

News Release



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July 15, 2010

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Service Honor Guard Debuts to Honor Flight 93 Passengers and Crew

In its first official function, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Honor Guard today represented the agency at the dedication of conservation lands and a memorial service honoring the heroic passengers and crew of United Airlines Flight 93 near Shanksville, Pa. One of four commercial airliners hijacked on September 11, 2001, Flight 93 crashed, killing all aboard, but the actions of passengers and crew thwarted the planned terrorist attack on the nation's capital. Richard J. Guadagno, a refuge manager and refuge wildlife enforcement officer, was on the flight, returning to his home in California, and played a role in preventing the attack.

The dedicated conservation lands, named State Game Lands 93, encompass 665 acres, including portions of the Flight 93 National Memorial and will be managed for the benefit of wildlife and people by the Pennsylvania Game Commission. A memorial and habitat area was created within the 665 acres to honor Guadagno's legacy, and a special memorial service was held at the Richard J. Guadagno Habitat Area. The Service Honor Guard provided full honors for the events.

"This is a proud and historic moment for the Service. It's the first formal honor guard in the 139-year history of the agency," said Acting Service Director Rowan Gould, "and fitting that their first official function was to honor the memory of a heroic comrade on Flight 93, Richard Guadagno."

Representing nearly every Service region, the twelve Service refuge law enforcement officers and three active alternates were chosen based on their skills and dedication to the core values of the Service.

The Honor Guard's mission is to honor and remember Service employees who have dedicated their lives to promoting wildlife conservation as well as the safety and security of Service lands. The Honor Guard will provide full honors at funerals and graveside services and participate in ceremonies and other official events.

Greg Siekaniec, Assistant Director for the National Wildlife Refuge System, said "I extend my sincere appreciation to these officers for their willingness to serve on behalf of the Service."

The Pennsylvania Game Commission and the Conservation Officers of Pennsylvania Association hosted the dedication and memorial service, just three miles from the Flight 93 crash site, in conjunction with the North American Wildlife Enforcement Officers Association 2010 Conference.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.