



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Friends and Volunteers

Annual Update FY 2011

People Making a Difference



A Connected Conservation Constituency –

Though our fundamental vision is wildlife conservation, we recognize that to be successful we must inspire the American people to connect with their wildlife heritage and participate as stewards of our system of lands. Our goal must be to inspire all Americans to become part of a conservation constituency. The growth of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's (Service) volunteers, Friends organizations and partners during the past 30 years has been a remarkable achievement of public involvement and stewardship. Volunteers of all ages and abilities now provide a wide array of vital services on Service lands. Working side by side with Service staff, they greet the public and teach the young; they clear trails and control invasive species; and they provide biological expertise with precision and enthusiasm. If a job needs to be done, chances are pretty good that a volunteer is there to help. The Service could not function without the 1.7 million hours of work that our more than 46,000 volunteers contribute every year.

The Service has similarly been fortified by the active involvement of Friends organizations. These locally established, nonprofit citizen organizations have many different names, but they all share our passion for wildlife and our love of wild places. They are one of the Service's best ambassadors in the community—sharing knowledge with their neighbors and standing firm when fish and wildlife are in peril. They epitomize the idea that all conservation is local. – excerpted and edited from Conserving the Future: Wildlife Refuges and the Next Generation.



Cover: Volunteer moves brush at Desert NWR/FWS

Volunteers

People Making a Difference

Volunteers, Friends and partners are valuable allies of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service). These individuals and groups are vital to fulfilling the Service's mission and goals. Each year, they give generously their time, expertise and resources to the National Wildlife Refuge System, the National Fish Hatchery System, the Migratory Bird Program, the Office of Law Enforcement, the Endangered Species Program, Ecological Services and the National Conservation Training Center. They play an important role in serving the more than 44 million visitors who enjoy public lands managed by the Service.

During Fiscal Year 2011 (October 1, 2010 – September 30, 2011), 46,880 volunteers donated 1,718,369 hours. The value of their labor was \$36,704,362.00, the equivalent of 826 full-time employees. More than 200 Friends organizations and many national and local partners support the work of the Service.

There is no better way to show the value of our volunteers, Friends and partners than to share their successes. Along with volunteer achievements, this report describes some of the innovative programs our Friends organizations are undertaking. It also highlights projects involving partners such as Take Pride in America, National Environmental Education Foundation and the Student Conservation Association.

What Authorizes the Service to Accept Volunteers?

The Fish and Wildlife Act of 1956, as amended by the Fish and Wildlife Improvement Act of 1978, and the National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer and Community Partnership

Enhancement Act of 1988 authorize the Service to accept volunteer services. Congress reauthorized the Volunteer and Community Partnership Enhancement Act in 2004, and again in 2010, affirming its desire to involve Americans as stewards of our nation's natural resources and wildlife. As a result, the National Wildlife Refuge System expanded its volunteer program, and environmental education programs, recreational opportunities and community-based partnerships increased.

Who Are Our Volunteers?

Our volunteers are people who want to give back to their communities and are interested in the work of a refuge, hatchery or Service program. They are parents who want to model environmental stewardship, retirees willing to share a wealth of knowledge and experience, outdoor enthusiasts wishing to spread the word about America's great natural treasures and concerned citizens of all ages interested in making meaningful contributions while learning about conservation. Whether it is an environmental ethic, a love of bird watching or enthusiasm for the outdoors, like-minded volunteers gather to share their passions while contributing to the good of their communities.

What Do Our Volunteers Do?

Volunteers perform a variety of tasks. Some work full-time; others give a few hours a week or month; and still others help during special events. We match our volunteers' talents and interests to work to be done, which varies from site to site. Whenever possible, we put special skills and experience to work to achieve our conservation goals.

Volunteers conduct fish and wildlife population surveys, band birds, lead tours and educational activities for school groups and other visitors, do laboratory research, manage cultural resources, perform administrative duties, work with computers and other technical equipment, maintain Service facilities, write grant proposals and much more. Many volunteer projects use groups of people in "work parties." These events are as social as they are productive. Friendships are formed while important work is done.

How Do We Calculate the Value of Our Volunteers?

Although volunteers' skills, knowledge, and time are priceless, the Service uses the figure calculated annually by Independent Sector, the leadership forum for charities, foundations and corporate giving programs, to put a monetary value on volunteer contributions. For FY 11, an hour of volunteer time was worth \$21.36.

Volunteers complete tasks that would otherwise go undone. The Service uses a full-time equivalent, or the hours worked by a full-time employee in a year, to figure the number of staff positions filled by volunteers. A full-time equivalent equals 2,080 hours.

Volunteer Contributions Service-wide

FY 11 (October 1, 2010 - September 30, 2011)

Value of Service

\$36,704,362

Hours of Service

1,718,369

Number of Volunteers

46,880

Full Time Equivalents

826



Volunteer Contributions for Each of the last 10 Years

| Fiscal Year | Number of Volunteers | Hours | Hourly Value | Value of Service |
|-------------|----------------------|-----------|--------------|------------------|
| 2002 | 39,534 | 1,352,952 | \$16.74 | \$22,648,416 |
| 2003 | 44,126 | 1,628,550 | \$17.19 | \$27,994,775 |
| 2004 | 37,958 | 1,532,123 | \$17.55 | \$26,888,759 |
| 2005 | 37,996 | 1,478,797 | \$17.55 | \$25,952,887 |
| 2006 | 36,169 | 1,447,421 | \$18.04 | \$26,111,475 |
| 2007 | 37,881 | 1,491,152 | \$18.77 | \$27,988,923 |
| 2008 | 39,765 | 1,557,764 | \$19.51 | \$30,391,976 |
| 2009 | 42,198 | 1,611,388 | \$20.25 | \$32,630,607 |
| 2010 | 44,307 | 1,691,957 | \$20.85 | \$35,277,303 |
| 2011 | 46,880 | 1,718,369 | \$21.36 | \$36,704,362 |

Volunteer Contributions by Service Program in FY 11

| Program | Number of Volunteers | Hours | Value of Service | Full-Time Equivalent |
|-----------|----------------------|-----------|------------------|----------------------|
| Refuges | 41,601 | 1,505,118 | \$32,149,320 | 724 |
| Fisheries | 4,416 | 129,484 | \$2,765,778 | 62 |
| Other* | 863 | 83,767 | \$1,789,263 | 40 |
| Total | 46,880 | 1,718,369 | \$36,704,362 | 826 |

*Other Service Program Divisions includes Endangered Species, Law Enforcement, Migratory Birds, Ecological Services field offices, NCTC and Headquarters offices

Volunteer Contributions by Service Regions in FY 11

| Region | Number of Volunteers | Hours | Value of Service | Full-Time Equivalent |
|-----------------------|----------------------|-----------|------------------|----------------------|
| 1 (Pacific) | 8,011 | 221,622 | \$4,733,846 | 107 |
| 2 (Southwest) | 4,585 | 284,101 | \$6,068,397 | 137 |
| 3 (Midwest) | 7,598 | 204,857 | \$4,375,746 | 98 |
| 4 (Southeast) | 8,720 | 363,972 | \$7,774,442 | 175 |
| 5 (Northeast) | 7,421 | 271,262 | \$5,794,156 | 130 |
| 6 (Mountain-Prairie) | 2,603 | 130,004 | \$2,776,885 | 63 |
| 7 (Alaska) | 547 | 80,358 | \$1,716,447 | 39 |
| 8 (Pacific Southwest) | 7,339 | 133,502 | \$2,851,603 | 64 |
| 9 (Headquarters) | 56 | 28,690 | \$612,818 | 14 |
| Total | 46,880 | 1,718,369 | \$36,704,362 | 826 |

Volunteer Contributions by Activity by Service Region in FY 11

| Region | Wildlife & Habitat | Maintenance | Wildlife Dependant Recreation | Cultural Resources | Other** | Total Hours |
|-----------------------|--------------------|-------------|-------------------------------|--------------------|---------|-------------|
| 1 (Pacific) | 89,831 | 21,030 | 82,711 | 6,839 | 21,211 | 221,622 |
| 2 (Southwest) | 94,063 | 62,928 | 98,041 | 2,894 | 26,175 | 284,101 |
| 3 (Midwest) | 72,789 | 29,722 | 77,020 | 4,673 | 20,653 | 204,857 |
| 4 (Southeast) | 107,377 | 93,655 | 127,784 | 1,652 | 33,504 | 363,972 |
| 5 (Northeast) | 111,246 | 45,014 | 89,619 | 1,123 | 24,261 | 271,262 |
| 6 (Mountain-Prairie) | 44,406 | 30,326 | 33,371 | 2,696 | 19,205 | 130,004 |
| 7 (Alaska) | 48,295 | 4,258 | 18,944 | 2,123 | 6,738 | 80,358 |
| 8 (Pacific Southwest) | 83,096 | 10,007 | 32,644 | 804 | 6,951 | 133,502 |
| 9 (Headquarters) | 17,470 | 0 | 0 | 1,500 | 9,720 | 28,690 |
| Total | 668,573 | 296,940 | 560,134 | 24,304 | 168,418 | 1,718,369 |

**Other Activities includes administrative duties such as filing, updating the library, archiving, digitizing and translating documents and brochures, or any other activity not included in the categories listed.

Volunteer of the Year



David Govatski

A lifetime of dedicated public service and volunteerism has earned New Hampshire resident David Govatski the coveted Refuge System Volunteer of the Year Award from the National Wildlife Refuge Association and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation. “Volunteers are the lifeblood of the Refuge System,” said Evan Hirsche, NWRA president. “Volunteers like David make the difference in the overall program success and we salute David’s lifelong dedication to public service and conservation.” Govatski has dedicated over 11,000 volunteer-hours at the **Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge**. He is president of the Friends of Pondicherry, a local booster organization for the wildlife refuge. As a certified silviculturist, he is noted for discovering both the largest black spruce and white spruce in New Hampshire, which were found on the wildlife refuge. Govatski’s public and volunteer service also includes more than 25 years with the United States military where he retired as a master sergeant with the Vermont Army National Guard. He concurrently served for 30 years as a forester and a fire and aviation officer for the U.S. Forest Service. “David is well known for the energy and enthusiasm he brings to volunteering on the refuge and dedication to promoting conservation.” Hirsche said. “He invented a new technique of trail maintenance for wetland trails that is now used by other trail organizations.” Govatski also serves on the board of the Friends of Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge. He resides in Jefferson, NH with his wife Kathi who also is a volunteer on the refuge.

National Wildlife Refuge System Volunteer Highlights:



Tree and Violet-Green swallow monitored by volunteers at Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge

At **Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge** volunteers took part in a program to watch over 19 nest boxes. “NestWatch” is a citizen-science project and nest-monitoring database of the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Volunteers monitored the nest boxes to record data including nest site location, habitat, species, and number of eggs, young, and fledglings. The data is gathered on official forms and is then entered into the national database where their observations are compiled with those of other participants in a continent-wide effort to better understand and manage the impacts of environmental change on bird populations. The program is also a great interpretive opportunity. Visitors along the trails almost always comment on how much they love watching the birds flying in and out of the boxes. Some of the questions asked by visitors are types of birds, how many chicks are being raised, and where they can get boxes and poles like the ones used.

As an Alternative to College Spring Break, **Desert National Wildlife Refuge** partnered with the Friends of Nevada Wilderness to engage student volunteers from the University of Nevada, Reno (UNR) and Las Vegas (UNLV). Student volunteers and local citizens spent a week camping and working in the rugged backcountry of the refuge. As there are no roads to the work site, the volunteers enjoyed a 3 mile stroll from the staging area to the job site. The object of the endeavor was a 3000 foot stretch of 8 foot tall, three-course, heavy-duty enclosure fence that was used in the 1980s to capture Desert bighorn sheep for study. The work area was along a 30 to 90° mountain slope with an elevation change of 700 feet. After disassembly, the fencing was rolled into manageable sections. To haul the fence out, every day these hard-working volunteers happily endured a grueling 3 mile trek back to the staging area. Some of the more enthusiastic volunteers made the round trip twice each day.



Making it look deceptively easy are Anna Breen (L), Toby Marble (C), and Ian Smith. Photo credit: Friends of Nevada Wilderness, Kurt Kuznicki.

Volunteers are the lifeline at **J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge**. Every Friday, teams of volunteers take to the waters to remove the nearly invisible monofilament fishing line that can be deadly to birds and marine life. In the winter more than 40 volunteers show up each week. In the summer a steady crew of six hits the kayaks weekly.



An Earth Day volunteer at J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge helps a young lady to craft a "Mother Earth" ornament.

A very successful Earth Day Celebration was also held at the refuge, attracting over 1100 visitors. Volunteers conducted crafts workshops, lectures and tours all day. The Earth Day schedule included a wildlife drive, assistance for kids to make "Mother Earth" ornaments, pop-bottle butterfly or jellyfish, beeswax candles, bracelets out of "plarn" (plastic bag yarn), and several narrated walks and tours. Also present walking around the education center was "Bagzilla". Bagzilla was a volunteer in a costume made with the average amount of shopping bags used by one person in a year (seen in background of the image above).

The **Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge** has over 130 active volunteers who help the refuge in a variety of ways. One of those volunteers, David Blood, was named Forsythe's 2011 Volunteer of the Year. Arriving several years ago to help staff the front desk at the headquarters office building, Dave's duties expanded exponentially to include working with the Friends organization (which included a stint as President), and completing a Volunteer Master Naturalist training. Dave currently updates the refuge's and the Friend's website and helps staff the Nature Store on Wednesdays and Saturdays, putting in more than 1,000 volunteer hours.

At the **Bitter Lake National Wildlife Refuge** Dragonfly Festival numerous volunteers performed an assortment of activities to make the festival a success. Volunteers lead tours, drove vans, set up tents, helped serve lunch, developed a kids art table and much more. Volunteers from the Roswell Photo club organized a photo workshop for the first time during the festival.

Volunteers at Bitter Lake also assisted refuge staff with the 2011 Youth Pheasant Hunt that included partnering with the Safari Club International and the New Mexico Game and Fish Department. Some of the tasks volunteers work on included preparing breakfast, dog handling demonstrations, skeet shooting and guiding 12 kids in the field during the pheasant hunt.

At **Kofa National Wildlife Refuge** volunteers assisted with the relocation of Sonora Pronghorns to the refuge, replaced boundary signs, completed repairs on three historic buildings, and helped staff informational booths at five community events. These same volunteers also reached out to the community by conducting 107 environmental education programs reaching 4,446 students.

Neil Smith National Wildlife Refuge marked the 25th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King's legacy by hosting a day of service on January 17. Volunteers were recruited to help with tall grass prairie reconstruction by cleaning and preparing seeds for spring planting, as well as cleaning planting containers in the greenhouse. While the day of service took place indoors, after completion volunteers were encouraged to spend some time outdoors exploring the refuge on snowshoes.

DeSoto and Boyer Chute National Wildlife Refuge staff hosted a celebration to thank the many volunteers who helped build levees, pack artifacts and perform countless other tasks during the flooding of the Missouri River in 2011. Of high importance for preservation was the Steamboat Bertrand collection. The 200,000 pieces in the Bertrand Collection provide one of the most significant assemblages of Civil War era artifacts in the country. According to Refuge Manager, Tom Cox, volunteer efforts saved the refuge \$27 million in costs and preserved a national treasure. The cost

estimate is a result of discussions with engineers working with other companies early on as to what the costs of restoring the infrastructure would be if the water was as high as predicted. Museum specialists estimated the Bertrand collection would take anywhere from three weeks to six months to evacuate. The collection was packed up and moved in a week by 100 volunteers. Artifacts were packed and transported to a secure off-site storage facility. In all, more than 130 volunteers assisted the Service in the larger preparation efforts. A dozen organizations provided volunteers. The evacuation would not have been possible without the hard work of these dedicated community volunteers.

The James River Excess to Asset program of the **Eastern Virginia Rivers National Wildlife Refuge Complex** uses volunteers to collect metal, tires, and other debris from Refuge lands. Collected materials are then sold to local scrap yards for funding that is injected back into the refuge for promotion of the recycling program. To date, over 23,226 pounds of metal scrap has been taken for repurposing. Through this program several acres of property have been returned to natural habitat; facilities are clean, more than \$1,300 has been gained through recycling, and more than \$30,000 garnered in GSA sales of antiquated equipment.

Residential Volunteers

Moapa Valley National Wildlife Refuge enjoys the help from resident volunteers or "RVers" as these volunteers are called who provide their own "homes" (usually in the form or some sort of recreational vehicle). The host site provides a variety of support amenities, usually including a pad with septic, water, and electricity hook-ups in exchange for a pre-determined length of time and number of hours of volunteer service each week. It's a win-win situation.

Volunteers at Moapa Valley donated their labor and skills performing general maintenance, visitor services, environmental education and participating in four volunteer habitat restoration and maintenance events. During these events volunteers planted native trees, bushes and grasses, or cut and removed overgrown weeds. They helped remove thousands of palm tree sprouts and cleared 18 cubic yards of construction debris.



Full-time resident RV volunteers Royal and Janet Arnold happily provide valuable maintenance and well-informed visitor service help at Moapa Valley NWR. For FY2011 Royal donated 1,435 and Janet 491 volunteer hours./USFWS

This year, two work-camper volunteers operated the **Sonny Bono Salton Sea National Wildlife Refuge Complex** visitor center and performed other maintenance activities for 32 hours per week from October to March. Other volunteer activities included a group of seven volunteers from the local 4H spending 8 hours planting 250 willow trees in a 20 acre field that was converted from rye grass production, and several college students participated in invasive plant removal and research activities on the **Coachella Valley National Wildlife Refuge**.



Volunteer caring for willow tree at Sony Bono NWR

National Fish Hatchery System Volunteer Highlights:

The **Coleman National Fish Hatchery** volunteer program continues to grow every year. Thousands of school children visit the hatchery as part of a school curriculum. Since 2001, the station has worked to put together volunteer led tours to focus on visiting school groups. About two dozen individuals volunteer at the hatchery leading school groups around the facility in an organized manner, logging in close to 420 hours conducting these tours. The volunteer-led guided tour has resulted in a high quality experience for the children and the teachers.

A very popular community and partnership outreach event at Coleman, the annual *Return of the Salmon Festival* has been celebrated since 1991 providing visitors with a wide array of information on current natural resource topics. Visitors can view day-to-day hatchery operations such as brood stock spawning, egg incubation, juvenile rearing and fish tagging. Visitors during the festival are treated to viewing large numbers of fall Chinook salmon returning to Battle Creek and the hatchery. About 7,000 visitors attend this event every October and the festival would not be the success it is without the huge donation of over 1,600 volunteer hours.



Friends and Volunteers of the Coleman National Fish Hatchery Complex prepare to install informational signs along the Battle Creek Salmon Trail/USFWS

Volunteers at **Natchitoches National Fish Hatchery** contributed a total of 242 hours supporting the hatchery's annual open house in conjunction with National Fishing and Boating Safety Week. Another 520 hours were donated by two individuals who helped at the hatchery's aquarium, transferred hatchery property records into the PPMS database, fed the alligator gar and mowed hatchery grounds. Several teachers from the Natchitoches Parish School System and two students of the Louisiana School for the Math, Science and the Arts donated a combined 158 hours towards the Caddo Indian Cultural Heritage Project to integrate Caddo culture into schools.

Private John Allen National Fish Hatchery volunteers contributed to a successful year in connecting people with nature. For a short time, new construction on the hatchery limited the public from visiting the facility. As a result, the number of off-site presentations was increased. A 500 gallon mobile aquarium was used quite extensively during the year at many outreach events. Volunteers were crucial to transporting the tank, distributing informational material, and answering questions about the hatchery and its role in impacting the environment. Over 14,000 adults and children were reached through these presentations and it could not have been possible without the help of our volunteers.

Volunteers at **Bears Bluff National Fish Hatchery** assisted with a number of resource projects and were a critical component in achieving some of the hatchery's resource goals. Volunteers assisted with the collection of American shad brood stock via electro-fishing, construction of oyster reefs, bagging oyster shell, under-dock reef sampling, red drum fin clip collection, Atlantic sturgeon feeding, cobia brood stock collection, spawning activities, and facility maintenance. Volunteers also restored oyster reef habitat around the hatchery perimeter. One reef was created this year testing the use of recycled crab traps in areas of soft substrate. Over 100 bushels of oyster shell were recycled.



Volunteers moving bags oyster shell. Oyster bags were used to create an oyster reef footprint

A very successful cooperative restoration work day was held on Martin Luther King Jr. Day at the Dow's Prairie Schoolyard Habitat Project in McKinleyville, CA. More than 40 members of the community, including the McKinleyville Land Trust, Americorps Youth Serve Program, the Dow's Prairie Elementary Parent Teacher Organization, and the **FWS Arcata Fish and Wildlife Office** joined together to install a new walking path, remove invasive Himalaya blackberry and Scotch Broom, and prepare the site for the restoration planting of native species. The goal of the project is to restore and enhance a 2.5 acre wetland site featuring a seasonal pond with an abundant amphibian population, as well as create a stand of native Spirea.

Additional Service Program Highlights

Volunteers assisted with the **FWS Arizona Ecological Services Office** native pollinator study that is being conducted in cooperation with Northern Arizona University (NAU) and the Merriam Powell Center for Environmental research. The project was initiated in response to Regional Director Benjamin Tuggle's challenge for Region 2 personnel to develop tasks or projects to address climate change and its effects to wildlife and its habitats. A partnership was developed with the Merriam Powell Center for Environmental Research at Northern Arizona University in 2009 to study native pollinators at the Center's Elevational Gradient Study Plots. This project is ongoing and will continue for at least the next few years. Other work involved assisting on native fish surveys at Aravaipa Creek, stream habitat surveys in Wet Beaver Creek, and aquatic insect sampling in the West Fork of Oak Creek.

The Mississippi ES Field Office took college volunteers out to the Mississippi River to collect river shrimp as part of research study through the Mississippi River Shrimp Project. Volunteers have helped with the River Shrimp Project for two years now and have saved the office from sending out a second staff biologist to work on the project. Volunteers also helped at two youth summer camps that the field office leads each year. They have one teen volunteer who helped at both camps. Three volunteers from the local chapter of the Audubon Society and one volunteer from Wild Birds Unlimited assisted with the Kids Bird Camp.

At **Klamath Falls Fish and Wildlife Management Office** volunteers assisted with several projects. In a schoolyard habitat project volunteers assisted by planting native plants, maintaining a nature trail, controlling weeds, providing students with lessons and activities, and by offering interpretation, curriculum development, and environmental education in schools. In another project volunteers assisted with field work by helping with electroshocking fish surveys, inserting passive integrated transponders in fish and operating antenna stations for remote detection of the transponders, performing pebble counts to characterize stream substrates and using radio-telemetry to locate radio-tagged suckers.

Volunteers in the **Virginia ES Field Office** oversaw a water quality monitoring program for Copper Creek, including water sampling, stream surveys and data analysis. These volunteers provided biologist assistance at local community outreach events focused on educating school children about water quality and streams. They also completed a GAP analysis for migratory birds that utilize habitat on the eastern shore of Virginia. This analysis will help biologists identify the highest priority land parcels for habitat restoration and acquisition projects.

Sixteen volunteers assisted the **Region 7 (Alaska) Marine Mammals** sea otter management program. Ten of the sixteen assisted with forensic necropsies, organized samples, sent out samples for special projects, entered data, organized literature and data forms, maintained field equipment, collected samples and analyses, and cleaned the warehouse and lab areas. Volunteers also assisted with the sea otter capture program. Further, eight volunteers assisted with several key components of the polar bear management program. They helped prepare for the spring bear capture by developing outreach materials to educate the public and collaborators. Two of the volunteers assisted with the actual capture work.

Also in **Alaska's Migratory Bird Management Office**, 16 volunteers contributed 4,368 hours on the following research and monitoring projects: Dunlin migratory connectivity study at Izembek and Yukon Delta national wildlife refuges, arctic shorebird demographics network studies at Barrow and Cape Krusenstern, Red knot breeding ecology and distribution study on Seward Peninsula, monitoring seabirds in Prince William Sound, and took part in at-sea seabird surveys onboard NOAA's icebreaker vessels in the Bering, Chukchi and Beaufort seas.



Volunteer shorebird banding in Alaska

Bloomington ES Field Office used the services of a volunteer working on her master's to assist in mussel and water quality toxicity reviews, later using this data to develop a GIS map showing Indiana mussel distribution and possible correlations with water quality parameters. She also aided in the Great Lakes Restoration Initiative Chemicals of Emerging Contaminants field study in Duluth, MN, helping to trap and net fish under wet, frigid conditions.

How Do You Find Out About Volunteer Opportunities?

Volunteer positions with the Service are posted at www.volunteer.gov/gov. You may also contact the field office where you would like to volunteer, the volunteer coordinator in the region where you are interested in volunteering or the national headquarters. For more information about the Service's volunteer program, visit www.fws.gov/volunteers. A complete list of our national and regional volunteer coordinator contact information is at the end of this report.



Securing planks

Friends Organizations

What are Friends Organizations?

Friends are private, independent, community-based, nonprofit organizations formed primarily by citizen volunteers who support the mission and purposes of a national wildlife refuge or national fish hatchery. There are more than 200 Service Friends organizations, with about 10 new organizations created each year. Some support single refuges or hatcheries, while others are connected to a refuge complex or an entire state.

What do Friends do?

Friends' organizations are crucial to the Service's mission of conserving and protecting the fish, wildlife, and plants, and their habitats, of this great nation. Friends are our best ambassador in the community – sharing knowledge of the Service with their neighbors and standing firm when fish and wildlife are in peril.

These important allies assist their field stations by educating local communities and elected officials, encouraging community participation in programs and building long-term support. They raise funds and offer volunteer staff to do work that might otherwise go undone. They help with education programs and special events. They give time, skills and resources for wildlife conservation. Friends are an essential link to the community to promote land stewardship.

Friends Organization of the Year

Along with the National Volunteer of the Year, the National Wildlife Refuge Association and National Fish and Wildlife Foundation also sponsor the Friends Organization of the Year. This award honors a Friends Organization that has shown outstanding leadership as a voice of the community and as an advocate for the protection, conservation and enhancement of local refuges and the National Wildlife Refuge System overall. **The Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society** headquartered in Manteo, NC, is this year's recipient of the Friends Organization of the Year. The Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society (CWRS) was established in 1989 by a group of local citizens. President Stanley Oliver said the group has approximately 1,000 dedicated members and a budget of about \$250,000 annually. The CWRS designed, constructed, and staffs the visitor center and gift shop/book store for Pea Island National Wildlife Refuge. The CWRS is actively fund-raising and conducting outreach to support a number of refuge projects - including the construction of a large Visitor Center and Office Complex on Roanoke Island for Alligator River National Wildlife Refuge. Their main work focuses on the **Alligator River and Pea Island National Wildlife Refuges**. The group is noted for its work with the annual "Wings Over Water" festival, now in its 15th year. The CWRS uses funds raised from the festival to support its transportation grants program for school buses and drivers to bring school children from nine counties in eastern North Carolina to both refuges. In addition to transportation, up to 25 percent of the grant funds are used for supplies and equipment related to the educational refuge trips. The CWRS also sponsors a number of regular events throughout the year including weekly kayak and canoe tours, education programs, Red Wolf "howlings" and tram tours.

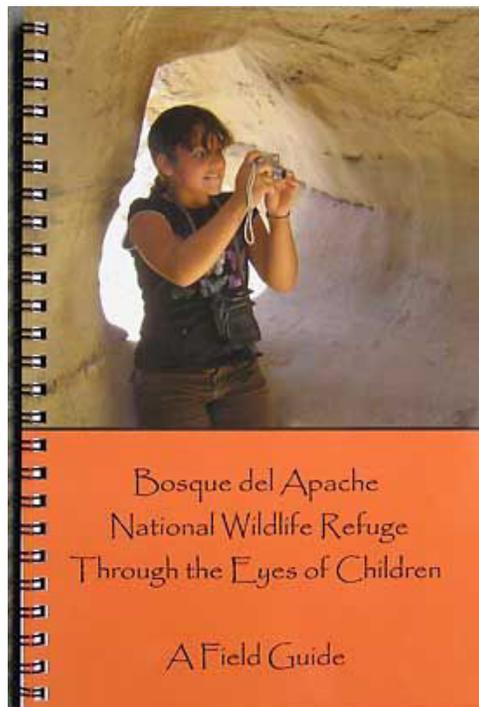
Friends Organizations Highlights

The **International Wildlife Refuge Alliance** is the Friends organization for the **Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge**, the only International Wildlife Refuge in North America. The refuge includes islands, coastal wetlands, marshes, shoals, and waterfront lands along 48 miles of the Detroit River and the western Lake Erie shoreline. Its location is unique -- situated in the heart of a major metropolitan area. Established in 2006, they are dedicated to supporting the mission and purposes of Detroit River International Wildlife Refuge. The Friends provide many vital services such as community outreach, education programs, habitat restoration, special events support, volunteer staff, advocacy and fundraising.

Establishing a new national wildlife refuge is often a years-long process that can be initiated by Congress, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service or even citizen groups. In the case of Cherry Valley National Wildlife Refuge in northeastern Pennsylvania, establishment of a refuge was a goal of the **Friends of Cherry Valley** as far back as 2003. The first 185 acres were purchased in October 2010 with money appropriated by Congress from the Land and Water Conservation Fund. Friends president Debra Schuler considers that parcel a doorway to the entire area because it includes the headwaters of Cherry Creek as well as established trails and woodlands. The refuge's acquisition boundary spans more than 20,000 acres. Now the Friends are writing new goals for their organization centered on conservation/preservation, partnerships and educating adjacent landowners about conservation.

Norfolk National Fish Hatchery, with their **Friends of the Norfolk National Fish Hatchery**, held their first outreach event to coincide with the Flippin Elementary (Arkansas) “Hooked on Fishing Not on Drugs”. This daylong event encompassed six stations utilizing the Biologist-in-Training (BIT) program. Sixty-six first graders learned about the local environment and how they fit into the picture.

In addition to the internationally known “Festival of the Cranes”, the **Friends of the Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge** created a field guide to Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge. The project involved children from San Antonio Elementary School learning about water, ecology, restoration, pollution and the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Friends purchased three digital cameras and several field journals and worked with an eager group of fourth and fifth graders to produce Bosque del Apache National Wildlife Refuge Through the Eyes of Children: A Field Guide. This full-color, 106-page book is the culmination of a year-long, intensive project to document, photograph and otherwise describe the refuge from a child’s perspective. It summarizes refuge history and resources, highlights particular species, describes management techniques, and presents tidbits of information. Dozens of photos and quotes from the children are strikingly poetic and insightful.



Friends of the Bosque provided resources to help fourth and fifth graders produce a field guide to Bosque del Apache Refuge.

Friends of St. Catherine Creek National Wildlife Refuge installed 14 activity stations along the newly extended Magnolia National Recreation Trail, giving youngsters a chance to waddle like a duck, jump like a grasshopper, hang like a bat and run like a bear. A special certificate awaits those who complete the new Animal Olympics. Each station on the self-guided trail includes a sign in the shape of a particular animal, a fact about the animal and a suggestion to imitate a behavior of that animal. The stations stretch for a quarter mile.

Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge is one of the most remote coral atolls on Earth with a total human population of 40. Yet the **Friends of Midway Atoll** has more than 250 members representing all 50 states. The Friends attract members because of the island’s unusual wildlife, several significant historical connections and its exotic volunteer opportunities – all promoted regularly through a quarterly newsletter, a web site and word of mouth. The Friends newsletter is published in Hawaii, the treasurer lives in Oregon, the president is in Indiana. Board members join a monthly conference call from Massachusetts, Georgia and Washington. Volunteers who come to help eradicate invasive species, count albatross or collect and monitor marine debris often become Friends.

Where can I find more information on Friends Organizations?

To learn more about these amazing organizations please visit www.fws.gov/refuges/friends or contact the Service’s Regional Friends Coordinator. A complete list of our national Friends coordinators contact information is at the end of this report.



Coastal Wildlife Refuge Society Board in front of newly “dried in” Gateway Visitor Center

Additional Partnerships

Refuge managers now work beyond the boundaries of their units much more than in the past. Because of personnel and funding constraints, agencies increasingly rely on volunteers and cooperating organizations to help in the successful execution of projects that would not otherwise be possible. Partnerships with states, other Federal agencies, non-profit organizations and citizen-conservation groups have become increasingly important to addressing off-refuge challenges that affect on-refuge goals and objectives. Examples of cooperative efforts include conservation communications, training, hunter education, scholarships for study of natural resources, conferences, and youth activities.

National Environmental Education Foundation (NEEF)

National Public Lands Day (NPLD), sponsored by the National Environmental Education Foundation, is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands Americans enjoy. Designed as a "work day," volunteers give back to the resource through project work, while learning about their public lands. Held the last week in September, this year's event drew over 170,000 volunteers at more than 2,000 sites around the nation. These projects contributed an estimated \$17 million in improvements to Federal, state and local public lands. Fifty (50) Service sites hosted NPLD volunteer activities. Below are just a few.

NPLD drew 19 volunteers to **Desert National Wildlife Refuge**. Adults and children spent a morning creating native seed packets "gobs of goo." Volunteers used previously collected native seed, mud, peat moss and other ingredients to construct over 700 seed balls.

Fifty five (55) incoming freshman from Palm Beach Atlantic University had the chance to get their feet wet as volunteers at the **Arthur R Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge**. Volunteers traveled by canoe or by foot through wetland areas impacted by non-native snails that are interfering with the natural Everglades environment. The volunteers were tasked with finding and removing the bright pink egg clusters of the non-native snails, scraping the eggs into buckets.

At **Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge** volunteers helped with maintenance around the historic Chesser Island Homestead. They also repaired split rail fences and cleared trails.

Volunteers in the National Public Lands Day Habitat Restoration event at **Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge** planted 735 upland plants in an area previously inundated with invasive weeds.

American Hiking Society

The American Hiking Society is now in its fourth decade of stewardship. It was founded to ensure our Nation's trails will be enjoyed for many years to come. The Society's Volunteer Vacations are a series of trail stewardship projects in exciting and diverse locations around the country. Each crew consists of between six and 15 volunteers accompanied by a leader. Trips involve backpacking or day hiking, and accommodations range from primitive camp sites to bunk houses or cabins.

This year the Service participated in three (3) Volunteer Vacations on two (2) refuges. Volunteers at **Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge** created a hiking trail by clearing old logging roads of spruce fir. The trails were created around water courses and helped with brush clearing and erosion control. At **Canaan Valley National Wildlife Refuge** volunteers performed trail rehabilitation of the Brown Mountain Trail and Brown Mountain Overlook Trail. Work included building up to 13, 10-foot boardwalk section bridges, rock placement, trail widening, a 50-foot turnpike, water diversion and drainage, and sections of trail rerouting.



Seal Beach native plant restoration

The National Wildlife Refuge Association

The National Wildlife Refuge Association (Refuge Association) works to protect America's wildlife heritage by bringing a unique perspective and creative strategies to conservation. They have created a powerful recipe for success by engaging conservation nonprofits, private land owners and refuge Friends organizations in safeguarding wildlife. By mobilizing citizens in support of conservation, generating support for wildlife conservation among decision makers, and creating mosaics of public and private protected lands, the Refuge Association is ensuring a future for wildlife across America. The Refuge Association, in partnership with the Service has launched a multiyear effort to build capacity and expertise of the Refuge Friends organizations across the country. The Refuge Association and the Service seek to provide the tools, expertise and resources to help Refuge Friends meet the growing needs of our national wildlife refuges. The objectives of this initiative include: building an online resource hub that allows Friends to connect and support each other; and access Refuge Association and Service resources; deliver training workshops that address topics such as managing nonprofits and building partnerships; create a Friends "council" that uses the knowledge and expertise within the Friends community to benefit both individual groups and the Friends community; and, reinvigorate the Service mentoring program, which helps foster the partnership between Friends and the Service.

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation

The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation awarded 24 new grants in FY 11 to develop collaborative weed management areas and help local communities control infestations of invasive or noxious weeds. The Foundation's 2011 "Pulling Together" Initiative is providing grants of Federal funds totaling \$1.1 million which will be matched by \$2.2 million in non-Federal contributions from local partners. While we don't have space to list all 24, several of the projects that received funding include:

- **Invasive plant management at Palmyra Atoll National Wildlife Refuge** – The project will initiate a proactive, adaptive and integrated invasive species management approach to curtail and prevent the further influence of invasive plants and trees on private and refuge lands at Palmyra. Ten volunteers contributing 200 hours were trained to identify invasive species, and were trained in early detection rapid response protocols and drilled up to 10 holes, two inches deep, into the base of coconut palms, injecting herbicide into the holes. Seedlings of invasive plants and trees were pulled by hand or treated with herbicide. Treated trees were marked with tags for monitoring. Approximately 3,500 coconut palms and seedlings were removed from 21 acres and 4 islands are now free of coconut palms. Twenty five Indian almond trees were cut down with hand saws and removed.
- **Tallgrass Prairie mapping at Tewaukon National Wildlife Refuge** – Twelve volunteers were trained on GPS, GIS and weed mapping protocol. Over 500 remote and less inventoried lands that do not get the level of attention as the higher priority lands were mapped. Two invasive plant infestations, hounds tongue and crown vetch, which would have otherwise gone undetected, were treated. Leafy spurge beetles were released on some of the more remote areas mapped.

- **Inventory and monitoring of invasive Mountain goats at Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge** – The Mountain goat was introduced to Kodiak Island in 1953 and the population has undergone irruptive growth and range expansion. There are currently an estimated 2,200 goats with approximately 60 percent distribution on the refuge. Adequate management of Mountain goats on Kodiak will be problematic without detailed information on spatial use patterns, resource selection and population dynamics. Three volunteers contributing over 1,880 hours conducted field work in 3 remote regions of Kodiak. Field work included camping for 10 days at a time, hiking steep and thickly vegetated areas, collecting over 200 Mountain goat pellet and hair samples, conducting behavioral observations, and conducting over 280 alpine vegetation surveys.

The Nature Conservancy

The Nature Conservancy is the leading conservation organization working around the world to protect ecologically important lands and waters for nature and people. The plight of Western snowy plovers and California least terns don't have a lot of beach to call their own in California. Much of their prime habitats of dunes and beach swales have been lost to recreational activities and development. Volunteers helping these Federally-listed threatened and endangered shorebirds are vitally important for their recovery. In Oxnard, California, the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office, the Nature Conservancy and a number of other partner organizations and individuals have joined forces to recover these birds and help them thrive.

Take Pride in America

Take Pride in America is a national partnership set up by the Department of the Interior to inspire Americans to volunteer in caring for their public lands. Take Pride's goal is to instill in every citizen an active sense of ownership and responsibility for natural, cultural and historic resources and to support and recognize the effort of those who volunteer on public lands. Take Pride recognizes and honors outstanding volunteers at its annual national awards ceremony. Individuals, groups, organizations, programs and Federal land managers are honored for their contributions to our public lands and innovative use of volunteers.

For her dedication, Sharon Glock, a volunteer at **Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge**, received the 2011 Take Pride in America National Volunteer Award. Sharon volunteers wherever her husband Charles, a maintenance worker with the Service, is stationed. She has volunteered for 21 years with more than 10,000 volunteer hours on six refuges. She has operated skid steers, hydraulic excavators, boats of every size, all-terrain vehicles, and computers. On Blackbeard Island National Wildlife Refuge she maintained trails, assisted with sea turtle nesting and beach cleanups. At several refuges, including Mississippi Sandhill Crane, Walkill River, and Blackwater National Wildlife Refuges, she came inside to organize a filing system for photos and create an electronic database for 18 years of records on the Delmarva fox squirrel. At Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge she helped organize the heavy equipment safety classes. In 2010, the couple made their latest move, to an old ranch house at Buenos Aires National Wildlife Refuge where Sharon is busy helping renovating buildings, resealing roofs, re-fencing pens for endangered species and greeting visitors.



Take Pride in America National Volunteer Award recipient Sharon Glock

James Gray, project leader at **Wolf Creek National Fish Hatchery** was named the Service's Federal Land Manager of the Year by Take Pride. Besides maintaining a demanding fish production program (1 million trout produced per year), James has been the driving force behind one of the largest and most successful volunteer program in the National Fish Hatchery System. In 2006 Wolf Creek became home to the first visitor/environmental education center of its kind located on a working fish hatchery. This facility, which receives 100,000 visitors each year, is staffed year round almost entirely with volunteers. The hatchery logged in more than 13,000 volunteer hours last year. James spearheaded the formation of one of the country's first Fisheries Friends Organizations which annually sponsors the largest youth fishing event in the Southeast. He has a strong partnership with local schools, the regional tourism commissions, the chambers of commerce, local businesses, civic organizations, other Federal agencies, state agencies and the regional health department. By using local volunteers the hatchery partnered with the health department to distribute information to parents about the health benefits of connecting children with nature and the opportunities offered not only by the hatchery, but in their own backyards. Through a partnership with the local library, the hatchery established a family nature club that meets monthly for volunteer-led nature oriented activities to help build an attitude of stewardship.

Department of the Interior Partners in Conservation Award

The **Friends of Nevada Wilderness** was one of several partners that were presented with the Department of Interior's 2011 *Partners in Conservation Award* in Washington DC in September 2011. The Friends of Nevada Wilderness was recognized for their on-the-ground volunteer stewardship projects in Nevada that helped wild lands and wildlife habitat on Federally-managed lands, including the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. This organization is dedicated to preserving all qualified Nevada public lands as wilderness, protecting all present and potential wilderness from ongoing threats, educating the public about the values of and need for wilderness, and improving the management and restoration of wild lands.



From left - Friends' staffers: Jose Witt, Sheena Britschgi and Shaaron Netherton with Secretary Salazar (center) and agency partners Angelina Yost FWS and Sendi Kalcic BLM

Youth in Natural Resources Initiative

Studies find that the average American child spends an average of four minutes per day playing outside and almost eight hours a day glued to electronic entertainment media. In an effort to combat this, Secretary Salazar pledged to connect youth to the great outdoors through education and employment opportunities at the Department of Interior. A proposed funding increase for the Youth in Natural Resources initiative enables key agencies such as the National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and Bureau of Land Management to develop innovative approaches through environmental education, recreation, and service to engage diverse youth on public lands and pique their interest for careers in public service. What better way to light a “fire” or “wet your whistle” for a potential career in natural resources than through volunteering.

Cody Clarkin, **Rhode Island National Wildlife Refuge Complex’s** youngest volunteer recently received his 250 hour pin. Cody is one of over 200 skilled and dedicated individuals of all ages who give a combined total of over 17,000 hours annually to the refuge.

San Luis National Wildlife Refuge conducted several Saturday volunteer restoration days in which volunteers planted native trees, shrubs, forbs, and grasses. This year had a very high attendance at the native vegetation restoration events – one Saturday hosted over 60 volunteers. A youth group from the Christian Service Brigade constructed over 30 wood duck nest boxes and installed them in riparian habitat on the refuge.

Student Conservation Association (SCA)

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has partnered with the Student Conservation Association (SCA) for over 20 years, and has provided students an opportunity to volunteer in their field of study while gaining valuable work experience. It is a perfect union. The Service has a range of important work to be done, from environmental education and interpretation, to stream stocking and habitat monitoring, to high-quality data collection and research. SCA’s mission is to build the next generation of conservation leaders by engaging young people in hands-on service to the land.

Through its **Career Discovery Intern Program (CDIP)**, the Association recruits college students from culturally and ethnically diverse backgrounds to work with Service employees between 12 and 52 weeks. Founded in 2008, CDIP introduces culturally and ethnically diverse college freshman and sophomores to careers in the USFWS. The internship equips SCA members with the hands-on learning they need to begin pursuing professional work in the conservation arena. CDIP increases the diversity of the applicant pool for conservation-based jobs and provides FWS field staff the benefit of working with culturally and ethnically diverse employees.

The summer of 2011 marked the inception of the **Tribal Youth Intern Program**. The objectives of the program are to provide hands-on conservation service learning experiences for students affiliated with tribal colleges and universities, introduce and expose tribal college students to the Service as a potential career, and provide additional human resource, capacity and energy to Service stations and staff through internship placements. The 2011 Tribal Youth Intern Program provided 17 young adults with a 12 week summer

internship in one of 14 Service stations. Interns engaged in a wide array of natural resource management disciplines including habitat and wildlife monitoring, environmental education and interpretive programs, maintenance, invasive species control and fire management. Just days after graduating from Ohio University, SCA tribal intern, Micah Knabb, a Cherokee, reported to **Bear River Migratory Bird National Wildlife Refuge** where he surveyed grasslands, inventoried bird species, and studied abnormalities in Northern Leopard frog population.

The goal of the **Trails Inventory Program** is to provide the Service with comprehensive and accurate GIS data of trails on over 600 Service sites across the country. The project requires travel to every corner of the country – from mountains, deserts, bayous and plains. Over 234 sites were visited, 750 trails inventoried and 1,545 miles of trail inventories. Nine **SCA Wilderness Fellows** spent 6 months on 18 refuges gaining valuable career experience while helping advance stewardship of wilderness resources. They work with staff to identify and prioritize wilderness measures important to each refuge; located information about each refuge’s wilderness; entered data into the wilderness database and compiled the final report. Fellows had many opportunities to participate in other refuge activities such as a bison roundup, a fence removal project, assisting on wilderness reviews, wildlife surveys, trail clearing and working with school children.



Trail Inventory

At **Minnesota Valley National Wildlife Refuge**, SCA biology intern Alexis Herb, was involved in Reed Canary Grass surveys and forest inventory. In the Reed Grass Survey she visited meadows infested with this invasive species and compared different treatment methods for getting rid of the grass. The forest inventory consisted of noting the different types of trees in a given area, their size and health, in addition to what is in the mid and understory of the forest. The purpose of the forest inventory is to look for the Emerald Ash Borer beetle and also to take stock of the different species and overall health of the forest.

Kayla Morain, a Visitor Services SCA intern stationed at **Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge**, had the opportunity to participate in alligator tagging. Never having seen an alligator until this summer, Kayla ended up capturing 4 alligators on her own to be tagged. Tagging consisted of laying them out for measuring their full size and the length from their genitals to their snout. Their sex was examined and then tagged with little pieces of metal. Thirty nine alligators were caught and tagged that evening, and recaptured three that were tagged in the past.

4-H

4-H is one of the largest youth programs and reaches over 7 million young adults per year. Since 1979, the USDA and DOI have been partnering to honor and support programming that connects people with nature. Presently, through a 4-H and Fish and Wildlife Service GIS Mapping Replication and Expansion Project partnership, we are tapping into the expertise and infrastructure of the 4-H program and 4-H GIS/GPS projects to put youth and volunteer leaders on the ground at our field stations. The youth are mapping data points based on the needs of National Wildlife Refuges, and working together with refuge professionals to apply the youth's work. In the process, we're building bridges between 4-H/Cooperative Extension at the Land Grant Universities (LGUs) and National Wildlife Refuge and National Fish Hatchery systems to continue working together.

The 4-H National Headquarters and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service presented the 2011 Connecting Youth with Nature through Natural Resources Conservation Education Award to the

Louisiana State University AgCenter's 4-H Youth Wetlands Program at the 76th North American Wildlife and Natural Resources Conference. The **4-H Youth Wetlands Program** has approximately 85,000 students enrolled in their educational and outreach program in Louisiana. By developing and distributing wetland education curriculum and teaching materials at no cost to participating educators, this program strives to implement wetlands education in the classroom as well as in the field. Students learn about water quality, invasive species, biodiversity, recreation, adaptations, wetland loss, and many more pressing wetland topics. Youth are empowered to contribute ideas and make decisions that will aid in the recovery of Louisiana's deteriorating coastline. Since January 2010, youth participants have installed approximately 50,000 wetland plants across Louisiana to combat wetland loss.

The Boy Scouts of America

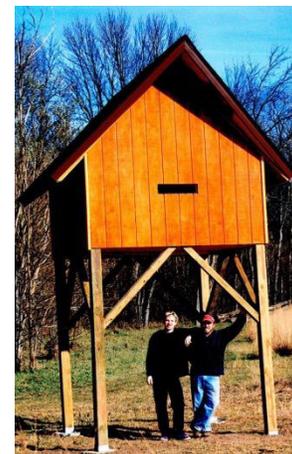
Scouting programs and requirements provide great opportunities for mutual benefits to the Scouts and the Service. Boy Scouts and Cub Scouts, both as troops and individually to complete Eagle Scout projects, acquire activity pins and merit badges, frequently donate volunteer hours on Service lands. In many cases scouts may come to a refuge or hatchery in an effort to complete the requirements to accomplish the respective program and while doing so, provide hours of volunteer service to the facility and substantial benefits to nature.

As part of an Eagle Scout project, Boy Scout Josh Hallmann, along with the assistance of his troop, built and installed two bat boxes in the native plant garden at **Seal Beach National Wildlife Refuge**. And, along those same lines, Cole Gabrick, a senior in high school, built a bat condo – a massive bat home on stilts that can house up to 6,000 of the winged animals. At the request of the refuge manager at **Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge**, Gabrick, and a crew of other Scout volunteers, constructed the new bat condo in response to a problem bat infestation in a refuge pole barn and provided a total of more than 625 volunteer hours to complete the bat condo.

The annual event at **Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge**, "Walk on the Wild Side" saw 2500 visitors take part and over 30 volunteers help out. In addition to this annual event, refuge volunteers also assisted with next box and rookery monitoring, habitat restoration on Blue Heron Trails and Marsh Wren Wetland, provided docent-guided tours, and led canoe and kayak tours. Over 1,000 school kids participated in service-learning projects by planting native habitat. Three Eagle Scouts did habitat restoration and built nest boxes.

With more than 400 scouts and parents registered for the "Scouting for America's Great Outdoors event, there was plenty of work to do. The late October event was a partnership project between the Boy Scouts of America's Eagle River District, the Service's St. Croix Wetland Management District and the Friends of the **St. Croix Wetland Management District**. The goal of the event was to merge learning with hands-on invasive species management while at the same time providing opportunities for scouts to work on several merit badge requirements.

Scouts at the Service's St. Croix Wetland Management District practice invasive species management



Cole Gabrick built a bat condo at Trempealeau National Wildlife Refuge for his Eagle Scout project

The restoration of Mackey Creek, native habitat of the gulf strain walleye, is a project of importance at the **Private John Allen National Fish Hatchery**. Volunteer Eagle Scouts assisted in the completion of the re-vegetation part of the project. A significant component to the completion of this stream bank stabilization project involved measuring and plotting a grid of the stabilized area. Volunteer scouts then surveyed the adjacent stream bank to determine native species presence. Native plants and grasses were planted for bank stabilization.

Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge staff and volunteers proudly celebrated the opening of a Children's Nature Discovery area on "Make a Difference Day." The area, adjacent to the new visitor information center is a special place where children can explore and connect with nature, with distinct areas for different types of activities to create family awareness and involvement in nature education. The Nature Discovery area was created through the efforts of refuge Friends and volunteers, Eagle Scouts and other community organizations.



The Nature Discovery area was created through the efforts of refuge Friends and volunteers, Eagle Scouts and other community organizations at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge.



Volunteer with youth at National Elk Refuge



Volunteer trims grass along a trail at Sacramento NWR

Regional Volunteer and Friends Coordinator Contacts

Region 1 - Pacific Region (Idaho, Oregon, Washington, Hawaii and the Pacific Islands)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 457
Ridgefield, WA 98642-0457

Volunteer/Friends
Ph: 360-887-4106

Region 2 - Southwest Region (Arizona, New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
500 Gold SW, Room 4504
PO Box 1306
Albuquerque, NM 87103-1306

Volunteer/Friends
Ph: 505/248-6635

Region 3 - Great Lake-Big Rivers Region (Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Michigan, Missouri, Minnesota, Ohio and Wisconsin)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
One Federal Drive
Fort Snelling, MN 55111-4056

Volunteer/Friends
Ph: 612/713-5167

Region 4 - Southeast Region (Alabama, Arkansas, Florida, Georgia, Kentucky, Louisiana, Mississippi, North Carolina, Puerto Rico/Virgin Islands, South Carolina and Tennessee)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
1875 Century Blvd., NW, Suite 420
Atlanta, GA 30345
Volunteer/Friends
Ph: 404-679-7178

Region 5 - Northeast Region (Connecticut, Delaware, Maine, Maryland, Massachusetts, New Hampshire, New Jersey, New York, Pennsylvania, Rhode Island, Vermont, Virginia and West Virginia)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Edwin B Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 72
Oceanville, NJ 08231

Volunteer
Ph: 609-652-1665

300 Westgate Center Drive
Hadley, MA 01035-9589

Friends
Ph: 757-986-3705

Region 6 - Mountain-Prairie Region (Colorado, Kansas, Montana, North Dakota, Nebraska, South Dakota, Utah and Wyoming)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Division of Education and Visitor Services
134 Union Blvd., Suite 600
Lakewood, CO 80228

Volunteer
Ph: 303-236-4392

Friends
Ph: 303-236-4395

Region 7 - Alaska

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
Visitor Services
1011 East Tudor Road, MS 235
Anchorage, AK 99503

Volunteer/Friends
Ph: 907-786-3391

Region 8 - California and Nevada

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
2800 Cottage Way, Suite W-2606
Sacramento, CA 95825

Volunteer/Friends
Ph: 916-414-6681

Region 9 – National Conservation Training Center

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Training Conservation Center
Human Resources
698 Conservation Way
Shepherdstown, WV 25443

Volunteer/Friends
Ph: 304-876-7421

Region 9 – National Coordinator (Washington DC)

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
National Wildlife Refuge System
4401 N. Fairfax Ave., Room 634
Arlington, VA 22203

Volunteer
Ph: 703-358-2386

Friends
Ph: 703-358-2392



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