

# Friends Forward



Fall 2008

National Wildlife Refuge System

## New Leadership Team

October finds new leaders taking the helm in many regions and positions of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the National Wildlife Refuge System.

**Geoff Haskett**, who has been chief of the National Wildlife Refuge System, will move to Alaska as regional director. He last worked in Alaska for the National Park Service where he was deputy for the Alaska Lands Program. Beginning his Service career in 1979 in Portland, Ore., Haskett has also served in the Southeast and Southwest regions. He holds a Master's degree in public administration.

**Tom Melius**, currently serving as director for the Alaska Region in Anchorage, will become regional director in the Great Lakes/Big Rivers Region. Before coming to the Service, Melius was a senior professional staff member on committees of the U.S. House and Senate, formulating policies on fishery management and international conservation. He holds a Master's degree in fish and wildlife science from South Dakota State University.

**Robyn Thorson** will leave the Great Lakes Region where she is currently director to lead the Pacific Region



*Becharof National Wildlife Refuge, Alaska*

*"Look forward. If you're a leader, think about the impact of your decisions on seven generations in the future." —Chief Wilma Mankiller*

## Independent Evaluation Rates Refuge System

An independent evaluation, which found that the Refuge System experienced an 11 percent decline in real purchasing power between FY 2003 and the FY 2008, also rated the Refuge System as "highly effective" in facilitating partnerships and cooperative projects.

Management Systems International (MSI), which conducted the evaluation between October 2006 and September 2007, specifically pointed to effective work with volunteer and Friends organizations as well as state fish and wildlife agencies. MSI calculated that in 2005 alone, partnerships contributed more than \$50 million to the Refuge

System—with more than \$30 million in direct cash contributions.

On the other hand, the report, titled, "An Independent Evaluation of the Effectiveness of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's National Wildlife Refuge System," found that the Refuge System's decline in real purchasing power led to its inability to maintain its level of operational activity. MSI rated the Refuge System as "ineffective" in meeting two strategic goals:

- protect resources and visitors through law enforcement,
- strategically grow the System.

*Continued on page 7*

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# Welcome!

**F**riends of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in Columbia, N.C., formed not long after the Navy announced that it would no longer consider the refuge's Pungo Unit for an Outlying Landing Field. The proposal had stirred controversy because the refuge is a winter home for tens of thousands of tundra swans and snow geese. Soon after the landing field ceased to be a concern, fire consumed more than 39,000 acres of the refuge, closing many areas of the refuge to the public until further notice.

The **Kodiak Chapter of Friends of Alaska National Wildlife Refuges** was formed out of group members' passion for Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge. Most of the charter members have spent a great deal of time over a number of years volunteering for the refuge. The group created a chapter of the larger group to meet the needs of the local refuge, but at the same time benefit from the experience of the larger group. The new Kodiak Chapter plans a monthly lecture series, a two-day film festival and other events to raise awareness of the refuge.

**Friends of Tampa Bay National Wildlife Refuge** in Florida will be supporting Egmont Key, Passage Key and Pinellas National Wildlife Refuges. The group plans to build support for the refuges in the large urban area of Tampa Bay and help with such projects as bird surveys in the interior lagoons and removal of monofilament fishing line from the islands.

**Friends of the Savannah Coastal Wildlife Refuge** in Georgia and South Carolina will be supporting seven refuges, including Pinckney Island, Savannah, Harris Neck, Tybee, Blackbird Island, Wassaw




*Egrets will have a new advocate with the formation of the Friends of Pocosin Lakes National Wildlife Refuge in North Carolina.*

Island and Wolf Island. The Friends expect to help the refuge confront such challenges as encroaching development, budgetary constraints and the lack of vocal or visible support for the refuge system from local citizens. The Friends will also assist in staffing a long-awaited visitor center at the Savannah Refuge in early 2009.

**Friends of Eufaula National Wildlife Refuge** in Alabama plans to emphasize activities on the refuge for elementary, middle and high school-aged students. The group expects to open a bookstore and build wood duck nesting boxes in partnership with a local Boy Scout Troop and a local chapter of the Future Farmers of America.

**Friends of Plum and Pilot Islands** in Wisconsin celebrated the transfer of Plum and Pilot Islands from the U.S. Coast Guard to the Green Bay National Wildlife Refuge in May. The Friends plan to work on preserving several historic maritime structures on Plum Island, including a boathouse, a lighthouse, keeper's quarters and a fog signal building.

**Friends of the Front Range Wildlife Refuges** in Colorado will support Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Rocky Flats National Wildlife Refuges. In addition to building community support for these relatively new refuges, the group plans to integrate pedestrian/equestrian and wildlife corridors on the refuges with trails in the surrounding communities.

The **Lostwood Birding and Nature Association** in North Dakota was formed to support environmental education in northwestern North Dakota and advocate for Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge. A local group formed the association to share the enthusiasm experienced at the Burke County Birding Festival, first held in 2006. The Lostwood Refuge and Association received one of four mentoring visits in 2008. 

## We Need to Raise How Much Money?

The Friends of the Sherburne National Wildlife Refuge in Minnesota had been talking about a visitor center for nine years. Now the board is initiating its own \$5 million-\$6 million capital campaign. Sue Hix, board president, has been leading the visitor center effort for the past five years and acknowledges that many changes and challenges lie ahead. "We know there will be ups and downs, but we are convinced we can do it," says Hix.

The Friends of Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge in Florida raised \$820,000 in eight months for exhibits, displays and a video production. The Friends of the Bosque del Apache Refuge in New Mexico raised nearly \$700,000 for an educational annex. The "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society raised \$3 million in five years for its visitor center. The Friends of the Bear

*The Friends of Black Bayou in Louisiana raised \$500,000 to move and renovate an historic home.*



Before



After

ANN SMITH

A feasibility study commissioned by the Sherburne Friends identified four key factors that dictate potential success of a major capital campaign:

- Credibility, image and awareness of the organization
- Perceived need for the project
- Fundraising potential
- Experienced and dedicated campaign leadership

Capital campaigns by Friends organizations are not new. The Friends of Black Bayou in Louisiana launched an unplanned capital campaign when the Black Bayou Lake National Wildlife Refuge was given a dilapidated 1880s planter's home for its visitor center. Bit by bit, the Friends raised \$500,000 to renovate the house and another \$500,000 for a conservation learning center.

River Migratory Bird Refuge raised more than \$1 million for a visitor and educational center that is visible from the interstate highway near Salt Lake City, Utah.

Although each organization raised a different amount and encountered its own challenges, the groups highlight common themes and best practices.

### Stakeholders/Partners:

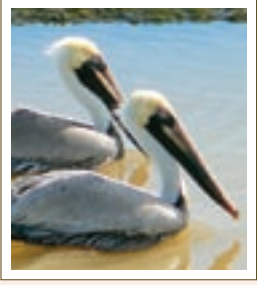
- "Make sure you include a wide spectrum of shareholders...The concept must resonate with a broad base, not just the traditional groups." *Alan Trout, former manager Bear River Refuge*
- The biggest source of funding for the Friends of Black Bayou was the Monroe West Monroe Convention and Visitors Bureau, which saw the restored historic house as a tourist draw.

■ Sherburne Friends recommends recruiting the support and assistance of numerous community development organizations. "We are members of five chambers of commerce." *Sue Hix*

### Skills

- "Widen the circle of people who are invited to be board members." *Sue Hix*
- "Find someone with a proven track record in successful fundraising." *Nancy Marshall, Friends of Loxahatchee Refuge*
- A resident of Sanibel Island who understood corporate and foundation giving agreed to join the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society and organize the fundraising campaign. Friends of Bear River discovered a neighboring

*Continued on page 10*



# from friend to friend

share your  
success  
stories

## Partnering to Raise Funds

The **Friends of the Montezuma Wetlands Complex** organized a fundraising tree sale to assist the Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge in New York with reforestation projects. The refuge will be planting trees along the Cayuga-Seneca-Barge Canal to benefit cerulean warblers, bald eagles, wood ducks and other wildlife.

For every tree purchased by an individual, the refuge is able to purchase two trees for the refuge. The Friends organization has partnered with RPM Ecosystems, a native plant nursery, whose Web site includes pictures and descriptions of native trees available for sale. Tree order forms are available online, in the refuge's gift shop and at the nearby Montezuma Audubon Center.


"Our restoration is a long process dictated by the growth rate of the trees," says Montezuma Refuge visitor services manager Andrea VanBeusichem, "so the benefits to the birds will be in about 20 years. However, the outreach potential and volunteer involvement when we plant our trees in the fall is a more immediate benefit, for sure."

The Friends also hosted an art show in the visitor center in conjunction with its annual Wildflowers and Wine Festival. The festival includes a guided bus tour of the refuge with a stop at the Montezuma Winery for the introduction of a new Monarch wine. A portion of the sales of the

Monarch wine will be donated to the Friends. The Wildflowers of Montezuma in Art Form show was sponsored by the Ludovico Sculpture Trail of Seneca Falls, New York.

**Friends of Blackwater** (Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge in Maryland) will hold the 12th Annual Eagle's Nest Christmas Open House in December. This event is an opportunity for visitors to buy gifts for nature lovers but also learn more about the refuge. The day begins with early morning bird walks and Friends member Zeeger de Wilde leads his legendary Eagle Prowl (reservations required)! There are ranger-led tours of the refuge, the Observatory and Wildlife Drive are open without charge and local artists display their creations.

A few local crafters are invited to sell their products (photography, carving, painting, holiday ornaments, pottery, etc.) and many typically donate 10 percent of their profits to the Friends. There are craft activities for children (making simple bird feeders), a puppet show and a roving Santa. Volunteers provide refreshments. Friends President Marty O'Connor says early publicity in the calendar sections of local newspapers is key, as are a "couple of well organized individuals to work with the refuge and the craftspeople."

The "**Ding**" **Darling Wildlife Society** benefitted from a new partnership among Biolage, The Conservation Fund and the J.N. "Ding" Darling National Wildlife Refuge in Florida. Three local salons that use Biolage products competed to win recognition as the Biolage Select G.R.E.E.N. Salon of the Year. Biolage donated \$3 to the "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society for every Biolage bottle returned to participating salons and \$1 for every non-Biolage, professional haircare bottle returned during the contest, earning the Wildlife Society \$7,000. For one day following the contest, 60 stylists from the three salons — One Flight Up, Ricks Island Salon and Steel Magnolias — trimmed invasive plants along a trail and filled four trucks with exotic weeds. 

*The "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society — and waterfowl like these black skimmers — will benefit from a new partnership among Biolage, The Conservation Fund and the J.N. "Ding" Darling Refuge in Florida.*



GEORGE GENTRY / USFWS

## Reaching Out to Teachers

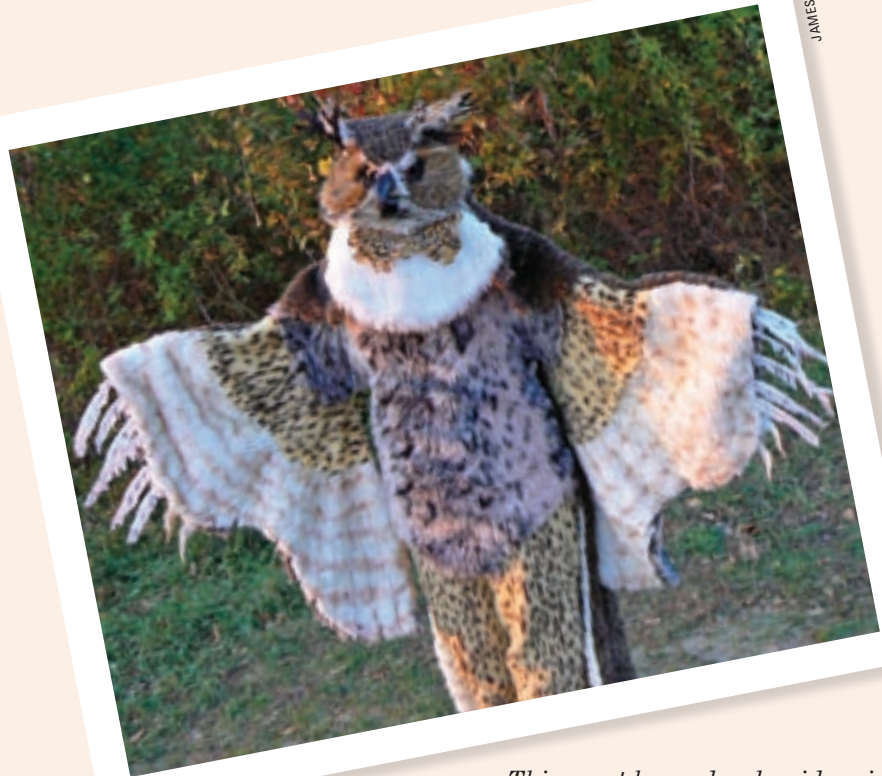
Friends of the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center in Fergus Falls, Minn., sponsored a two-day professional development workshop for 22 teachers on “Nature Journaling and Observation Skills for the Classroom.” Participants at the summer workshop included kindergarten through twelfth grade teachers, a rural Hutterite one-room schoolhouse teacher, a city parks and recreation director and art teachers.

The workshop was presented by two local teachers and an educator with the Roger Tory Peterson Institute of Natural History from Jamestown, N.Y. <[www.rtpi.org](http://www.rtpi.org)>, a national nonprofit organization dedicated to improving teacher skills in nature science education. The teachers volunteered; the Friends paid the Peterson educator with help from another nonprofit organization.

Molly Stoddard, instructional systems specialist at the Learning Center, recommends teaming with local teachers who already know the area and are experienced in teaching outdoors and using journals.

Workshop participants studied the works of famous naturalists, learned about current brain research and best practices in teaching outdoors, and the use of hand-signals to get youngsters’ attention outside. They practiced such new techniques as contour and gesture sketching, use of hand lenses and sound mapping.

In their evaluation of the workshop, teachers said they expected to use more journaling and nature experiences in their classrooms. One teacher added, “I will have my students bring their journals with them to the Prairie Wetlands Learning Center instead of waiting to get back to add to their entry.” Teachers had an option to receive graduate credit for the workshop through Hamline University in St. Paul, Minn. 🦋



JAMES BRITT

*This great horned owl guides visitors through Wallkill National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey during Nocturnal Creature Night.*

## Creatures of the Night

Visitors get to know the wild animals that come out after dark at “Nocturnal Creature Night,” at Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge, bordering New Jersey and New York. Refuge staff and volunteers dress in costumes as nocturnal animals are stationed along a nature trail. Guided tour groups meet and learn about each animal—what they eat, who their predators are, why they look the way they do. And each animal character hands out a treat reflective of its own diet. (The fox offers rat-shaped lollipops and the moth caterpillar provides maple leaf candy, for example.)

The 24 costumes were designed and made by Marie Springer, founding president of the nonprofit Friends of Wallkill River National Wildlife Refuge. The event was launched nine years ago and grows a little each year.

“I try to make the costumes as anatomically correct as possible so

the people wearing the costumes can really teach about that creature,” she says, explaining that the firefly costume’s abdomen lights up and that the male and female moths have different antennae indicative of their genders.

### Highlights and Tips

- Pre-register and schedule tours to go every half hour (each tour is about 1½ hours long). Groups like Scout troops may need to be scheduled in the spring for fall tours.
- Add costumes each year—don’t try to make everything the first year.
- Have the costumed creatures speak in the first person about their habitat, predator/prey relations.
- Station creatures near their actual habitat—frogs and salamanders near the pond, skunk next to the owl because the owl is a predator of the skunk.

For more details, contact Marie Springer at <[friendsofwallkillrivernwr@yahoo.com](mailto:friendsofwallkillrivernwr@yahoo.com)>. 🦋

# Succession Planning

By Doug Seale



MARILYN HOLTROP

In 1860, Henry David Thoreau gave an address before the Middlesex (Massachusetts) Agricultural Society, entitled, “The Succession of Forest Trees.” He exhorted his audience to understand nature’s own ways of dispersing seeds and providing the most optimal conditions for their propagation.

Just like Thoreau, Friends organizations will do well to understand the importance of succession planning—planning to ensure continued effectiveness as conditions change and people leave—in order to remain productive as they mature from newly-sprouted organizations to effective supporters of their refuges and the National Wildlife Refuge System. A Friends group must give careful thought to its own evolution.

It is not at all unusual to find that the impetus of success is due in major part to the dedication, creativity, vision, tenacity and leadership of one or more individuals. Without those individuals’ qualities, many organizations would fail from entropy and lack of momentum. The strengths of many organizations are embodied in those individuals.

A maturing organization cannot rely on those qualities alone. Solid and effective processes should be introduced to capture the strengths, ideas and creativity of leaders and doers. A simple rule is: value individual contributions and embed them in the organization’s structure and culture.

Here are a few specific suggestions:

- Make sure your organization has a clear mission that is consistent with the goals of your refuge(s). Revisit

the mission statement at least every two years, if not annually.

- Work to ensure Friends’ projects support the mission, including projects to grow and serve the membership community, funding initiatives, other outreach programs, training and field work.

- Make sure that certain processes—such as event notification, volunteer recruitment, Web site maintenance and other tasks—are well-documented for those who might undertake them in the future.

- Recruit new talent and new ideas.

- Review openly and honestly what each member of the board brings that helps advance the mission.

- Don’t be afraid—and this may be a challenge—to change the makeup of the board when circumstances require it.

- Cultivate a habit of building effective and well-documented processes to ensure long-term success.

- Make sure that all board members and other leaders understand their responsibilities for clarifying how they go about making their own contributions.

- Recognize and celebrate the achievements of all who contribute.

I like to think of these processes as seeds out of which the continued success of a Friends organization may spring and grow. Oak trees may succeed pine trees, but the forest will endure with a little help. *✍*

*Doug Seale is a board member of Friends of the Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge in Massachusetts.*

*Assabet River National Wildlife Refuge in Massachusetts—planting seeds for the future.*

## Spread the Word




*Friends Forward* is available online. A limited number of newsletters is printed and mailed. So send your Friends organization and prospective members to [www.fws.gov/friends/home/frontpg-blue-600.asp](http://www.fws.gov/friends/home/frontpg-blue-600.asp) to download the latest edition.

**New Leadership, continued from page 1**

in Portland, Ore. A native of Seattle, Thorson has served in four Service offices, including Alaska, Southwest and Pacific Regions and Washington, D.C. She holds a law degree from the University of Oregon and served briefly as a biologist for USGS.

**Ren Lohofener**, currently serving as regional director for the Service's Pacific Region, will become the new director of the California-Nevada Region in Sacramento, Calif. Lohofener joined the Service in 1989 after working as an ecologist for the National Marine Fisheries Service. He was also assistant director for endangered species in Washington. A native of Kansas, Lohofener served in the U.S. Army and earned his Ph.D. at Mississippi State University, where he was an adjunct professor.

**Ken Stansell**, currently serving as the Service's career deputy director, will become special assistant to the director, charged with providing policy guidance and advice and heading the Service's workforce planning efforts. Stansell began his career in 1974 as a research biologist with the South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department, where he established one of the first state endangered species conservation programs.

**Rowan Gould** will become the career deputy director of the Fish and Wildlife Service. Gould currently serves as the assistant director for Wildlife and Sport Fish Restoration in Washington, D.C. He has extensive experience in Alaska, including coordination of the Service's activities in response to the Exxon Valdez oil spill. Gould holds a Ph.D. in fish pathology and fish biology from Oregon State University. 

## Building Rapport with Congress

By Molly Brown

When asked to write an article on how one can build rapport with members of Congress, I first reflected on the fact that there are many lobbyists who are paid handsomely to press their agenda. Being an unpaid volunteer, what could I possibly do to compete with these professionals? Then I remembered: it may not only be about money, but more importantly it may be about what comes from the heart.


*A Friends group must do its homework. You must coordinate the objectives of the project with the refuge manager and staff.*

As a volunteer, you must be passionate about your project. To build a relationship with anyone about a project, you must have the enthusiasm to sell it.

A Friends group must do its homework. You must coordinate the objectives of the project with the refuge manager and staff. They will help you formulate a plan to see this project through to completion. You must be sure to include the Fish and Wildlife Service regional and Washington offices. Also, don't forget to contact your local and state representatives who may help you.

I remember the questions that were asked of me when I first went to Capitol Hill in the late 80s: "Who are you? What political clout do you have? Where is the Back Bay Refuge?" By doing the above homework early and getting your political alliances on board, you will be able to answer these questions effectively.

When you make an appointment to meet with your Congressional representatives, be courteous and clearly state the objective of your project and how they may help you. Be on time, stay focused and keep your message succinct. Many will be interested in knowing how your project will affect their district and how it will benefit the public. Use maps and pictures because, like many of us, legislators are visual learners. Don't be too disappointed if your local Senator or Representative cannot meet with you. Talk to a legislative aide and leave a packet that explains your project and includes contact numbers. Finally, invite them to visit your refuge, so they may see for themselves.

After returning home, write a thank you note to whomever you met, just like your mother told you to do. Meet with your local refuge manager to discuss your visit and formulate further plans. Remember to keep all concerned informed about the progress of your project. Contact the local media. By passionately working together, you may balance the "wants" of people with the "needs" of wildlife. 

*Molly P. Brown is president of Friends of Back Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia.*

# History by the Numbers

By Charles Whitmore

The history committee of our Friends group at Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey has made good use of detailed historical information found in the U.S. Census. Much of this information is conveniently available online in the form of images of the original census enumeration sheets.

From those records, we have learned much about those who lived here over the many decades preceding formation of the refuge. We also wanted to know more about how those earlier occupants of the land lived—and particularly about farming practices in the mid-1800s.

We were able to find county-by-county statistical abstracts of agricultural production, but these were not specific about what a farm at the corner of Long Hill and White Bridge roads, for instance, might have produced.

We visited a local university library that is a federal records depository, but a trip deep into the dim stacks only turned up several volumes full of the same generalized information that we had previously located. But the persistence of the reference librarian finally led to successful conclusion of our search. The librarian contacted a colleague at another library and learned that the New Jersey State Library in Trenton probably had the microfilm images that we sought.

Page No. 47 30

SCHEDULE 3.—Productions of Agriculture in *Madison Township*, in the County of *Middlesex*, N. J.

Post Office: *Madison*

Name of Agent, Owner or Manager	ACRES OF LAND							LIVE STOCK, Jan 1, 1870											WATER							
	Cultivated			Uncultivated				Cattle			Horses		Mules and Oxen		Swine		Sheep		Goats		Ponds		Streams			
	No.	Ac.	Pr.	No.	Ac.	Pr.	No.	Ac.	No.	Ac.	No.	Ac.	No.	Ac.	No.	Ac.	No.	Ac.	No.	Ac.	No.	Ac.				
1 <i>Thomas Selas D</i>	40	5		5000	75		2		2				2	120							2	4		150		
2 <i>Benajah Selas G</i>	50			1700	30	420	2		5				11	115							3	10		145	20	
3 <i>William Hishala G</i>	39			2000	80		1		1				1	115								2	6		100	
4 <i>Brian Langfaith G</i>	17	4		4000	15		1		1					120												
5 <i>Stiles John</i>	100	10		4500	125	800	2		2					450										100	20	
6 <i>Burley Henry</i>	80	20		4000	450	100	4		6	2			9	900							50	15		150	10	
7 <i>William John G</i>	60			4000	150		2		1				2	185										25		
8 <i>Baird Ebenezer</i>	52	8		4000	75		2		1				2	290							30			75		
9 <i>Beckham Francis</i>	125	15		10000	500	200	10		7	2			5	1100							20	15		200	10	

*Friends of Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in New Jersey are using the Agricultural Census of 1870 to learn how the refuge lands were farmed 150 years ago.*

At the state library, we were led directly to Drawer 6 in Cabinet C, where the microfilm had been waiting all along. We came away with several dozen pages of paper copies of handwritten agricultural census records made by enumerator James H. Bunting during July 1870 in the townships where the refuge is located. For 1870, each spread of two enumeration sheets has information on 40 farms, set out in 52 columns.

Having paid scant attention to the guidance, “Be careful what you wish for...,” we now had to analyze this wealth of information, and intend to combine the results with other information from population censuses and land ownership records. We hope that a picture will emerge to give better understanding of the way in which land in the Great Swamp was being used nearly 150 years ago. ✎

*This article originally appeared in The Swamp Scene, the newsletter of the Friends of Great Swamp National Wildlife Refuge. Charles Whitmore is on the Friends board of directors. He had initially been researching who originally owned the land that is now part of the refuge. Many of the landowner names are familiar in the area even today.*

## News Wanted!

We welcome stories about your refuge Friends group's activities and accomplishments as well as articles about the contributions of individual Friends. In most cases, your contributions should be no longer than 300 words. Please submit high-resolution photos (300 dpi) to illustrate your story. Send materials to <Karen\_Leggett@fws.gov>.



## Evaluation, continued from page 1

It rated the Refuge System as “effective” in four goals:

- provide quality wildlife-dependent recreation,
- maintain infrastructure and equipment,
- complete high quality Comprehensive Conservation Plans,
- reduce wildfire risks and improve habitats.

Among its 11 principle recommendations, MSI advises increasing the number of full-time Refuge System law enforcement officers from the current 200 to 400. Estimates have put the cost of training, equipping and paying the annual salary of a full-time officer at \$150,000. MSI also noted that the rate at which land has been added to the Refuge System had declined “significantly” over the past five years.



*Refuge officer Chris Johnson rows a patrol boat at Kenai National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. An independent study recommends doubling the number of law enforcement officers in the Refuge System.*

Among other recommendations, the report:

- rated the Refuge System as “partially effective” in conserving, managing and restoring wildlife resources and habitats. Forty-one percent of Refuge lands in states other than Alaska were found to be in need of management attention. Therefore, MSI recommended the Refuge System hire more biologists.
- recommended the Refuge System develop a water strategy to more effectively assess and address water management issues. MSI advises the appointment of a “water resources coordinator.” A Water Resources Team Initiative has been chartered within the Refuge System and is developing a water resources strategic plan.

The independent analysis was undertaken to fulfill the Program Assessment Rating Tool (PART) — part of the President’s Management Agenda. It was mandated by the Office of Management and Budget (OMB). The full text of the report — as well as its executive summary — is available at: <[www.fws.gov/refuges/policyMakers/independentEval.html](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/policyMakers/independentEval.html)>.



*A mule deer at the Rocky Mountain Arsenal Refuge*

## Mentors Visit Four States

Friends organizations in Colorado, Louisiana, North Dakota and Washington received practical advice on establishing and sustaining their organizations and partnerships this summer through the National Wildlife Refuge Friends Mentoring Program.

Under the program, a two-member mentoring team, including an experienced Friends leader and a seasoned refuge manager, provides customized help for new Friends organizations as well as existing ones looking to build their capacity.

Friends organizations forming or already established at Rocky Mountain Arsenal and Rocky Flats Refuges (Colo.), Tensas Refuge (La.), Lostwood Refuge (N.D.) and Columbia Gorge Refuge (Wash.) were selected to receive mentoring visits during 2008.


Applications for next year’s program are due in spring 2009. For more information about the program, contact Trevor Needham at <[Trevor\\_Needham@fws.gov](mailto:Trevor_Needham@fws.gov)> or 703-358-2392. 

# Q&A *send us your questions*

## Q: How do you find and select software that is useful for Friends organizations?

**A:** There's a Web site specifically designed to help answer such questions. TechSoup <www.techsoup.org> bills itself as "The Technology Place for Nonprofits." This online company offers donated and discounted technology products to nonprofits and public libraries. TechSoup offers more than 300

products from companies such as Microsoft, Adobe, and Symantec.

Nancy Menasco with the Friends of the Red River National Wildlife Refuge in Louisiana also recommends the site for its articles and roundtable discussions on topics of interest to nonprofits. In addition, TechSoup offers free toolkits and Web-based courses in specialized topics such as online conferencing, successful tech planning, a searchable database of charitable giving to your organization, and recruiting and managing volunteers. You can even, according to the TechSoup Web note, "reprint our articles without asking. Seriously." 

## Money, continued from page 3

landowner who was a hunter/conservationist, retired banker and member of a major foundation.

### Marketing/Publicity

■ "Keep the work of the refuge in the public eye. We are a publicity machine. When International Paper gave \$30,000 for an aquarium, we made sure people knew that." *Ann Smith, Friends of Black Bayou*

■ "Report your success along the way. The local paper loves to keep tabs on mission-driven efforts and it can drum up additional donors." *Alan Trout*

■ "We can sell the economic benefit to our area. If we attract twice as many visitors and use local people to build it, it has an immediate, positive impact." *Sue Hix*

### Donation Strategy

■ Focus on large lead donations first. There is a snowball effect if you have a number of major donations before announcing the campaign to the general public. "*Ding*" *Darling Wildlife Society*

■ "Our biggest contributions came from foundations with local roots." *Al Trout*

■ Consider extended pledge periods (three to five years), opportunities for naming areas/exhibits/bricks/tiles, family contribution packages, in-kind support, small donor appeals to youth ("Pennies for the Refuge"). *Friends of Sherburne Refuge*

■ "Early on we came up with the idea of supporters buying an acre for \$450....it turned many of those \$100 or \$200 donors into \$450 donors. We put the names of the 85 acre donors on a plaque at the trailhead leading to the property." *Leigh Ann, executive director, Friends of the Bosque del Apache Refuge*

### Details

■ "The rule of thumb is that generally you can raise 2.5 times your normal budget...I can't emphasize enough the importance of having good database management." *Nancy Marshall*

# Calendar

## November 1

Preserve America Grant Applications due <www.nfwf.org> or <www.historicpreservation.fws.gov>, <Eugene\_Marino@fws.gov>, 703-358-2173

## November 6

2-4:30 pm Birding Broadcast: Jennifer Fee, Bird Sleuth Project Leader, Cornell Laboratory of Ornithology. Find a Distance Learning Classroom near you at <distancelearning.fws.gov/location.html>. Contact <Maggie\_OConnell@fws.gov>, 703-358-1938

## November 15

Okefenokee National Wildlife Refuge (Ga.): traditional sugar cane boil

## November 22-23

DeSoto National Wildlife Refuge (Iowa): Art of the Wild, featuring artwork, photography, carving and more from local artists

## December 6

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (Md.): 12th Annual Friends of Blackwater Christmas Open House

## December 31

Deadline to submit entries in the photo contest for the Federal Recreation Lands Pass. More information at <www.sharetheexperience.org>.

# Puffin Watch is part of Fireworks-Free Independence Day Celebration

By Gary Hayes

Each Fourth of July, Cannon Beach, Ore., hosts a colorful aerial display unlike most communities. When the city of Cannon Beach decided to enforce state laws prohibiting fireworks on the beach, Friends of Haystack Rock introduced The Great Cannon Beach Puffin Watch, a seabird-watching event, as part of a fireworks-free Independence Day celebration in this north Oregon coast community.

The event offers visitors the opportunity to watch puffins and many other varieties of seabirds that nest on the town's icon, Haystack Rock, and other near-shore rocks. Haystack Rock offers the most accessible location in the Pacific Northwest to view nesting puffins. Its thriving intertidal area is protected as a Marine Garden designated by the state of Oregon, and along with other offshore rocks on Cannon Beach, it is part of the Oregon Islands National Wildlife Refuge.

During the Puffin Watch event, the city's Haystack Rock Awareness Program offers interpretive events on the beach, ranging from discussions of the area's geology to photographing tide pools and displays of live rescued birds. Spotting scopes are available for visitors to observe puffins on Haystack Rock. Ongoing intertidal tours are offered. About a mile to the north, a large colony of common murrelets can also be seen just offshore. Many other varieties of birds are also common visitors to these areas, including brown pelicans, cormorants, pigeon guillemots, black oystercatchers and bald eagles. Friends of Haystack Rock produces

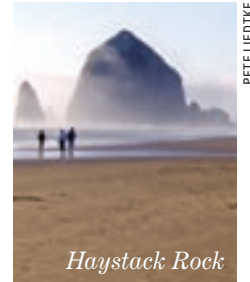
GARY HAYES



free Puffin Watch Passports that provide identification information and a checklist of birds that can be seen in the area.

While there have been critics of the city's decision to enforce state laws prohibiting fireworks on the beach, The Great Cannon Beach Puffin Watch not only provides an alternative, but showcases some of the remarkable natural resources the laws were intended to protect. "When people see the puffins and learn that this is a critical nesting time for seabirds, it's easier for them to understand the reason for the fireworks ban," says Tom Oxwang, president of the Friends of Haystack Rock board of directors. "Most people understand that it is not appropriate to explode fireworks in a National Wildlife Refuge."

Friends of Haystack Rock was formed to provide guidance and support for the Haystack Rock



Haystack Rock

When the city of Cannon Beach, Ore., banned fireworks on the beach, Friends of Haystack Rock introduced The Great Cannon Beach Puffin Watch as an alternative.

PETE LIETKE

Awareness Program and is one of two Friends groups connected to Oregon Islands Refuge. Since 1985, the Haystack Rock Awareness Program, funded by the city and private contributors, has worked to educate visitors about preserving Cannon Beach's famous landmark. ❧

## Money, continued from page 10

■ Develop a case statement—a vision, mission, immediate objectives and long term goals. "Ding" Darling Wildlife Society

■ "Once we had a better plan and a ballpark figure, we were better prepared to approach foundations, which ended up being our primary donors. It is important to maintain excellent records throughout the process, especially if the project takes several years." Leigh Ann Vradenburg ❧

## Wild Bird Note Cards

Images for 17 note cards are available in DVD format—ready for production by your local printer. The back of each note card includes a description of the bird and the role of the National Wildlife Refuge System in protecting birds. The name of your Friends group may be added at the bottom.

*Bullock's Oriole*  
by *Louis Aggasiz*  
*Fuertes*



Note card sets may be sold by Friends organizations at special events, in bookstores, etc. Bookmarks are also available. Contact Martha Nudel, Refuge System Branch of Communications, at <Martha\_Nudel@fws.gov> or 703-358-1858 to obtain a DVD. ✂

## 2009 National Friends Conference

### *Plans Are in the Works*

Building on the success of last year's national "Friends for the Future" conference, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is partnering with the National Wildlife Refuge Association to organize the 2009 national Friends conference in Washington, D.C. February 21–23, with NWRA's Capitol Hill visit on February 24.

The conference seeks to bring together and strengthen refuge Friends organizations nationally, providing timely opportunities for Friends members to build their skills, share experiences, network and express support for the Refuge System.

Be on the lookout for additional details by email or contact Trevor Needham at <Trevor\_Needham@fws.gov> or 703-359-2392. ✂

## Refuge Week Toolkit has Long Shelf Life

Each refuge manager has received a CD toolkit with materials to help promote National Wildlife Refuge Week, but the toolkit includes many items which can be used at any time with little or no modification:

- Event and activity ideas, including customized backpacks, arts on the refuge, geocaching, journaling and reusable shopping bags
- Fill-In-The-Blank press release, which can be personalized

■ Sample op-ed and Letters to the Editor, which you can offer to local daily and weekly newspapers from your Refuge Friends president or other official

- National Wildlife Refuge System Talking Points
- Duck Stamp and Junior Duck Fact Sheets for public distribution

If you would like additional copies of the toolkit, contact Martha Nudel, Refuge System Branch of Communications, at <Martha\_Nudel@fws.gov> or 703-358-1858.



## FriendsForward

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