



We Are The Pacific Southwest Region

Summer 2010

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More inside



First Lady Michelle Obama and Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex's Visitor Services Manager Angelina Yost discuss the Let's Move campaign June 1 at Red Rock Canyon in Nevada. See page 4 for the complete article.

From the Regional Director ...

As we approach the three month mark of the Gulf Coast oil spill, there is still much to be done.

As gallons of oil spilling into the Gulf of Mexico increase, so does the need for help. To date nearly 50 of our region's employees have traveled to the Gulf Coast to aid in this effort – some more than once! And more than one hundred of you have put your names on a volunteer list. Thank you!

There are many skills and talents needed to meet this ecological challenge and volunteers will ensure we are the most effective in our conservation work.

The future of Gulf Coast wildlife, the marine food web and human futures will be affected by this massive spill. It's important that the efforts to minimize the damage remain at the top of our priority list and continue to be a priority in the months ahead. I realize that volunteering will require time away from family, friends and workloads. I sincerely thank each and every one who has volunteered and is registered to do so.

I will be in the Gulf area this week and I will try to thank personally the folks on the ground over the July 4 weekend.

During times of crisis it is then that our determination is tested and sacrifices are needed; we will press forward in preserving wildlife and their habitats, and cleaning up the Gulf of Mexico.

Again, thank you.

Ren



Marc Provencher, Coleman NFH



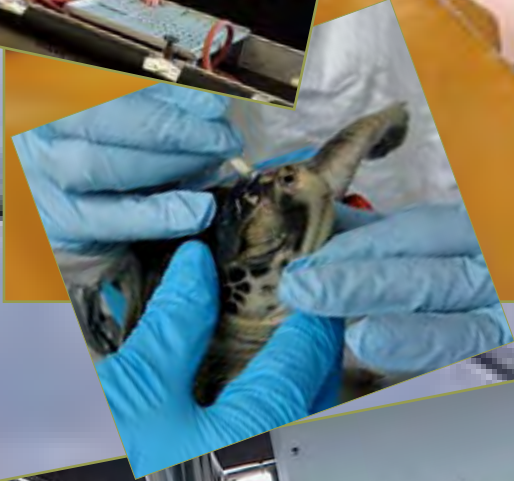
Secretary Salazar on his ninth Gulf visit



Steve Martarano, Bay Delta FWO



Jon Myatt (right), Regional Office



Terry Adelsbach (left), Sacramento FWO



Sharon Taylor (left), Carlsbad FWO



Kathleen Pollett, Carlsbad FWO



First Lady Michelle Obama kicks off “Let’s Move Outside!”

by Dan Balduini, Public Affairs Officer, Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex

The magnificent Red Rock Canyon provided the backdrop as First Lady Michelle Obama struck a blow against childhood obesity while promoting her “Let’s Move!” initiative.

The first lady kicked-off the “Let’s Move Outside!” campaign in Nevada during the June 1 event at the national conservation area just west of Las Vegas.

“Let’s Move Outside!” promotes outdoor activities and encourages people to take advantage of the national parks, national wildlife refuges, national forests, and other public lands in the state.

The Southern Nevada Agency Partnership (SNAP) hosted the event, which included appearances by U.S. Senate Majority Leader Harry Reid, U.S. Representative Dina Titus, and Assistant Interior Secretary Rhea Suh. SNAP is a partnership comprised of professionals from the Bureau of Land Management, National Park Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Department of Agriculture’s Forest Service. Representatives from the agencies work together with communities and partners to conserve and enhance the federal lands of southern Nevada for current and future generations.

The Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex was well represented, both during the planning stages and at the event. Under the guidance of Project Leader and SNAP board member

Cynthia Martinez, Visitor Services Manager Angelina Yost played a major role on the planning team and was the on-site lead as she escorted the first lady and Senator Reid during the field activities. Supervisory Law Enforcement Officer Rob Peloquin and Officer Lionel Castillo were part of the security team, and Visitor Services Specialist Ida Castillo assisted with the field activities. Additionally, yours truly served as the lead news media contact and escort.

Michelle Obama delivered an inspiring 10-minute talk to the roughly 100 invited guests, making it clear she wanted to end childhood obesity in one generation’s time. She reminded the baby boomers in the crowd of the importance of exercise and getting outside with her own example, saying her parents “kicked us outside. In fact, they told us not to come back inside” until dinner time.

“Now, children spend too much time in front of the TV and computer, playing video games,” Obama continued.

Following her speech, the first lady and Senator Reid joined the children for some real exercise at Sandstone Quarry. The quarry is at one of several trail heads along the canyon’s 13-mile scenic drive. It boasts magnificent red and yellow sandstone formations carved over millions of years by wind and water. The steep rock walls attract hikers and climbers from around the world.

The first lady and the senator participated in “geology stretching” exercises with the children in the

shadow of a massive sandstone formation in the middle of a wash. The exercises require the participant to mimic a geologic feature or natural force through body positioning and motion. On this day, Obama and the others learned how to be a mountain, a boulder, and stretched out horizontally while standing on one leg to demonstrate erosion.

It was the boulder exercise that brought the biggest laugh of the day. The participant begins the activity in a squatting position. The first lady, wearing a bright green knee-length skirt, blurted out, “I’m not doing that!”

The group then moved to the base of large red sandstone outcropping that gives the canyon its name. There, the first lady and Senator Reid watched as the children scrambled up the side of the red rock formation.

The event culminated with Obama administering the Junior Ranger Oath to the children, which she did in a very animated fashion — especially emphasizing the need to keep the “wild” in wildlife. She then announced to those 20 school children from Las Vegas that they were the first Junior Rangers of the “Let’s Move Outside!” campaign in the entire country.

The Junior Ranger Oath

- I promise to protect, respect, and enjoy our public lands;
- I will leave rocks, plants, and historic objects where I find them;
- I will improve my health by playing outside;
- I will keep the “wild” in wildlife;
- I will share what I learned with others.



Suggest Improvements for the Regional Newsletter Now

This quarterly employee newsletter has been produced for a couple of years now. It's time for us to evaluate how useful it is as a communications tool.

Please take a minute to print out this page and send it to Erica Szlosek, External Affairs in the Regional Office. You can scan it and attach it to an email or send it hard copy in an envelope to the Regional Office.

Any suggestions or comments are welcomed! It's a newsletter for all of our R8 employees so if you have ideas of how to make it more interesting, more useful, let us know.

1. How often do you read the newsletter?

Each issue If I have time I never know when it's available Most issues Rarely Never

2. Which types of articles tend to interest you most?

Articles about FWS initiatives Articles about specific employees Articles about specific events
 _____ Other [please explain]

3. Which articles interest you least?

Articles about FWS initiatives Articles about specific employees Articles about specific events
 _____ Other [please explain]

4. What would you suggest changing? [Mark as many as applicable]

- Make newsletter shorter
- Make newsletter longer
- More graphics [photos, drawings]
- Fewer graphics
- Make type easier to read
- Make the publication web-based rather than a PDF
- Fewer newsletter issues a year
- More newsletter issues each year
- Longer articles
- Shorter articles
- Other [please explain below]

Region Celebrates Efforts to Connect People to the Natural World

by Erica Szlosek, Region 8 External Affairs

Four years ago Region 8 set out to tackle a huge problem – how to better connect people with the natural world. Without conservation enthusiasts would anyone care about the fate of the planet's fish? wildlife? or plants? Thorny questions.

In response the Service put together a team of interested employees to focus the region's efforts to strengthen opportunities to connect people with nature.

The team has been gaining momentum each year, and has been especially key in helping employees integrate the Service's Connecting People with Nature initiative into their every day work. The most recent regional survey, shows that employees have devoted 79,000 hours to connecting people with nature activities. This was up from 70,000 hours in 2008.

Not only did activities take place on Fish and Wildlife Service's lands, many involved other outdoor spaces and included many partnerships and mentoring activities.



USWS photo

The activities included:

- Festivals and events;
- Formal environmental education;
- Interpretation and guided walks;
- Schoolyard habitat, restoration, and cleanup programs;
- Career fairs;
- Hunting;
- Fishing;
- Photography;
- and more!

In all, the region's employees participated in more than 110 different festivals and special events; 125 different environmental education programs; 118 different programs tied to various interpretive trails; 78 schoolyard habitat, restoration, and cleanup programs; 25 career fairs; and hundreds of fishing, hunting photography and wildlife watching activities.

And even more activities are on the books for 2010. According to leader Kate Eschelbach the team is going strong with some big projects now under way, including sponsoring some of the FWS State Fair exhibits and activities.

To encourage even more participation in connecting people with nature activities, the Team is sponsoring a challenge to all offices to see which ones can garner the largest numbers of employees in these events. Winners will be announced in February and incentives will be offered.

Need more information? Call Kate Eschelbach at the Ventura FWO.

Volunteers Build Condor Observation Blind

by Lisa Cox, Hopper Mountain NWR

Thanks to refuge volunteers, biologists who observe condor feeding behavior at Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge will now be able to do so from a sturdy blind that can withstand adverse weather and the occasional wildfire.

Long-time refuge volunteer and president of the Friends of the California Condors Wild and Free, Vince Gerwe, headed the project. He brought along other volunteers and refuge Friends members to help in the construction. Terrell Cryer (draftsman) and Dennis Huhn (carpenter) played key roles in the building process. Intern Andria Kroner and refuge employees Dan Tappe, Blake Massey, Geoffrey Grisdale and Lisa Cox, volunteered their days off to the project, providing necessary field equipment, manpower and supervision.

The project volunteers and employees ensured much-needed features were installed, including air vents, small viewing slots on all sides, a shelf-like desk, scope anchors, and even a slightly pitched roof to combat wet weather. The sturdy, all weather blind features one-way glass windows biologists will use to watch incoming condors that visit the site to feed. The blind will mainly be used to observe feeding and other social behaviors.

The blind was made possible through the efforts of Hopper Mountain volunteers and the refuge Friends group. The Friends group has continually supported and volunteered for the refuge over two years, with some of the volunteers approaching seven years of continued support.



USWS photo

Region 8 ARRA Project Updates

San Diego ARRA Project Under Way

Recently the Service awarded a \$4.5 million contract to construct a new administrative headquarters, visitor contact station, and service building for the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex (NWRC) in Chula Vista to PCL Construction Services, Inc., of San Diego.

This project includes three buildings and will be located on the Sweetwater Marsh Unit of the San Diego Bay NWR adjacent to the Chula Vista Nature Center in Chula Vista. The buildings will consolidate refuge administration, resource management, and maintenance operations, functions that are currently spread out among the Complex's four offices in San Diego County.

"This new facility will improve management efficiencies by locating our staff together and enhance opportunities to develop partnerships with our neighboring communities in San Diego County," said Andy Yuen, project leader of the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex. "The location will encourage



visitors from the Chula Vista Nature Center onto the Refuge to explore the trails, observe wildlife, and foster connections with nature."

The new facility will also allow the Service to vacate existing leased space, located one hour from the nearest refuge unit.

Construction Begins on San Luis Headquarters and Visitor Center

By Scott Flaherty, External Affairs

San Luis National Wildlife Refuge Complex (NWRC) will soon be getting a facelift thanks to ARRA funds.

The new facility will span 16,000 square feet and will be located on the southwest corner of the refuge. The space will include work areas for 31 people and a 5,000 square foot visitor center. The center will also include a multi-purpose room/classroom, exhibit spaces and an information desk. The new building will be a far cry from the current refuge offices, which have been operating out of a strip mall for over 30 years and do not include facilities for visitors.

The San Luis project is one of the largest ARRA-funded refuge construction projects in the Service. A construction contract of \$7.2

million was awarded to West Coast Contractors of Nevada, Inc., of Reno, Nevada to complete the project. West Coast will create local jobs by subcontracting some of the work to local construction firms from Sacramento to Fresno.

"Today, every contract means survival for construction firms and this is going to put a lot of people to work," said West Coast Contractors of Nevada's President Mario Ramirez.

It's anticipated that the new building will double the amount of visitors to exceed 140,000 people annually, up from the current 70,000 visitors.

"This project will benefit the local economy in Los Banos and Merced County by doubling the visitors coming to refuge, half of whom travel to the refuge from out of town," said Project Leader Kim Forrest. "My hope is that community residents and school students view the new facilities as a part of their own 'back yard' and visit often."



Region Celebrates Duck Stamp's Role in Conservation During First Day of Sale Event at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR



Regional Director Ren Lohofener shows off the 2010-2011 Federal Duck Stamp following his purchase of the stamp during a First Day of Sale Event Friday at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay NWR. (Photo: Courtney Ashe, California Waterfowl)

The Pacific Southwest Region and several conservation organizations celebrated the First Day of Sale for the 2010-2011 Federal Duck Stamp June 25 at LaRiviere Marsh at Don Edwards San Francisco Bay National Wildlife Refuge in Fremont, Calif.

Regional Director Ren Lohofener joined Dr. Rudy Rosen, director, Ducks Unlimited Western Region; Graham Chisholm, executive director, Audubon California and Jake Messerli, vice president of Conservation Programs for California Waterfowl Association to deliver messages regarding the role of the duck stamp in conserving wetlands

and associated habitats for waterfowl, birds and wildlife in California. A group of about 30 Service staff, partners and refuge supporters attended the 30 minute event, which culminated in the sale of the first duck stamp by Ren Lohofener.



Grants Provide Funds for Habitat Along One of Southern California's Last Remaining Wild Rivers

by Lois Grunwald, Ventura FWO

With its recent purchase of 141 acres along the Santa Clara River, the Service, Nature Conservancy, and the State of California are conserving valuable riparian habitat for wildlife and outdoor recreation space for people in Ventura County, California.

The Santa Clara River Trustee Council ARCO oil spill settlement, composed of the Fish and Wildlife Service and the California Department of Fish and Game, contributed \$2 million towards the purchase. And \$750,000 was contributed from the Coastal Conservancy, which was awarded the funds through the Service's National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grant Program.

The Nature Conservancy and the Coastal Conservancy initiated the land deal in 2008 as part of a plan to create a river parkway along the Santa Clara River for activities such as hiking and bird watching.

The Service also recently provided a \$1 million grant to the California Department of Fish and Game through its Cooperative Endangered Species Conservation Fund for the purchase of a yet-to-be determined parcel of up to 145 acres along the Santa Clara River.

The Santa Clara River drains a 1,600-square-mile watershed. The lower Santa Clara River supports 18 state and federally-listed species and the acquisition will aid in the recovery of the federally endangered southwestern willow flycatcher, least Bell's vireo, arroyo toad, and the federally threatened California red-legged frog. Both acquisitions support regional conservation efforts.

FWS Provides High School Students With Mentoring

Donnie Ratcliff, a fisheries biologist with the Service's Anadromous Fish Restoration Program (AFRP) recently began serving as a mentor to Merlot Institute of Environmental Technology students through a program run by the Center for Land Based Learning (CLBL). The Student and Landowner Education and Watershed Stewardship – SLEWS – engages high school students in habitat restoration projects that enhance classroom learning, develop leadership skills and result in real habitat restoration.”

Through the SLEWS program, high school students are able to become an integral part of local restoration projects. Students are trained and guided by mentors with expertise in ecosystem restoration and are then able to provide much needed labor to landowners while learning about restoration in a real-world situation. This approach allows conservation and stewardship values to be shared while important habitat restoration is accomplished.

The students from Merlot Institute

completed several restoration projects during the spring of 2010. Service employees participated in two of these projects. In early March, Ratcliff joined the students, CLBL staff, and other SLEWS mentors at the Mokelumne River Day Use Area and the Mokelumne River Fish Hatchery. Students planted native riparian trees within the day-use area along the Mokelumne River.

The group toured the fish hatchery and discussed the life cycles and habitat needs of chinook salmon and steelhead. To finish the day, the group discussed how functional riparian habitat and ecosystem restoration benefits several of the life history stages of aquatic and terrestrial species that occur in the area.

Lodi Lake Park was the site of the final project day of the 2010 Merlot Institute SLEWS effort on April 15.

Donnie Ratcliff and Ramon Martin (Assistant Program Manager with AFRP) joined the students, CLBL staff, and

other SLEWS mentors to plant native riparian grasses, shrubs, and trees in an area that the City of Lodi Parks and Recreation Department had recently cleared of invasive Himalayan blackberry. After planting, the group discussed the multiple benefits that healthy native riparian vegetation provides in relation to water quality and temperature, nesting and foraging habitat for mammals and birds, stability of floodplain areas, and benefits to recreational users.

During the course of this year's SLEWS activities with Merlot Institute, mentors and CLBL staff have been able to reach out to students from an underserved part of the community and share with them the process and benefits of ecosystem restoration.

Many of the students have commented that without a program like this, they would have had little opportunity to learn about the diverse ecosystems of California's central valley and the restoration opportunities that exist.



Donnie Ratcliff (right) and Merlot Institute students planting native riparian trees along the Mokelumne River (Photo: Shana Welles, CLBL).

Tribute to the Klamath National Wildlife Refuge Complex

By Ron Cole, Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex

First impressions of the Klamath Basin have been carved into the minds and journals of many explorers and travelers throughout recorded history.



In 1905, famed naturalist William Finley wrote as he gazed upon the vast wetlands of the Klamath Basin for the first time: "Here lay the land of my dreams. After nearly 20

years of waiting, I was looking out over this place of mystery that lay far beyond the southern rim of my home hills. ..."

My first impression of the Klamath Basin occurred during the early 1980s, as I drove east on Highway 161 along the California/Oregon border to begin a seasonal job at the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

A sea of bulrush, cattail and water hugged the road to the south while fields of grain rippled in the breeze to the north. Ahead of me about a half mile, I noticed that the paved highway was washed out. As I sped forward, I could see this was no ordinary washout. This was a waterfowl washout made up of thousands of ducks walking on the pavement, looking for grit. They moved in mass, slowly oozing like feathered syrup. When they lifted off, the air was filled with wings and orange feet.

For a moment, I lost sight of the sky. What I heard over the sound of my idling engine was the roar of over 10,000 winged turbines lifting into space. What I had heard about the Klamath Basin was true. This indeed was a land of abundance and mystery.

Today, travelers along this same path can still enjoy the winged abundance found in the Klamath Basin when they visit the Klamath

Basin National Wildlife Refuges. There are six refuges in the Klamath Basin complex, which include Lower Klamath, Upper Klamath, Bear Valley, Clear Lake, Tule Lake and Klamath Marsh national wildlife refuges.

Together, these federal wildlife refuges span over 200,000 acres of wetlands, shrub-steppe, old-growth forests and agricultural landscapes. Over 400 species of fish and wildlife can be found on the refuges. Waterfowl and other migratory birds are particularly dependent on the refuges for their sustained survival.

About 80 percent of the migratory waterfowl in the Pacific Flyway pass through the Klamath Basin each spring and fall. So important are these refuges that in 1908, Lower Klamath National Wildlife Refuge became our nation's first National Wildlife Refuge established for waterfowl.

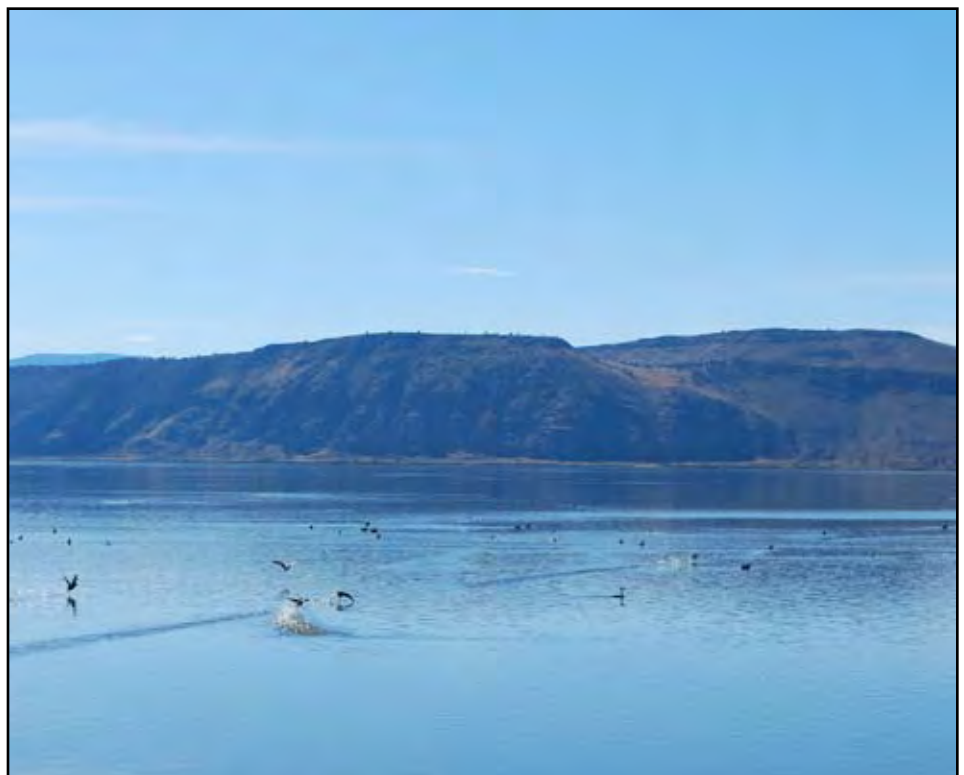
The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is currently starting a process to develop a long-range Comprehensive

Conservation Plan for the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex. When completed, the CCP will guide all aspects of refuge management for the next 15 years.

We welcome the public to attend a series of meetings to gather ideas and suggestions concerning the long-term management of these important landscapes. The public's input is important and we want to hear your thoughts about the refuges and how you feel they can best serve our nation's wildlife.

Whether they are your first, or whether they are those you have accumulated over a lifetime, we invite you to share your impressions about these treasured landscapes.

*This opinion piece first appeared in the **Redding Record Searchlight** to encourage the public to participate in CCP public involvement meetings.*



USFWS photo



In Memoriam: FWS Special Agent Todd Eckhardt

Special Agent Todd Eckhardt passed away May 12, after a courageous fight with cancer.

At the time of his death, he was surrounded by family and friends who cherished his pure unadulterated zest for life.

He loved and he was loved, and he will be greatly missed.

Todd could raise morale with his wonderful sense of humor. You could always count on him to be there in the trench with you if things were going bad.

I will miss him as an agent of the highest caliber but most of all, I will miss him as my friend.

A Special Agent with the Office of Law Enforcement for nearly 15 years, Todd dedicated his life to wildlife conservation and giving a voice to creatures that had none.

He started his career with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in 1995 in Chicago after seven years with the Nevada Division of Wildlife, where he was honored as the Nevada Fish and Game Warden Association's Officer of the Year in 1993. After Chicago, Todd moved

to the Service's law enforcement office in Burlingame, California, and then to Agana, Guam, where he worked on endangered species cases and key wildlife trade enforcement. While in Guam, he met Karen Tanaka, who became his wife.

Since September of 2000, he worked in OLE's Klamath Falls Office, focusing on waterfowl and migratory bird issues. He was instrumental in developing an avian protection plan with PacificCorp that plays a key role in protection of eagles in the nation's largest bald eagle migration route.

He participated in helping protect water resources for the endangered Klamath short-nosed sucker in 2001.

That same year, after the September 11 terrorist attacks in New York City and Washington, D.C., he stepped up to protect our nation's citizens as an air marshal for nearly six months.

Always dedicated, Todd also stepped up to maintain peace and preserve public property on the Puerto Rican island of Viequez, during a violent protest after the

U.S. Navy turned over its base to the Service to manage as a national wildlife refuge.

Todd also worked on a special protection detail during the 1996 Summer Olympics in Atlanta.

Born in Redwood City, California, he grew up in Paradise, California, and graduated from Humboldt State University in 1986 with a Bachelor's Degree in Wildlife Management.

Todd is survived by his wife, Karen Tanaka-Eckhardt, who works as an Administrative Officer in the Klamath Basin National Wildlife Refuge Complex.

Todd's family thanks everyone who donated leave to him during his struggle.

In lieu of flowers, the family suggests donations in Todd's name to the American Cancer Society or Ducks Unlimited.

by Daniel Crum, Office of Law Enforcement

Transitions

Arcata FWO

Daryl Van Dyke has joined the Arcata Field Office as the GIS Analyst with the Klamath Strategic Habitat Conservation team. For the previous four years, Daryl was a GIS Specialist with the National Park Service, serving Redwood National & State Parks. In addition to focuses on mobile mapping, resource- and engineering-grade topographic surveys, and GIS and hydrologic analysis, he developed algorithms and code for the analysis of LiDAR data. Principal applications included LiDAR analysis for vegetation characterization, coastal dune morphology, and predictive models for forest structure. Daryl has a B.A. in Community, Regional, and Environmental Studies from Bard College, and a B.S. and M.S. in Environmental Resources Engineering from Humboldt State University.

CA/NV Fish Health Center

New Employees:

Michael Insalaco and Deanna Olson, Biological Science Tech (Fisheries) STEP employees joined us on June 1 for this summer season. Michael comes from Humboldt State University where he is working on a degree in microbiology and Deanna comes from Chico State University where she is studying animal veterinary science. They will be working on the Klamath Fish Health Monitoring Project performing necropsy, DNA extraction and QPCR

Star Award:

Ken Nichols, Fish Biologist. The Fish Health Center is involved with two projects (VAMP fish health evaluations and Stanislaus R. juvenile Chinook health and physiology survey) in the San Joaquin River basin during the spring. Independently, Ken has coordinated, developed sample plans and supplies, and performed field collections. This award is in recognition of the long hours spent in the field (some collections at 4:30 am to meet tidal conditions) to successfully obtain all targeted samples.

Desert National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Matthew Jeffress is the new biologist at the Desert National Wildlife Refuge. Matt is a native Nevadan with B.S. degrees in wildlife resources and fisheries resources from the University of Idaho. He minored in fire ecology. Jeffress came to the Service from the Nevada Department of Wildlife, where he served two years as a biologist working primarily with desert bighorn sheep. In his free time, Matt enjoys hunting, fishing and backpacking with his wife, Mackenzie.

Karyn Barnett is the new visitor services specialist at the Pahrangat National Wildlife Refuge. Karyn has been sharing her passion for nature since the mid-1980s., leading nature walks, hikes, bird-watching trips, cultural and historical talks, and backcountry 4-WD excursions in the desert, mountains and coastal areas of San Diego County. She has worked as a naturalist and interpretive specialist at several California State Parks, and as a ranger at the Tetlin National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska and Mt. Rainier National Park in WA. Karyn holds degrees in geography and philosophy from San Diego State University.

Harry Konwin joined the complex as a volunteer program coordinator with responsibilities for recruiting and maintaining a pool of volunteers to support the four wildlife refuges in the complex. Harry earned a bachelor's degree in anthropology from the University of New Mexico. His coursework was concentrated on archeology and cultural anthropology. A veteran of the U.S. Navy, Konwin developed his people skills as an owner and manager in the hospitality industry. He also has experience in archeology, having served in the private sector as an archeological field technician on several digs in New Mexico.

Hopper Mountain NWR Complex

Hopper Mountain NWR Complex's

newest employees is **Ken Convery** who will serve as the Complex Refuge GIS Specialist. This position was identified to provide support to other R8 NWRS field stations as a shared resource. Ken will work in close coordination with Justin Epting, Refuges GIS coordinator and Patrick Lineback the new Regional GIS Coordinator; and well as others to further the R8 NWRS geospatial programs.

Ken is a Certified Wildlife Biologist and GIS professional with 11 years of geospatial experience. He comes to the FWS from the Conservation Management Institute at Virginia Tech, where for 8 years he was a biologist and geospatial project manager. During his tenure there he specialized in wildlife-habitat modeling, GIS-based decision support systems, and land conservation prioritization and planning. Ken first worked for the USFWS as a biological technician in 1998 and 1999 for the Alaska Peninsula and Becharof National Wildlife Refuges. He has earned graduate degrees from Virginia Tech in biology (MS) and business administration (MBA) and undergraduate degrees from the University of California, Santa Barbara in ecology and evolution (BS) and environmental studies (BA).

Regional Office

Ken McDermond has been the Deputy Regional Director for the Pacific Southwest Region for more than eight years and he has decided to take his expertise and passion for collaboration and partnerships to the exciting new field of Landscape Conservation Cooperation and move closer to family. Ken has just completed the Senior Executive Service training and the Southeast Region's gain is our loss as Ken takes the position of LCC Coordinator for the South Atlantic LCC in North Carolina.

With Ken McDermond moving to his new position in Region 4, **Alexandra Pitts** has been approved as the Deputy Regional Director for Region 8. Since 2004 Alex has been the Assistant Regional Director for External Affairs for Region 8. Prior to her work in the region she served in the Washington Office of External Affairs for six years as

Chief of Congressional and Legislative Affairs. Combined with Alex's previous work experience as a staffer in both the House of Representatives and Senate and in the private sector for both environmentally-oriented non-profit organizations and for Weyerhaeuser Company, she has knowledge of the Service's many programs and responsibilities and an excellent understanding of the Director's responsibilities, the roles of the Assistant Directors, and the working of the Department of Interior, the highest levels of the Administration and Congress. Alex also has a Bachelor's Degree that specialized in botany and a Master's Degree from Yale in Forestry Science

Rebecca J. Fris is the new Science Coordinator of the California Landscape Conservation Cooperative (LCC). She will be responsible for coordinating science support for the California LCC. Rebecca joins FWS after working 15 years with the California Resources Agency. She most recently served as Program Manager for the Delta Science Program where she supervised technical staff and collaborated with others to provide scientific information for conservation activities in the Bay-Delta system. Rebecca holds a bachelor's degree in environmental studies from the University of California, Santa Barbara, and a master's degree in environmental management from Duke University.

Scott Flaherty has been selected as the first ever External Affairs Deputy. He has been with External Affairs in Region 8 for the last 4 years handling our growing web presence and communications for the refuge program, law enforcement and "other duties as assigned." Before that he was in public affairs in Region 3 with a focus on refuges and law enforcement. Prior to coming into the Service he did public affairs for the military in the US and Europe. Scott will be acting EA ARD until we can advertise and select a new ARD.

Sue Detwiler joined the Regional Office in May as the Wildlife and Sport Fish Division Chief, replacing Laura Valoppi. Sue comes to us from the Alaska Regional Office. Most recently she served as the Congressional and

Native American liaison, working with Alaska's Congressional offices as well as Alaska's many Native tribes. Sue also spent several years as the Alaska regional endangered species coordinator. Sue began her career with the Service in 1989 in the Alaska Region's federal subsistence management program. Prior to beginning work with the Service, she lived in rural areas of Alaska hunting, trapping, fishing, driving dog teams, and enjoying the unique lifestyle of Alaska. Sue was born and raised in San Jose, California. She has a B.S. in Wildlife Management from Humboldt State University and an M.S. in Natural Resource Policy from the University of Alaska – Fairbanks. In addition to her work in Alaska she spent several summers working for the U.S. Forest Service, National Park Service and Soil Conservation Service (now NRCS). She enjoys hiking, camping, biking and most other outdoor activities and is looking forward to some warm weather.

Dave Linehan has been selected to be the new Refuge Supervisor for the Pacific Southwest Region, filling the vacancy left by Dan Walsworth's retirement. Dave will bring lots of ideas and experience to this position: he is now a Refuge Supervisor in Region 6 and prior to that he was a Deputy Refuge Supervisor in Denver, Deputy Project Leader at the Mid Columbia NWR Complex in Washington, Refuge Manager at McNary and Toppenish NWRs in Washington, Assistant Refuge Manager at Benton Lake NWR in Montana and at Upper Souris NWR in North Dakota. He was also a Wildlife Biologist at the Pierre Area Office (South Dakota) and at the Aberdeen Wetlands Acquisition Office.

Samantha Marcum is R8's new Coastal Program Coordinator. Samantha has served as the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Coordinator for the Carlsbad FWO for the past four years, where she quickly established a reputation for the program and has consistently carried one of the heaviest project workloads in the Region. Her cooperative work with NRCS has been recognized at the State level and her leadership in finding creative ways to deliver a private lands restoration program in one of the country's most urbanized and ecologically sensitive regions has brought new

attention and resources to the southern California coast.

In addition to her work in coastal habitat restoration, Sam has an extensive background with the Service as well as a great deal of field experience with USGS BRD. Sam will be coordinating the Coastal Programs located in Humboldt Bay (Arcata FWO), San Francisco Bay (Sacramento FWO), the Central Coast (Ventura FWO), and San Diego Bay (Carlsbad FWO). She will also coordinate the National Coastal Wetland Grant program for the Region and work to enhance our involvement in climate change planning along the coast. This position is housed in the Habitat Restoration Division of the Conservation Partnerships Program, but is co-located with the USGS Pacific Science Center in Santa Cruz.

Jason Cox has joined the Habitat Restoration Division in the Regional Office as a SCEP student while he completes his Masters degree in Geography at CSU Chico. His graduate work focuses on ecological responses to changes in land use; primarily in riparian-agricultural interfaces using GIS and remote sensing technology. Jason's background in Agriculture and Rangeland science are a great asset to our work delivering the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program and coordinating efforts related to the California Rangeland Conservation Coalition. Welcome, Jason!

Jennifer Miller joined our Migratory Birds permits staff. For the last three years, Jennifer was a Fullbright Scholar working on her PhD on hippo research in the Okavango in Botswana for BirdLife Botswana. She has a background in GIS, data management and analysis, ecological modeling and Bayesian statistical analysis acquired through her academic studies and working with Travis County Department of Transportation, TX, a land trust, and NRCS. Through her various experiences she has gained skills in customer service, conflict resolution, and data tracking and data management, all of which will be great assets on the more challenging permit issues. For her Masters she obtained a Major in Fisheries and Wildlife Science and a Minor in Geographic Information Sys-

tems from North Carolina State Univ., and for her Bachelors she has a Major in Environmental Resource Management and a Minor in Wildlife and Fisheries Science from Pennsylvania State University.

Jon Myatt was named the new Region 8 Web Manager in March. Jon brings more than 30 years of public affairs and web-based media experience to the External Affairs team. Jon was public information director for the Florida Department of Military Affairs for 15 years, where he established and directed web-based media operations for the Florida National Guard and helped create the myflorida.com website.

Kanisha Allen has joined the External Affairs staff this summer as a STEP student. Her primary focus will be interactive media - Facebook, Twitter, Flickr and more.

David Diamond has taken a new position working for Bryan Arroyo, Assistant Director for Fisheries and Habitat Conservation as the program's climate change coordinator.

Jeff McLain left his position as San Joaquin River Restoration Program Coordinator to work with the National Marine Fisheries Service in Sacramento.

Sacramento FWO

Sarah Swenty filled the Information and Education position in External Affairs on June 6. Prior to joining the Service as a regular employee she worked under contract for the Migratory Bird Program to coordinate the 2010 Federal Duck Stamp Contest, and will continue those duties through the judging in Berkeley this October.

Sarah joins us with a broad range of experience in public relations for California Waterfowl as their Public Relations Coordinator. She also taught English in Japan, where she studied Tea Ceremony extensively after graduating with a B.A. in Fine Arts from UC Davis in 2004.

Staff biologist **Mike Thomas** was promoted to Habitat Conservation Planning Branch Chief. **Rocky Montgomery** was promoted to Senior Biologist in Watershed Planning.

The following employees have left the Sacramento Field Office: **Mike Hall**, Front Desk Receptionist accepted a promotion with the DOD on June 18; **Barbara McFadden**, Office Assistant for the Sacramento Valley Branch transferred on June 4 to the Stockton FWO with a promotion to Budget Technician; **Jennifer Tepley**, Office Assistant for the Recovery and Conservation Planning Branch resigned on June 18; **Angela Picco**, Biologist for the Coast-Bay Branch received a promotion on July 2, transferring to the Division of Listing, Recovery, and Habitat Conservation Planning in the Sacramento Regional Office.

Sacramento Field Office Staff are actively responding to the Gulf of Mexico BP oil disaster and are rotating in and out to the Gulf. SFWO employees who so far have answered the call and spent two to four weeks there include: **Dan Welsh, John Henderson, Toby McBride, Carolyn Marn, Janet Whitlock, Mark Littlefield, Rebecca Walther, Doug Weinrich, and Terry Adelsbach, Kevin Aceituno and Catrina Martin.**

Take Me to the State Fair!



July 14 - Aug 1

Want to work at the FWS booth? Contact Viola Taylor at the Sacramento FWO right away.

We Are the Pacific Southwest Region is an online employee publication produced by the Pacific Southwest Region's External Affairs Office, 2800 Cottage Way, Sacramento, Calif., 95825. Articles and photos were primarily incorporated from FWS Journal submissions. Questions regarding the newsletter can be sent to Erica Szlosek at erica_szlosek@fws.gov or by phone at (916) 978-6464.

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