

# The Grebe

VOLUME 9, ISSUE 18

SPRING 2016

Support Friends  
through "Idaho  
Gives 2016"  
See Page 2

## Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge

Our mission is to promote,  
protect and provide resources to  
preserve and enhance

## Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

for the enjoyment of present  
and future generations.



## Friends of Deer Flat Board of Directors

Bob Christensen, President  
Bob Ruesink, Vice-President  
Tricia Matthews, Treasurer  
Mary Jo Schumacher, Secretary  
Mike Shipman, Member  
Kathleen McCarter, Member

## Contact Information

13751 Upper Embankment Rd  
Nampa ID 83686

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FriendsofDeerFlat](http://www.facebook.com/FriendsofDeerFlat)

**Bob Faller**  
Newsletter Editor

## President's Message – Native Sagebrush Steppe Restoration Project

About a year ago, the Friends Board evaluated all of the Friends past, ongoing and planned activities to see if we were meeting our mission to *promote, protect, preserve and enhance the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge*.

We found that we had achieved or assisted in various actions that met all of our mission statement criteria, but felt we were short in planning and carrying out a specific Friends' sponsored conservation project. As a result, we started exploring potential schemes that could either enhance off-lake wetland habitats or restore upland habitats.

After gathering facts, examining logistics, assessing costs, and visiting with refuge staff, we initiated an upland habitat restoration project adjacent to the refuge visitor center (see Figure 1). The objective of the project is to restore the native sagebrush steppe community which has vanished from the site primarily as a result of past wildfires. At present, the site is covered by a carpet of *cheatgrass*. We will start with a 3-acre area and expand from there as we perfect our plans and restoration techniques.



Figure 1: Proposed FDFWR Restoration  
Project Area (Phase 1) - 3.0 acres

*President's Message (Continued on Page 2)*

*President's Message (Continued from Page 1)*

The proposed timing and list of activities associated with the initial project are as follows:

| YEAR        | MONTH          | ACTIVITY  |
|-------------|----------------|---|
| 2016        | Mar            | Refuge staff treats project area with Roundup (done in March)   |
| 2016        | Jun-Jul        | FDFWR orders custom seed mix and bitterbrush seed   |
| 2016        | Apr-Aug        | Refuge staff mows and harrows to keep weeds down, and re-treats project area with Roundup as needed   |
| <b>2016</b> | <b>Oct</b>     | <b>FDFWR and Refuge volunteers collect seed on the refuge (sagebrush, four-wing saltbush)</b>   |
| 2016        | Oct            | Collected seed is sent to Lucky Peak Nursery to be processed and grown into containerized seedlings   |
| 2016        | Oct            | Purchased bitterbrush seed is sent to Lucky Peak Nursery to be grown into containerized seedlings   |
| 2016        | Nov            | Treat soil with cheatgrass-inhibiting bacteria  |
| 2016        | Nov            | Plant by means of a seed-drill the custom seed mix on the project site  |
| 2017        | Mar-Sep        | Use spot treatments with Roundup to control weeds and cheatgrass  |
| <b>2017</b> | <b>Oct-Nov</b> | <b>Plant nursery-grown sagebrush, saltbush, and bitterbrush seedlings when soil moisture is good. May consider hand-watering when planting</b>                    |
| 2018        | Mar            | Create interpretive brochures to educate visitors about native sagebrush steppe plant communities. These brochures will be available in the Refuge Visitor Center |
|             | <b>Mar-Sep</b> | <b>Hand water seedlings as needed and pull weeds</b>  |

The activities listed in **green** are excellent opportunities for Friends members to get involved in the restoration project. Please make yourselves ready to help with this exciting venture.

Best regards, Bob Christensen, Friends Board President

## **IDAHO GIVES 2016: May 5!**

### **CIRCLE THIS DATE ON YOUR CALENDAR!**

Idaho Gives is a program through Idaho Nonprofit Center that enables anyone to donate money online to their favorite nonprofit organizations—such as Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge. Simply log onto [www.idahogives.org](http://www.idahogives.org), click the “Donate Now” tab and select Friends of Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge.

Friends of Deer Flat especially appreciate donations through Idaho Gives as those donations are non-designated. This means the donations can be used for a wide variety of activities at the Refuge such as winter bird feeding, osprey web-cam, and many fun and educational programs for children.

Thank you if you have donated to Friends through Idaho Gives in past years, and we hope you will again remember us through a donation in the 2016 Idaho Gives campaign.

## JOIN US FOR EARTH DAY WORK DAY 2016



Celebrate Earth Day by removing litter or noxious weeds, or participating in other projects to improve wildlife habitat at the Lake Lowell Unit of the Refuge.

Volunteer efforts are important for wildlife. Controlling noxious weeds improves wildlife habitat by decreasing the amount of non-native vegetation that often out-competes native plants that wildlife depend on for food and cover.

Picking up litter not only makes the Refuge look better to people, it also eliminates the possibility of animals hurting themselves by eating or being caught in litter.

### **If interested in joining us on Earth Day, please pre-register!**

Contact the Refuge at [deerflat@fws.gov](mailto:deerflat@fws.gov). If you'd prefer to pre-register by phone or have any questions, call Wendy at 208-467-9278, or email [wendy\\_irwin@fws.gov](mailto:wendy_irwin@fws.gov).

Bring sturdy work gloves, sun protection, and water. Wear clothes appropriate for the weather and that you don't mind getting dirty. Long-sleeved shirts, long pants and close-toed shoes are recommended.

### Event Details

**When:** 9 AM - noon on Saturday, April 23.

**Where:** Meet at the Visitor Center at 9 AM for orientation. Projects occur all around Lake Lowell.

**Note:** GPS and online directions to the Visitor Center may not be correct. You can find [correct directions here](#).

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to this event for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, close captioning, or other accommodation needs to Susan Kain, 208-467-9278, [deerflat@fws.gov](mailto:deerflat@fws.gov), TTY 800-877-8339 by close of business 7-10 days before event.

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*Thanks for helping us improve the Refuge for wildlife and people!*

## Wing on Over to the Refuge for the New Spring Migration Celebration Saturday, May 14, 2016 (2 – 5 pm)

- ✚ Did you know that monarch butterflies fly between 50-100 miles per day during their annual migration?
- ✚ Or that the Arctic tern travels 22,000 miles each year between its breeding grounds in the Arctic and its wintering grounds in the Antarctic?

**Learn more about these flying athletes at activity stations around the Refuge Visitor Center, while you enjoy these Friends of Deer Flat events during Migration Celebration:**

### Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge's 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary (2 to 5 p.m.)

The Friends of DFWR invite you  
to help us celebrate our  
**10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary**  
during the Refuge's Migratory Event.

We will sponsor activities for children,  
host a membership booth, and  
show a short video in the auditorium called  
"Wings of Thunder."

Refreshments, door prizes,  
a silent auction, and a \$10  
membership enrollment special  
will all be part of our celebration.



### Special Ribbon Cutting for the Della Johnson Memorial Trail (2:30 p.m.)

You may be asking,  
"What is the Della Johnson Memorial Trail?"

It is a short ADA-accessible concrete trail  
located just east of the refuge visitor center.  
The trail cuts south off the Centennial Trail  
and ends at the Wildlife/Bird Viewing Blind  
(see map on Page 1, President's Message).

Funding to construct the trail was a joint  
endeavor between the Friends of DFWR and  
Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge.

Funds used by the Friends of DFWR came  
from a generous endowment by Dell M.  
Johnson, a local citizen and refuge friend who  
has since passed away.

A bronze plaque identifying the trail and an  
interpretive display describing birding  
opportunities at the refuge will be installed  
adjacent to the trail prior to the event.



## *Ospreys Have Returned*

The ospreys are back at Lake Lowell. They are busily rebuilding their nest and anticipating laying a clutch of eggs before the end of the month.

The osprey webcam is close to being online again - working out bandwidth and IP issues, so stay tuned!



## *Bald Eagles are Nesting*

Two pairs of bald eagles are currently attending their cottonwood nests on the edges of Lake Lowell. They should have eaglets by now.

Wildlife cameras were successfully installed at the nests in February.



## *Canada Geese are Laying*

The first round of goose nest surveys have been completed on the Snake River Island sector of the refuge.

There were lots of nests counted on the islands near Homedale, but for the rest of the islands above and below this reach, the number of nests found was very spotty.

# GREBE'S NEST NATURE STORE

Proceeds from the Grebe's Nest Nature Store are used to help fund conservation projects and public outreach events at Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge



*For questions or more information, contact Bob Faller 467-6676*

## Hours of Operation

Mondays  
1 pm to 4 pm

Tuesdays  
8 am to 4 pm

Wednesdays  
9 am to Noon

Thursdays  
8 am to 4 pm

Fridays  
10 am to 2 pm

Saturdays  
10 am to 4 pm



**Yes!**

**I want to be a member.**

Just copy this page, cut on dotted line above, complete the requested information below, then mail it along with your annual dues to:

**Friends of Deer Flat Wildlife Refuge  
13751 Upper Embankment Road  
Nampa ID 83686**

\_\_\_\_\_  
Name(s)

\_\_\_\_\_  
Address

\_\_\_\_\_  
City/State /Zip

\_\_\_\_\_  
Phone

\_\_\_\_\_  
Email

**Annual Membership Levels  
(Please mark one)**

|                               |           |
|-------------------------------|-----------|
| _____ Owl (senior or student) | \$ 10.00  |
| _____ Deer (individual)       | \$ 15.00  |
| _____ Fox (family)            | \$ 25.00  |
| _____ Osprey                  | \$ 50.00  |
| _____ Eagle                   | \$ 100.00 |
| _____ Goldeneye               | \$ 500.00 |

**Join  
the  
Friends  
of  
Deer  
Flat  
Refuge**

**Yes!**

**I want to be involved.**

Please mark all areas of interest and ways you'd like to participate.

- Habitat Enhancement
- Staffing the Bookstore
- Organizing events
- Litter lifts
- Weed eradication
- Project Management
- Photographic Documentation of Events and Activities
- Historian
- Newsletter
- Publicity / Public Relations
- Grant Writing
- Fundraising
- Lobbying and Advocacy
- Board of Directors
- Advisory on specific policies, protocols and processes.
- Other (please specify)

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Reminder of our special membership offer  
(see page 4 "Friends of DFWR 10<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Celebration")**

**During the Refuge's Migration Celebration on Saturday, May 14, Friends are offering a special membership rate of \$10.**

**This is a great opportunity for you to join (or rejoin)—and a perfect time for you to tell any wildlife enthusiasts you know about the work of the Friends of Deer Flat!**