

United States Department of the Interior
FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Chesapeake Marshlands National Wildlife Refuge Complex
BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE
2145 Key Wallace Drive
Cambridge, MD 21613
TEL: 410-228-2677
(FAX: 410-221-7738)

NEWS RELEASE

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE: **July 10, 2007**
INFORMATION: **Maggie Briggs 410-228-2677**

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge to Hold Volunteer Information Training Open to the Public

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge is holding a Volunteer Conference to update all Volunteers on what's happening at the Refuge on August 4, 2007 from 8:30 am to 4:00 pm. The public is invited to attend this conference to learn more about the Refuge. We hope you will be interested in becoming a Volunteer, but it is not necessary to attend the conference. Staff members will be bringing the Volunteers up-to-date on the various Refuge management programs through power point programs, talks, and various media. They will cover what has happened in the last year, what is going on at the present, and what will be happening in the coming year. Learn what the Refuge is doing to manage the habitat for wildlife, how you can help if you're interested, and what other activities are going on at the Refuge. There have been a lot of changes this last year and many more will be happening in the future. Meet the staff and other Volunteers. Coffee, muffins, bagels, etc. will be provided at 8:30 am, and a luncheon at noon, both compliments of the Friends of Blackwater. Since it is necessary to know how much food to prepare, it is necessary to register for the conference by calling 410-228-2677 between 8:00 am and 4:00 pm weekdays and 9:00 am to 4:00 pm weekends.

A second Volunteer training will be held in the Visitor Center conference room on Thursday, August 9, 2007 from 6:00 pm to 10:00 pm. This training will be to introduce new Volunteers to the Volunteer Program, what is expected of Volunteers, what Volunteers can expect of the Refuge, policies and procedures. We especially need Volunteers who will help with staffing the information desk, Friends of Blackwater Eagle's Nest Bookstore, and our new research library. The Visitor Center is open every day except Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day. Volunteers staffing the Visitor Center will normally work an 8:00am to 12:00pm or a 12:00pm to 4:00pm shift during the weekdays; but we especially need weekend Volunteers who would work a 9:00am to 1:00pm or 1:00pm to 5:00pm shift on weekends. You can work as many shifts as you want from one 4 hour shift to all day, once a month, once a week, or more often. We are aiming for two people for every shift. It's a great chance to work with your spouse if you want to do something together. The non-lending library will probably only be open one day a week until we have more Volunteers to staff the library. The main requisite to being a Volunteer is to enjoy meeting and talking with people, be willing to assist visitors, and know how to smile! Volunteers have fun assisting people from all over the world while learning first hand about Blackwater's numerous and fascinating wildlife. If you are interested in wildlife, like people, and enjoy learning as well as

helping to educate other people about wildlife and Dorchester County, this is the job for you!!

A third training will be provided for all Volunteers, but especially for new Volunteers. This training will be a tour of the Refuge that will start at 9:00 am at the Visitor Center. You will need to bring a lunch and drink, binoculars, snacks, etc. The tour will probably last until approximately 4:00 pm.

Volunteers are also needed for other types of activities at the Refuge including: maintenance (painting, fence building, mowing grass, constructing hiking trails, and janitorial cleaning), assistance with biological surveys and studies (invasive species mapping, frog surveys, shore bird surveys, breeding bird surveys, blue bird box surveys, plant identification, planting trees and marsh grass, and bird box repair), filing and answering phones, computer data base entry, numbering, cataloging, and organizing library books and slide file system, assisting with environmental education programs and training, tour guides for bus tours, trail walks, and orientations programs to the Refuge. Training will be provided when necessary, but some of these positions require some background knowledge of the subject.

If you are interested in Volunteering, please call Maggie Briggs at 410-228-2677 to find out more about the positions and the Volunteer training. If you just want to attend the Volunteer Conference on August 4, please call 410-228-2677 and register for the conference.