addressing the importance of the area and the need for science and history in our schools. Students then divided into classes and rotated through six stations, learning the cultural history of the Wanapum, geology and paleontology of the White Bluffs, water quality testing of the Columbia River, salmon lifecycles and macroinvertebrate identification. Information and Education Specialist Ron Crouse assisted the school district with logistics and presented the salmon and macroinvertebrate classes. The school



has a high percentage of ethnic students with limited English, but Crouse learned that enthusiasm for studying water bugs transcends all age and language barriers.



Comments and feedback indicated the day's programs were excellent with great organization and the best curricula in the four years running. The Saddle Mountain Unit also received high praise for its spectacular White Bluffs and deep blue Columbia River. The Monument is proud to help sponsor this event which touches the education of so many young students.