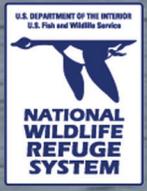


U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Friends, Volunteers, and Community Partnerships Staff Training



**Community Partnership Implementation Team
Staff Training Sub-Team
Final Report
January, 2014**

The Community Partnerships Implementation Team identified a need to provide Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) staff with information on the importance of community partnerships and with the tools needed to effectively develop and manage them. Staff training was identified as a key element to meet those needs and a Staff Training Sub-Team was established to address this topic.

This Sub-Team developed a list of National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) training courses that are possible conduits to the Service work force. These courses were chosen as they encompass Service employees across a wide range of work experiences and specialties. The goal of the sub-team was to locate at least one course in each of the “General Foundational, Intermediate, or Advanced” courses that could disseminate information regarding the value of working with Friends, Volunteers and Community Partners. These courses are listed in Attachment 1.

The Sub-Team sent NCTC Course leaders the list and the outlined learning objectives (Attachments 2, 3, and 4) for their respective courses. Each course leader was then interviewed by phone or in person and asked to review the team recommendations regarding inclusion of information regarding Volunteers, Friends and Community Partnerships in their training programs. The key questions were: a) Does your training program already include modules on these topics? b) If so, can they be updated to include information from the Community Partnerships Team? and c) If the course does not include these topics, can they be incorporated? Why or why not?

Following the review, the courses were divided into two categories, those programs that requested additional information on Volunteers, Friends and Community Partnerships to incorporate into their curriculum and those courses which felt this information would have limited impact in the course. The program lead instructors were then provided a summary which included a synopsis of the interview, a listing of the items which they felt were needed to help them implement the recommendations, objectives for their course relative to Friends, Volunteers and Community Partners and a list of contacts that can serve as instructors or can recommend additional instructors (Attachment 5).

The end result of this project is that 8 NCTC courses plan to expand treatment of working with volunteers, Friends, and community partners and 4 courses will expand their content to define and raise awareness of the community partnership concept. Notes on each of these courses follow:

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1.0 Courses Expanding Treatment of Volunteers, Friends, and Community Partnerships

1.1 FWS Employee Foundations

Course Leader - Paula Elder, 304-876-7390

Background: Employee Foundations is now a four day course. The average age of participants is about 30 with a range of experience. Every program is represented in the course with roughly 10% being from the Refuge Program. The course is held 6 or 7 times/year with about 30 people per course. Currently, two people talk to the class about partnering but it is directed more toward the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program.

The Foundations course is going through a refurbish and Paula is open to including an hour to cover the topic areas.

What is needed: Recommendation for instructors/people who could provide the information on Friends/Volunteers/Community Partnerships.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand basic elements of Volunteer Management from Planning your Program to Recognition.

- Understand basic feature of Volunteer Tracker.
- Find on-line resources related to Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships.
- Understand the importance of Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships to developing a conservation constituency, getting needed work done, and saving money.

1.2 Wage Grade Academy

Course Leaders – Karen Lindsey, 406-243-4627; John Blitch, 703-358-2190; Kristi Thiel, 304-876-7345

Background: Wage Grade Academy is a one week course held one time per year (currently in March). The course currently includes a one-hour Visitor Services section delivered by Michael Carlo (HQ) and a two-hour “Working Together” session, but nothing tailored specifically to Friends, volunteers and community partnerships. All course leaders are very interested in developing a short session or incorporating information into an existing session.

What is needed: Coordination with current instructors or a recommendation for a new instructor to deliver a short (30 minute) discussion about how Friends and volunteers can help and work-with the maintenance professionals and the importance of partnerships within the community.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Find on-line resources related to Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships.
- Understand the importance of Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships to develop a conservation constituency, get needed work done, and save money.

1.3 Introduction to Visitor Services

Course Leader - Laurie Heupel, 304-876-7486

Background: Would like to incorporate new E-guide information. Will spread objectives between the following courses; Introduction to Visitor Services, Volunteer Management and Recruitment (8114), Advanced Volunteer Management (8120), and Friends Academy. Would like new Eguide to include examples of the new forms required for volunteers including the homeland security (IT forms) with examples of how to fill them out.

What is needed: Provide latest E-guide version. Can fit in some of the requested objectives into each course. A new on-line course for Volunteer Management and Recruitment is now open in DOI Learn for enrollment. The Advanced Course is also being revamped and is expected to be a face-to-face course.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify appropriate applications of a volunteer program at your site.
- Find on-line resources related to Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships.

- Understand the importance of Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships to developing a conservation constituency, getting needed work done, and saving money.

1.4 Stepping Up To Leadership (SUTL)

Course Leader –Jennifer Jones, 304-876-7904

Background: Stepping Up To Leadership (SUTL) is currently offered two-times per year for 24 participants each session. All programs/divisions are eligible for the program. Targeted to GS-12/13 employees. The program has been revitalized over the past couple of years and is looking at providing lecture/activities around current FWS topics (i.e. surrogate species, structured decision making, etc).

What is needed: The current curriculum includes a session on “Developing and Working in Partnerships” which will be revamped for the October 2013 session. It will become a four-hour module which will include a Black-foot Challenge “like” case study. Would be open to integrating the new handbook into this session. Will need objectives and talking points.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Define the motivations of volunteers versus paid employees.
- Understand the importance of Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships to developing a conservation constituency, getting needed work done, and saving money.

1.5 Advanced Refuge Management Academy

Course Leader - Dave Gonzales, 304-876-7344

Background: Held one time/year. Currently held at same time as Friends Academy and the two classes join together for one day.

What is needed: Joanna Webb conducts the Friends Academy. She can add a section on community partnerships. One idea was to develop an “action ideas page” which would give a five-minute brainstorming window to write down five community partnerships you could engage and then identify two of these that you will engage when you return.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of Friends, volunteers and Community Partnerships to developing a conservation constituency, getting needed work done, and saving money.
- Understand the difference between managing employees and managing volunteers.

1.6 Refuge Management Academy

Course Leader - Dave Gonzales, 304-876-7344

Background: Refuge Management Academy is offered two times/year. There is currently a four-hour block for Visitor Services (taught by Maggie O’Connell or Kevin Kilcullen), Friends (Joanna Webb), Cultural Resources (Eugene Marino).

What is needed: Provide content to instructors for each topic.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Find on-line resources related to Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships.
- Understand the importance of Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships to developing a conservation constituency, getting needed work done, and saving money.
- To describe a well-functioning relationship between a Friend, Volunteer or Community Partner and the refuge and understand how to successfully engage these partners.

Options for reaching this understanding over the next year beyond initial training:

1. Attend meetings between the refuge and the Friend, Volunteer or Community Partner.
2. Work with the liaison to the Friend, Volunteer or Community Partner.
3. Work with the Friend, Volunteer or Community Partner on a specific project.
4. Aid in discussions between the refuge and the Friend, Volunteer or Community Partner.

Module should include 20 minutes of lecture and 10 minutes hands-on activity.

1.7 Project Leader Academy

Course Leader - Jack Owens but information gathered from Joanna Webb, 703-358-2392

Background: The course currently contains an eight-hour partnership module which includes a two-hour Friends module. There is currently a community partnership module but it focuses on national strategy.

What is needed: Joanna Webb instructs the two-hour Friends module and is confident that it meets the goals of the Community Partnership Implementation Team. She will work with the instructors for the other six-hour module to bring them up to speed on the CPIT’s definition of a community partnership and the new volunteer Eguide. It sounds like the volunteer discussion may currently be limited.

Objectives for Volunteer Program: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand basic elements of Volunteer Management from Planning your Program to Recognition.
- Understand basic feature of Volunteer Tracker.
- Find on-line resources related to Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships.
- Understand the importance of Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships to developing a conservation constituency, getting needed work done, and saving money.

Objectives for Community Partnership Program: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Identify the essential components of a sustainable partnership.
- Identify the steps in establishing a legal and ethical partnership that will help accomplish strategic tasks.
- Identify at least two alternative funding sources available to their organization and describe the process to procure these funds.
- Evaluate the success of a partnership.

1.8 Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP)

Course Leader – Jennifer Jones, 304-876-7904

Background: The Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP) is a nine-month program focused on GS-13/14's. Participants explore leadership in the FWS and assess, learn about, and develop themselves as leaders. Detail assignments, including a 30-day job swap and a 60-day developmental detail, are used to explore leadership in the day-to-day environment of the Service. ALDP does focus on leadership competencies including partnerships and is currently covered through a four-hour module using the Black-foot Challenge as a case study. This study includes Friends and volunteers so could easily highlight those more in the session. Each person/team is required to identify a partnership they want to engage with when they return to their stations. This can be expanded to include Friends/volunteers. Each student then develops an action plan to engage their chosen partner/Friend/volunteer group.

What is needed: Objectives for learning and the new Eguide for inclusion in January 2014 Cohort 14.

Objectives: Upon completion of this course, participants will be able to:

- Understand the importance of Friends, Volunteers and Community Partnerships to developing a conservation constituency, getting needed work done, and saving money.

2.0 Courses Raising awareness of New Community Partnership Concept

2.1 Realty Academy

Course Leader - Rick Jorgensen, 304-876-7455

Background: This is a two week course offered every second year. The course is geared toward Realty professionals including appraisers, cartographers, surveyors, acquisition specialists, legal instrument examiners and budget analysis. The course discusses partnerships with other land conservation organizations and private landowners. Representatives from organizations lead discussions in the course and review where overlap occurs between their organization and the FWS and include case studies.

What is needed: The working definition of a Community Partnership to share with class participants.

Community Partnership Definition: A community partnership is a formal relationship with a local group(s) to achieve a common goal(s). When applying this definition in the context of the Conserving the Future Recommendation 11: *Develop and nurture active and vibrant friends groups or community partnerships for every staffed refuge or refuge complex*; a community partnership is an alternative or an addition to a Friends organization. A community partnership operates under a written agreement that describes shared goals and objectives between the community partner and the refuge.

2.2 Creating a Schoolyard Habitat

Course Leader – Matt Cloyes, 304-876-7654

Background: Course takes place in different locations across the country on a school yard. Funding for the actual habitat project comes from the Partners for Fish and Wildlife program. The participants learn about partnering, using Strategic Habitat Conservation (SHC) process to determine the needs of the habitat, and then create a plan to implement a similar project at their home station with a school. Requires that participants form a partnership with a school, go through the SHC process, and secure funding for the project.

What is needed: The working definition of a Community Partnership to share with the class participants. Likely more connected with the Urban Refuge initiative than Community Partnerships.

Community Partnership Definition: A community partnership is a formal relationship with a local group(s) to achieve a common goal(s). When applying this definition in the context of the Conserving the Future Recommendation 11: *Develop and nurture active and vibrant friends groups or community partnerships for every staffed refuge or refuge complex*; a community partnership is an alternative or an addition to a Friends organization. A community partnership operates under a written agreement that describes shared goals and objectives between the community partner and the refuge.

2.3 Strategic Conservation Planning Using a Green Infrastructure Approach

Course Leader - The Conservation Fund, 304-876-7925 (information from Katie Allen)

Background: This is considered the Green Infrastructure 101 course. The course is one-week in length and held one-time per year. It is a basic course to teach landscape level ideas of connecting public and private green spaces together. The course is part lecture and part team project. The course includes determining strategies to engage stakeholders and diverse public entities.

What is needed: The working definition of a Community Partnership to share with class participants.

Community Partnership Definition: A community partnership is a formal relationship with a local group(s) to achieve a common goal(s). When applying this definition in the context of the Conserving the Future Recommendation 11: *Develop and nurture active and vibrant friends groups or community partnerships for every staffed refuge or refuge complex*; a community partnership is an alternative or an addition to a Friends organization. A community partnership operates under a written agreement that describes shared goals and objectives between the community partner and the refuge.

2.4 Building Urban Community Habitats with Youth

Course Leader – Matt Cloyes, 304-876-7654

Background: This was a new course piloted in May 2013 in Albuquerque, NM as an off-shoot of the Creating a Schoolyard Habitat course. This year 20-participants from six communities completed the course which is designed to empower conservation professionals to assess, develop, and work with local youth service corps that engage 14-25 year olds in job training, conservation skills, and leadership opportunities through community habitat enhancement, restoration, or monitoring projects. This course supports DOI's 21st Century Conservation Service Corps initiative and is part of a multi-agency EE Capacity program designed to expand the role of environmental education in cities across America to help solve environmental problems. As a result of the course, FWS employees from New Mexico worked with local youth corps in downtown Albuquerque to redesign an existing community vegetable garden, originally developed and maintained by U.S. Veterans, to plant a wildlife habitat that attracts native migratory species. This course will be offered in four additional urban areas by then end of FY16.

What is needed: The working definition of a Community Partnership to share with the class participants. Likely more connected with the Urban Refuge initiative than Community Partnerships.

Community Partnership Definition:

A community partnership is a formal relationship with a local group(s) to achieve a common goal(s). When applying this definition in the context of the Conserving the Future Recommendation 11: *Develop and nurture active and vibrant friends groups or community partnerships for every staffed refuge or refuge complex*; a community partnership is an alternative or an addition to a Friends organization. A community partnership operates under a written agreement that describes shared goals and objectives between the community partner and the refuge.

Attachment 1. Courses Considered for Enhanced Treatment of Volunteers, Friends, and Community Partners Topics

General Foundational Courses:

USFWS Employee Foundations
Wage Grade Academy
Realty Academy
Fisheries Academy
Introduction to Visitor Services
Creating a Schoolyard Habitat – Outdoor Classroom
Partners for Fish and Wildlife (PFW) Habitat Restoration
Refuge Officer Basic School
Regional Specific New Employee Training (ie, R3 hosts a Summer Intern Workshop)

Learning Objectives: Gain a basic understanding of the role and relationship of volunteers, Friends and Community Partnerships in the FWS.

Intermediate Courses:

Stepping Up To Leadership
Refuge Management Academy
Project Leader Academy
Balancing Nature and Commerce in Communities that Neighbor Public Lands
Human dimensions of Natural Resource Conservation

Learning Objectives: Be able to identify specific actions that the student can take at their station to engage volunteers, Friends and Community Partners.

Advanced Courses:

Advanced Leadership Development Program
Advanced Refuge Academy

Learning Objectives: Identify and develop leadership skills associated with the successful inclusion of volunteers, Friends and Community Partners in your program.

Attachment 2. Example of a Training Proposal for a General Foundational Course

Title: Potential Revision to Employee Foundations

Brief Description: Give a brief description of how the training supports the team's work plan and/or recommendation(s) in *Conserving the Future*. Also, to the best of your abilities, please address the following:

The Community Partnership Team is recommending adding a limited overview of volunteers, Friends and community partnerships to meet the goals of Recommendations 11 and 12 which directly links these groups to every FWS employee.

The learning objective for the addition to the Foundations course would be to: gain a basic understanding of the role and relationship of volunteers, Friends and Community Partnerships in the FWS. Material to be included in the training would be taken directly from the Volunteers, Friends & Community Partnerships Eguide (currently under development).

Topics to be included in the training:

- What are Friends and why are they important?
- USFWS National Volunteer Program Overview
- Definitions of: Volunteer, Community Partnership, Cooperating Association, Friends
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and volunteers
- Volunteers – Lessons Learned/Case Study (very brief)
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Friends Organizations
- Friends – Lessons Learned/Case Study (very brief)
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Community Partners
- Community Partners – Lessons Learned/Case Study (very brief)

This would be a very cursory overview limited to the “what” and “why” of these groups and none of the “how.” Some aspects of these topics may already be covered in the course requiring only minor adjustments or additions to incorporate the new handbook. If all the topics are new to the course, it will likely add 30-45 minutes to the course.

Attachment 3. Example of a Training Proposal for an Intermediate Course

Title: Potential Revision to Stepping Up To Leadership (SUTL)

Brief Description:

The Community Partnership Team is recommending adding an overview of Volunteers, Friends and Community Partnerships to meet the goals of Recommendations 11 and 12 of *Conserving the Future* which directly links these groups to every FWS employee. Because SUTL includes all program areas (not just refuges) it may be the first occasion for some participants to envision how these groups could help their station/program.

The learning objective for the addition to SUTL is to be able to identify specific actions that the student can take at their station to engage Volunteers, Friends and Community Partners. Material to be included in the training would be taken directly from the Volunteers, Friends & Community Partnerships Eguide (currently under development).

Topics to be included in the training:

- What are Friends and why are they important?
- The National Friends Relationship
- FWS National Volunteer Program Overview
- Definitions of: Volunteer, Community Partnership, Cooperating Association, Friends
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Volunteers
- Volunteers – Lessons Learned/Case Study
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Friends Organizations
- Friends – Lessons Learned/Case Study
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Community Partners
- Community Partners – Lessons Learned/Case Study
- Landscape Approach – A Model
- Team discussion about how these groups are currently engaged at individual stations or within program areas

Each participant would be asked to develop a basic work plan as to how they would engage each of these groups at their station or within their program. Some aspects of these topics may already be covered in the course requiring only minor adjustments or additions to incorporate the new Eguide. If all the topics are new to the course, it will likely add 60-90 minutes to the course.

Attachment 4. Example of a Training Proposal for an Advanced Course

Title: Potential revision to Advanced Leadership Development Program (ALDP)

Brief Description:

The Community Partnership Team is recommending adding an overview of Volunteers, Friends and Community Partnerships to meet the goals of Recommendations 11 and 12 of *Conserving the Future* which directly links these groups to every FWS employee. Because the ALDP includes all program areas (not just refuges) it may be the first occasion for some participants to envision how these groups could help their station/program.

The learning objective for the addition to the ALDP is to identify and develop leadership skills associated with the successful inclusion of Volunteers, Friends and Community Partners in their program. Material to be included in the training would be taken directly from the Volunteers, Friends & Community Partnerships Eguide (currently under development).

Topics to be included in the training:

- What are Friends and why are they important?
- The National Friends Relationship
- FWS National Volunteer Program Overview
- Definitions of: Volunteer, Community Partnership, Cooperating Association, Friends
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Volunteers
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Friends Organization
- Developing the relationship between the Refuge and Community Partners
- Landscape Approach – A Model
- Guest speaker regarding Lessons Learned from one of the topic areas
- Team discussion about how these groups are currently engaged at individual stations or within program areas

Each ALDP Team would be asked to develop a work plan as to how each of these groups could be engaged at their station or within their program. Some aspects of these topics may already be covered in the course requiring only minor adjustments or additions to incorporate the new handbook. If all the topics are new to the course, it will likely add 60-90 minutes to the course.

Attachment 5. National Contact List Provided to NCTC Instructors

National Volunteer Coordinator

Deborah Moore
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deborah_moore@fws.gov

National Friends Coordinator

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Reg 1 Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

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Reg 5 Friends Coordinator

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OR

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Reg 6 Volunteer Coordinator

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Reg 6 Friends Coordinator

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Reg 7 Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

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Reg 8 Volunteer and Friends Coordinator

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U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System

www.fws.gov/refuges

March 2014



Recommendation 12: *Develop a national strategy for recruiting, coordinating and supporting a more self-sustaining volunteer corps, while creating new opportunities for community involvement in implementing refuge priorities.*