



Original artwork by Tim Knepp commissioned by FWS AIA.

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RUSSIA REGIONAL PROGRAM



Ken Clarkson, FWS

California high school students in Moscow.



Ed Grimes

Diana Solovieva in Annapolis, Maryland.



Peter Ward, FWS/DIC

Stephen Talbot of FWS Alaska addresses fellow botanists at New Roots conference in Pennsylvania.



Vaughn Ruppert, FWS and John Ivie

New visitor center at nature reserve in Siberia.

Young People Caring about Nature, Participating in Conservation

In early November 2005, the Russia Program partnered with the Division of Visitor Services and Communications of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) National Wildlife Refuge System to provide international airfare and per diem for four California high school students, their science teacher, and an environmental education specialist from San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge Complex to attend a Friends of Nature Reserves youth congress in Moscow, Russia. The U.S. students, from Renaissance Continuation High School in La Selva Beach, California, brought to Russia a poster display explaining their efforts to restore habitat of the Santa Cruz long-toed salamander at Ellicott Slough National Wildlife Refuge. The project involves the use of the Global Positioning System to track animals and plant locations in the refuge. Students also monitor weather conditions, and collect native plant seeds for sprouting in the school greenhouse and replanting in the refuge.

Sea Ducks: Continuing a Dialogue with Russia

The Second North American Sea Duck Conference was held November 7-11, 2005 in Annapolis, Maryland. Populations of some sea duck species have declined, but the reasons are largely unknown. This conference of scientists from around the world provided a forum to exchange information about sea duck biology and management. The Russia Program provided international airline tickets to researcher Diana Solovieva of St. Petersburg, Russia. Dr. Solovieva has conducted work in the Arctic at the Lena Delta Federal Nature Reserve and the Wrangel Island Federal Nature Reserve.

Botany: New Roots for the 21st Century

In September 2005, the Russia Program in partnership with the U.S. National Arboretum, hosted a U.S.-Russia botanical conference at Wilson College in Chambersburg, Pennsylvania to spur cooperation between Russian and U.S. botanists, and focus attention on plant conservation issues. A joint website is planned to promote collaboration.

Nature Reserve in Siberia

In July 2005, the Russia Program sponsored the travel of two specialists from Oregon to Sayano-Shushensky Federal Biosphere Reserve in southern Siberia, Russia to advise on the design of a new visitor center. The 964,000 acre reserve provides refuge to Siberian ibex, argali sheep, brown bears, snow leopards, caribou, musk deer, ptarmigan, golden eagles, saker falcons, Altai snowcocks, and rare species of plants.

CHINA REGIONAL PROGRAM

Dialogue on Wetlands Conservation and Restoration

Following devastating floods in 1998, the Chinese Government has repeatedly turned to FWS for guidance on best practices for the conservation and restoration of wetlands, and river and floodplain management.

In April 2005, four officials from China's State Forestry Administration visited National Wildlife Refuges and other sites in Arkansas, Louisiana, and California to see how wetland areas in the U.S. are managed, restored, and conserved. Three of the visitors were from Heilongjiang Province in northeast China, and the fourth was from Beijing.

Managing Visitation of Public Lands

In May 2005, five FWS employees and one National Park Service employee assessed education and outreach programs at nature reserves in Sichuan and Gansu Provinces of China and shared their experience in managing visitation of public lands.

In October 2005, an eight person group from Beijing and Sichuan and Gansu Provinces visited federal lands in California for two weeks to continue the dialogue through site visits and discussions with U.S. staff.



Huanglong Nature Reserve in Sichuan Province, China received guidance from a FWS team in May 2005.



San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex project leader Kim Forrest welcomes visitors from China. Los Banos, California. Nov. 2, 2005

OTHER ACTIVITIES

From America with Friendship

On December 20, 2005 Program Coordinator Steven Kohl took part in a Russian language radio call-in show at the Voice of America studios in Washington D.C. In the past year, in addition to three call-in shows at the Voice of America, Mr. Kohl was also interviewed by Moscow Echo FM radio station.

Geese Management and Research: 30+ Years of Cooperation

In October 2005, Program Coordinator Steven Kohl made a presentation in St. Petersburg, Russia at the 3rd International Symposium on Waterfowl of Northern Eurasia, highlighting many years of U.S.-Russia collaboration on goose monitoring and surveys. Read more about geese at <http://alaska.fws.gov/mbsp/mbm/waterfowl/waterfowl.htm>

Alaska-Chukotka Polar Bears

On November 17, 2005 the U.S. Senate Committee on Commerce, Science and Transportation approved the United States-Russia Polar Bear Conservation and Management Implementation Act. Now the Act stands before the full Senate for approval. Read more at <http://alaska.fws.gov/fisheries/mmm/polarbear/bilateral.htm>

Did you know?

In Fiscal Year 2005 FWS awarded grants for conservation of the critically endangered saiga antelope in Russia. Three grants totaling \$23,400 were awarded. The grants were used for combating poaching, acquiring field gear, and conducting conservation education.

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