

Ninth Canine Team for Refuge System

Federal wildlife officer Josh Hindman and his police service dog, Ukkie, became the ninth law enforcement canine team in the Refuge System. Because Ukkie, a two-year-old Belgian malinois, was born and bred in Holland, he doesn't understand English yet. As a result, Hindman gives commands in Dutch – or a version of it.

“A Dutch person might not agree with me, but it's Dutch,” Hindman told Northwest Public Radio last winter. Hindman and Ukkie are based at Mid-Columbia River National Wildlife Refuge Complex in Washington-Oregon. The complex includes eight refuges and Hanford Reach National Monument. Hindman and Ukkie are available for deployment across the Pacific Region. Ukkie offers protection for Hindman, especially in isolated places at night.

“It's almost like there are two officers out there,” Hindman says. Ukkie can search for illegal drugs and other articles. He can track people. And he's very social, the ideal temperament for a canine who interacts often with hunters and their labs. “He's a hyper ball of energy, but very controlled,” says Hindman.