

**Friends and Volunteer NCTC Training Waiver Program
Announcement FY 2018**

We are pleased to announce the FY 2018 Friends and Volunteer Training Waiver Program through the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). The program is open to all Friends and volunteers throughout all US Fish and Wildlife Service programs. The waiver program enables a limited number of official Friends members and USFWS volunteers the opportunity to take either in-class or online training courses offered through the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) at no or little expense to the participant or field station.

If enrolled in the waiver program, the following expenses are covered for the participant.

- 1) Waived - Course tuition for both online and in-class courses (limited number available)
- 2) Waived - Lodging and meals package for in-class courses at NCTC (limited number available)
- 3) Reimbursed - Up to but no more than \$1000 for travel expenses for in-class courses at NCTC or off-site NCTC courses (limited number available and must be reviewed for consistency with established travel guidelines).

Note 1: Travel expenses for approved in-class training will need to be paid up front by the participant and will be fully reimbursed 6-8 weeks post training. Official travel guidelines will be provided once approved for enrollment into the waiver program.

Participant Step 1: Meet Participant Eligibility Requirements

- Must be a USFWS volunteer, Friends member or Friends employee with a current and active total of at least 100 volunteer service hours to the USFWS and/or a Friends organization.
- Training must be deemed as needed by your Project Leader to directly support the USFWS site and/or Friends organization partnership with the USFWS site.

Participant Step 2: Browse available upcoming NCTC courses and identify a training course.

<https://training.fws.gov/NCTCWeb/catalog/CatalogSearch.aspx>

Or, an individual has received a course announcement which they are interested in signing up for through the waiver program.

Browsing the Course Catalog

There are dozens of relevant courses from which to choose, but below are some courses which have already been approved through the waiver program:

- Volunteer Recruitment and Management (Online)
- Youth Program Planning and Evaluation (Online)
- Education Programs for Youth – School’s Out (In-Class)

- Intro to Communicating Climate Change (Online)
- Pesticides and Fish and Wildlife Resources (In-Class)
- Visitor Services and Management (Off-Site)
- Introduction to Team Leadership (In-Class)
- Leading at the Speed of Trust (In-Class)
- Designing a Long Term Phenology Program for Management and Outreach (In-Class)

Participant Step 3: Obtain approval from your USFWS site manager, usually the Refuge/Hatchery Manager, to apply to take the course through the waiver program. Once you have the approval from your manager, please request the manager to send an informal email to the respective regional Friends/Volunteer coordinator.

Project Leader Step 1: The Project Leader/Manager email must include brief statements of 1) their support for the individual's enrollment into the waiver program and 2) the benefit to the Service-Friends-Volunteer partnership for this individual to receive this training.

There are a limited number of waivers each year so we are only able to accept one in-class request and three online requests per field station. For online courses, only those courses with a tuition fee should be submitted for approval into this waiver program. Free online courses and webinars do not require approval. Friends Academy and other Academies which are by competitive application are not included in this program. You can browse upcoming courses without a DOI Learn account here:

<https://training.fws.gov/NCTCWeb/catalog/CatalogSearch.aspx>

Participant Step 4: Contact your Regional Friends or Volunteer Coordinator to set up a time to meet by phone and apply for enrollment into the waiver program and for formal approval to register for a specific course. The coordinator will need to assess enrollment approval into the program and obtain basic information over the phone to formally validate your participation in the program.

NOTE: You may call the NCTC training technicians and/or course instructor listed as the contact on the course, but they cannot offer enrollment into or approve requests into the waiver program. Approval must first come from your Project Leader and then Regional Friends/Volunteer Coordinator.

Regional Friends/Volunteer Coordinator Step 1: Collect the following participant information, by phone, and transcribe into the Google drive spreadsheet:

- USFWS Region, State, Service site name
- Volunteer or Friend, Total volunteer hours
- Participant name, email
- Training type, Course #, Course name, Course dates, tuition amount, training instructor
- Project Leader name, approval of manager
- Short statement of training need/justification
- Short statement of post training commitment (how participant plans to apply the training)

- Planned mode of travel, travel from and to

This will formally enroll and approve a participant into the waiver program for a specific course.

Now, email the enrolled participant the Job Aid and Travel Reimbursement Form and cc the course instructor, notifying them they have been approved/enrolled into the waiver program for the specific course.

Participant Step 5: Once formally approved and enrolled in the waiver program by the regional coordinator and have been sent the job aid, you will need to request a DOI Learn account. Approval of a new account can take up to 3 business days. Once you have an approved DOI Learn account, then you will need to register for that course on DOI Learn.

Participant Step 6: Make your travel arrangements.

Participant Step 7: Save required travel receipts during travel and submit travel reimbursement form after training is completed.

This program is made possible by funding support through the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), the Friends of NCTC and the NWRS Division of Visitor Services and Communications.

USFWS Friends and Volunteer Coordinators

Region 1 – Pacific Northwest (WA, OR, ID, Pacific Islands)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

Chelsea McKinney
Portland OR
Phone: 503.231.2231
Email: Chelsea_McKinney@fws.gov

Region 2 – Southwest (AZ, NM, TX, OK)

Volunteer Coordinator

Juli Niemann
Albuquerque NM
Phone: 505.248.6635
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Friends Coordinator

Ken Garrahan
Albuquerque NM
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Region 3 – Midwest (IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

Megan Wandag
Minneapolis MN
Phone: 612.713.5463
Email: Megan_Wandag@fws.gov

Region 4 – Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, PR, Virgin Islands)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

Sallie Gentry
Atlanta GA
Phone: 404.679.7293
Email: Sallie_Gentry@fws.gov

Region 5 – Northeast (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, VA, WV)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

Susan Wojtowicz
Hadley MA
Phone: 413.253.8236
Email: Susan_Wojtowicz@fws.gov

Region 6 – Mountain-Prairie (MT, WY, CO, UT, ND, SD, NE, KS)

Volunteer Coordinator

Jackie Jacobson
Coleharbor ND
Phone: 701.442.5474, ext 127
Email: Jackie_Jacobson@fws.gov

Friends Coordinator

Melvie Uhland
Denver CO
Phone: 303.236.4395
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Region 7 - Alaska

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

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Region 8 – Pacific Southwest (CA, NV)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

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National NWRS Volunteer Coordinator

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