



News Release

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Urban Oases project designated as New Haven Harbor Watershed Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service today designated the Urban Oases project in the New Haven Harbor Watershed as an Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership. With 80 percent of Americans living in cities, the Service's new Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative will forge connections between the National Wildlife Refuge System, natural resource conservation, and people living in urban areas.

"We must reach out into cities to ensure that all Americans have the opportunity to develop a true connection with wild things and wild places. Our Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnerships will help us engage communities where we haven't had much of a presence," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe.

The project aims to expand habitat for migratory birds and other species in suitable areas and raise public awareness about the local watershed, Long Island Sound, and the linkages between urban green space and nearby public lands such as the Stewart B. McKinney National Wildlife Refuge. Partners include Audubon Connecticut, the New Haven Urban Resources Initiative, the Yale School of Forestry & Environmental Studies, New Haven Parks, Recreation, and Trees, Common Ground High School, Urban Farm and Environmental Education Center, the Yale Peabody Museum, New Haven Public Schools and local neighborhood groups.

Partners, including the Service, have contributed funds totaling \$355,803 in support of the project.

New Haven elementary school students have already begun to create wildlife habitat gardens in schoolyards and their local community, volunteers are establishing wildlife habitat plantings in city parks, and schoolchildren working with partners are developing educational signs and exhibits to inform the public about benefits to creating and maintaining wildlife habitat in their communities. For project details and updates, visit http://www.fws.gov/refuge/Stewart_B_McKinney/

The New Haven Harbor Watershed Urban Wildlife Refuge Partnership is one of eight across the country designated under the Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative. The initiative grows out of the Service's Conserving the Future vision, which sets a strategic path for the National Wildlife Refuge System for the next decade and beyond. For more information, visit <http://americaswildlife.org/>.

The Service manages more than 560 national wildlife refuges and 150 million acres across America. Many of the wildlife refuges are in urban areas, including Boston, Philadelphia, San Francisco, and Denver; among other cities. More than 47 million people annually visit national wildlife refuges.

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, <http://www.fws.gov/>

