

Friends Forward



Spring 2012

National Wildlife Refuge System
www.fws.gov/refuges

From the Chief “No Hope for Conservation Born of Fear”



Jim Kurth

Recently, the United States has faced its most severe economic crisis since the 1930s. That’s been reflected in the Refuge System budget, down about \$18 million this

fiscal year as compared to our budget in FY10. The President’s proposed FY13 budget would restore some of that cut—funding us at \$494.8 million.

Yet, even in the face of economic realities, the Refuge System has reasons to be optimistic. I am blown away by the fervor I see from refuge Friends organizations, which bring in new members each year, raise funds for special projects and help present enthralling programs. The growth of refuge volunteers and Friends groups over the past 30 years has been remarkable. If a job needs doing on a wildlife refuge, chances are good that a Friend is ready to help.

Now, we have to push ourselves to reach those who don’t know who we are or what we do. That may be the most important goal of the *Conserving the Future* implementation.

As detailed in the last issue of *Friends Forward*, the *Conserving the Future* Community Partnerships implementation team is moving forward with dispatch and

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Changing phenology of flowering trees and wildflowers may be an indicator of a changing climate.

Climate Change: What is Your Local Story?

“It is not the strongest of the species that survives, nor the most intelligent. It is the one that is most adaptable to change.” Refuge System climate change coordinator John Schmerfeld includes that quote, attributed to Charles Darwin, on every email he sends.

The number two recommendation in *Conserving the Future* calls for development of a climate change implementation plan for

the National Wildlife Refuge System. That puts Schmerfeld squarely in the conversation on three *Conserving the Future* implementation teams—science, planning and strategic growth.

Common to all three teams are issues of landscape-level conservation, vulnerability assessment and adaptation planning. “Implementing consistent adaptation strategies throughout the Refuge

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USFWS

New Division Chiefs

The Refuge System is adding two new faces to its Washington Office management team: **Marcia Pradines** will become chief of the Division of Visitor Services and Communications in late April; **Mendel Stewart** will take over as chief of the Division of Budget, Planning and Workforce in early summer.



Marcia Pradines

Pradines, deputy chief of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Division of Migratory Bird Management, has worked for the Service since 2008. She spent her early career in the

non-governmental sector. Stewart, a veteran of the Refuge System, is currently project leader at San Francisco Bay Refuge Complex. He has been with the Service since 1984.

Pradines worked as a vice president at the nonprofit Wildlife Habitat Council for more than a decade and was a director of the Pennsylvania Wildlife Center before she joined the federal government. While chief of the Branch of Bird Conservation, Pradines served with distinction on

the *Conserving the Future* Conservation Delivery core team, whose months-long work resulted in many of the 24 recommendations. Throughout her career, she has engaged partners and the NGO community and developed communications strategies on behalf of conservation. She holds an undergraduate degree in biology from the University of Pittsburgh and a master's degree in wildlife management from West Virginia University.

She loves whitewater kayaking, flyfishing, upland bird hunting and taking her springer spaniel to field trials.

Stewart took his first refuge manager position in 1985 at Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge in Florida, where, among other achievements, he recruited and trained a diverse volunteer corps that was only in its second year of existence. He went on to serve as refuge manager at Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge in Florida and as project leader at San Diego National Wildlife Refuge Complex in California.

Stewart is on the Urban Wildlife Refuge Initiative implementation

team, bringing his working experience to a *Conserving the Future* team that is at the crux of making wildlife refuges relevant to a diverse, youthful generation.



Mendel Stewart

He is also a veteran of the Washington Office, where he served from 1995 to mid-2000, an exhilarating era for the Refuge System as

Congress passed the National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act of 1997. Stewart crisscrossed the country, training Service employees in the details and implications of the Improvement Act. He holds an undergraduate degree in biology from Western Kentucky University and a master's degree in public administration from the University of Memphis. He recently helped establish and lead the Bay Area Ecosystem Climate Change Consortium.

Stewart, his wife, Kristin and his two daughters, Tori and Kylie, love the outdoors and look forward to new adventures on the East Coast. 🦋

New *Conserving the Future* Coordinator



Anna Harris

Anna Harris, a U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service economist, will oversee implementation of *Conserving the Future*, the 10-year strategic vision for the Refuge System.

She took over as the implementation coordinator on April 9.

Harris has been an economist with the Service since 2009, interpreting the National Survey of Fishing, Hunting and Wildlife-Associated Recreation. She has worked closely with a host of partners, including the Association of Fish and Wildlife Agencies and the State Organizations for Boating Access. She has been actively involved with Trout Unlimited and the National Wild Turkey Federation, and teaches fly fishing to breast cancer survivors

through the Casting for Recovery organization.

She holds an undergraduate degree in agribusiness management and rural development from West Virginia University and a master's degree in agricultural and applied economics from Virginia Tech. The author of numerous papers, Harris received the Unit Award for Excellence in Service from the Department of the Interior in 2010. 🦋

Conservation Initiatives Unveiled at White House Conference

President Obama joined Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar and other members of his Cabinet to advance several conservation and outdoor recreation initiatives at a White House Conference on Conservation on March 2.

Growing America's Outdoor Heritage and Economy brought together boaters, hunters, anglers, farmers, ranchers, small business owners, local governments, tribal leaders and other stakeholders in land conservation, historic preservation and outdoor recreation. Interior Secretary Salazar noted that, "People across the country are coming together to protect and preserve the places that nurture our souls, provide opportunities for recreation, and power our economies."

The Obama administration announced several new programs before and during the conference:

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Ducks Unlimited will work with the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission to focus resources on wildlife habitat in the Prairie Pothole region of the Northern Plains breeding grounds for most of the ducks in North America. Resources will be used to slow the rate at which native grasslands and wetlands are being converted to agriculture and other uses.
- A new National Water Trails System will increase access to water-based outdoor recreation, promoting tourism and encouraging community stewardship of local waterways. The Chattahoochee River Water Trail in Georgia is the first to join



Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge, FL

the new system. A designated water trail must provide:

- ◆ public access points for recreation and education,
- ◆ opportunities for communities to restore the health of local waterways,
- ◆ information about cultural, historic and natural features along the water trail, and
- ◆ a sustainable maintenance plan.

The Department of the Interior is accepting applications for other trails that could be added to the system. For more information, contact [Nathan Caldwell@fws.gov](mailto:Nathan_Caldwell@fws.gov) or 703-358-2205.

- The Departments of the Interior and Education will work together to use national wildlife refuges, national parks and other public lands as 21st century classrooms, in both rural and urban areas.

These programs are intended to improve environmental literacy, support learning outside the classroom and encourage local conservation partnerships. 



from friend to friend

share your
success
stories

UPPER MISSISSIPPI

It's an uncommon introduction to common species: a glossy, full color, 12-page pocket naturalist guide to birds, waterfowl, mammals and mussels, reptiles, fish and insects found on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge. Cortney White, a former STEP (Student Temporary Employment Program) employee, designed the guide with input from Friends of the Refuge Headwaters board members and funding from a National Fish and Wildlife Foundation grant.

Friends sold half of the first printing of 1,000 to other Friends groups along the river as well as to such outside organizations as the Minnesota Marine Art Museum and the National Mississippi River Museum and Aquarium in Dubuque, IA. The guides are being sold for \$5.99 at outreach events, refuge visitor centers and nature stores: 700 sold in the first four months.

Mary Stefanski, Winona District manager for the Upper Mississippi River Refuge, says the guides are perfect for the "Let's Go Outside" backpacks lent to families because they show easily identifiable images of wildlife people can expect to see. "It's eye-catching and it's great exposure for Friends," says Stefanski, noting that the Friends and refuge Web addresses—as well as a scannable code for the refuge Facebook page—are right on the back every guide.



Friends of the Refuge Headwaters helped produce a full-color pocket naturalist guide to common species found on the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.

NEW JERSEY

A partnership between Carneys Point Generating Plant and Friends of Supawna Meadows National Wildlife Refuge has given some Pennsville High School students a chance to have a rare outdoor field trip.

The local school system rejected a request from science teacher and Friends board member Bob Belding for field trip funds. "We felt that getting him funding would help his class and give the refuge a good image in the community," said Friends vice president Judy Oshipp. "The refuge had been vandalized

and littered recently and we thought we could give the young people a sense of pride and ownership of Supawna Meadows."

Carneys Point, a staunch supporter of several major Friends projects on the refuge, provided \$5,000 to pay for books, water testing kits, field guides and bus transportation for students in an environmental science class. Belding designed a curriculum and provides the on-site instruction so the field trip counts as classroom time; he also created a Science Club that could receive money from the Friends.

Belding plans to have students come to the refuge for half a day twice each year; the program started in spring 2011. Students measure evergreen and deciduous trees, identify migratory birds and their habitats, and collect soil and water samples. They also net and identify aquatic organisms before posting their data on charts back in the classroom.

"I have started a program of environmental monitoring that should last 10 years," says Belding. "The students gain ownership of the



High school students may catch sight of an indigo blue bunting on science-packed field trips to Supawna Meadows Refuge, NJ.

data, the project and eventually the refuge... they will learn so much more standing in an estuary than in a month in the classroom.”

“The high school is only about three miles from the refuge, but a shocking number of people don’t realize that a national wildlife refuge is in their township,” says Friends leader Judy Oshipp. “This helps give us a higher profile.”

MISSISSIPPI

It all started three years ago with a phone call from a young hunting/fishing enthusiast and student at Mississippi State University to Larry Box, then president of the Friends of Noxubee Refuge. Might the refuge have a day’s work for MSU’s Kappa Alpha fraternity pledges? You bet!

Ever since, about two dozen young men show up on a fall day when MSU isn’t playing football to assemble concrete benches, weed and mulch a native garden, clean trash from the lake shore and a stretch of highway that traverses the refuge, clear brush from hiking trails and algae from sidewalks. Half a dozen young men show up for a



Kappa Alpha fraternity pledges from Mississippi State University work at Noxubee National Wildlife Refuge, MS, one day each fall and spring.

second work day in the spring. The fraternity provides lunch and the Friends provide drinks, a short video about the refuge and a question-and-answer session (“Are there alligators on the refuge?” “How can I get a real job here?”)

“They’re very industrious workers,” says a grateful Box. “We have made the fraternity a sponsor and added them to our plaque of major donors.”

NEW JERSEY

By Dave Blood

From the wildlife drive on Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, the skyline of Atlantic City is clearly visible. This juxtaposition created an exciting opportunity for the Friends of Forsythe.

A fleet of privately-owned jitney mini-buses serves Atlantic City. When the jitneys were updated to newer, compressed natural gas-powered models, an owner/operator who lives near the refuge offered to donate an old vehicle to the Friends, making them the owners of an Atlantic City institution.

In the late fall 2011, the first two-hour tour of the refuge was led by a



Volunteer drive Marjo Atack heads out on a jitney tour of Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, NJ.

volunteer Master Naturalist and the bus was driven by a certified driver volunteer. Tours are scheduled every Saturday except during the summer, because the jitney air conditioning doesn’t work. “The first tour had one participant,” said Friends president Dave Blood. “Now we have a waiting list.” “Snowbirding at Forsythe” tours were especially popular. An additional tour was scheduled one Saturday to accommodate a Cub Scout pack.

The tours have attracted a range of interests: visitors who just moved to the area; tourists; families who came out of curiosity; and previous visitors wanting to learn more. People who might not have visited the refuge otherwise were attracted by having an interpreter on board to provide insights and answer questions, and it’s a really positive introduction to the refuge.

Dave Blood is president of the Friends of Forsythe. 

How You Can Make Geocaching Work

What started in 1972 as a Department of Defense project to help the military has become increasingly in demand for outdoor recreation. So how do you harness the popularity of Global Positioning Systems (GPS) technology to reach groups of people who otherwise might not come to wildlife refuges? Geocaching—carefully organized and monitored.

Geocaching is a high-tech scavenger hunt that is now being modified for refuges. Traditional geocaching consists of hiding and seeking a physical cache: coins, logbook and more. The cache location is pinpointed using GPS technology

and shared on a Web site such as *geocaching.com* for others to find.

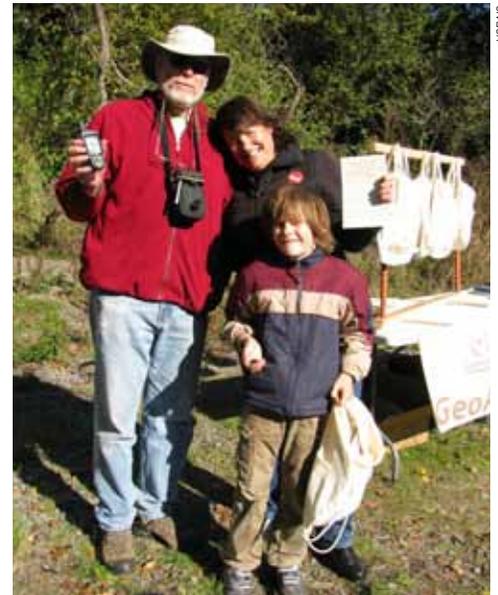
Burying, placing or removing a physical cache is prohibited on refuges because sensitive natural or cultural resources could be damaged. Wilderness areas pose a particular challenge. Although the use of GPS units within refuge wilderness is allowed, competitive public events or contests—such as a large, organized GPS geocaching event—are prohibited.

However, refuges and Friends groups have been creative in using virtual geocaching (*waymarking.com*) or earthcaching (*earthcache.org*). Typically, visitors obtain a list of clues to questions that can be answered by visiting waypoints on a refuge identified by GPS coordinates. Visitors who answer all the questions may receive a stamp, patch or other small prize.

Humboldt Bay National Wildlife Refuge, CA, incorporates Friends into one of its geocaching clues:

*N40° 41.1625 W 124° 12.3810
 The Friends of Humboldt Bay Refuge assists refuge staff in all functions, from leading walks to constructing benches like this one. They also help support the refuge financially through fundraising, paid memberships and grants. If you would like to join the Friends or share your knowledge and skills, please talk to staff at the refuge office.
Who made this bench? When was it built?

Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, WA, lends visitors a GPS device along with a small log and journal for two separate adventures—biology or archaeology. Families or school groups carry small backpacks containing objects that relate to



This family used a hand-held GPS device for a GeoAdventure at Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, WA.

each waypoint. As visitors stand outside the refuge's Cathlapotle Plankhouse, for example, they read a journal entry about Native American traditions and find in their backpack a small replica of the wooden wedge used to split huge cedars.

Young people who participate in the Ridgefield GeoAdventure can earn a Scout badges; it is also a popular activity for middle school field trips. Contact *Eric_Anderson@fws.gov*, instructional specialist at Ridgefield Refuge Complex, to get suggestions for creating similar programs. 🦋

Director Blogs and Tweets



What's a typical day like for U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dan Ashe? What does he think about the president's

budget day or the day he spent on Midway Atoll National Wildlife Refuge last December? Volunteer Danny Williams gives Ashe some tips on tweeting during last summer's Conserving the Future conference. Now he is blogging and tweeting regularly about all the issues and challenges, joys and journeys that confront him as the 16th director of the Service. You can find past and current blogs, plus videos, photos and tweets by clicking Dan Ashe's picture in the Director's Corner on the Service Web page at fws.gov. You can also follow @DirectorDanAshe on Twitter.

Summer of Paddling: 1 River, 10 States, 11 Friends Groups

The Mississippi River travels 2,400 miles through 10 states on its way to the Gulf of Mexico. “Along the Upper Mississippi every hour brings something new,” said Mark Twain, who coined his name from the term used to measure a safe depth for steamboats on the river. “There are crowds of odd islands, bluffs, prairies, hills, woods and villages—everything one could desire to amuse the children.”

His 19th century description is just as valid in the 21st century, especially during this year’s Summer of Paddling, a three-month celebration of America’s Great Outdoors filled with scores of recreational and stewardship opportunities for all ages and paddling abilities along the length of the river. At least 11 Friends organizations from Minnesota to Louisiana are partnering to plan and promote activities.

“When you have so many events with a mission everyone can agree on—like youth and getting people outdoors—it’s easy to bring in partners and give them a chance to show their colors,” said Mary Stefanski, manager of the Winona District of the Upper Mississippi River Refuge.

Friends of the Refuge Headwaters will co-sponsor a bike-and-paddle event topped off with lunch on National Trails Day June 2 when the new Aghaming Canoe Trail will be dedicated. It was developed by an Eagle Scout with guidance from refuge ranger Ed Lagace. Friends will provide refreshments and join the inaugural paddle. Through the year, Friends help map and maintain the refuge’s canoe trails—four of which have been submitted for possible



Multiple Friends groups are sponsoring paddling events during a Summer of Paddling along the Upper Mississippi River.

designation as National Recreation Trails. Friends president Todd Paddock is also working with the new LaCrosse chapter of a statewide nonprofit organization called Kids and Mentors Outdoors to co-sponsor another summer paddling event.

Other Activities

Earlier this year, Stewards of the Upper Mississippi River launched a new Junior Stewards group for third to eighth graders: 16 youngsters come to the refuge every Saturday, usually with their parents, to “really develop their exploration skills and connect with the resource,” says refuge visitor services manager Pam Steinhaus. The young Friends-in-training will explore the backwaters of the river by canoe early in July, sharing stories of their adventures with refuge rangers. Musician Erica Wheeler will turn their experiences

into a song to be performed at an evening concert.

Friends of Pool 9 and 10 are planning Mississippi River Adventure Days, encouraging people to post a pledge on the Summer of Paddling Web site or Facebook page:

- Tex Hawkins: “I pledge to paddle in each pool of the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge.”
- Jeff C.: “I pledge to paddle with my 4 & 2 year old sons... Fostering a love of the outdoors and environmental stewardship can never start too early.”

Visit Summer of Paddling at www.sop2012.org/. 

Climate Change: What is Your Local Story?—Continued from page 1

System will be challenging,” says Schmerfeld, “because refuges are not experiencing climate change uniformly across the continent. Perhaps the greatest challenges will occur at inland refuges where impacts may be subtle or slower to resolve.”

In terms of growing the Refuge System strategically, decisions about where to purchase land or encourage easements should take into consideration potential changes in species ranges and habitat. Along the Atlantic flyway, for example, coastal freshwater habitat is the most imperiled by sea level rise and most favored by waterfowl. How should refuges plan?

Coastal refuges are already dealing with sea level rise caused by warming temperatures. A new report called *Surging Seas* from the nonprofit organization Climate Central says the sea has risen eight inches globally during the last century. “Sea level rise is not some distant problem that we can just let our children deal with. The risks are imminent and serious,” said report lead author Ben Strauss of Climate



American white pelicans arrive sooner each spring at Chase Lake National Wildlife Refuge, ND, a possible impact of climate change that leaves chicks vulnerable to spring storms.

Central. The Surging Seas Web site includes a map showing risk zones for 3,000 coastal towns, cities, counties and states.

Adaptation, mitigation and engagement are the three pillars of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Climate Strategy. Schmerfeld will be identifying ways to address each pillar in the next round of

Comprehensive Conservation Plans (CCPs) that each refuge is required to complete.

Friends most directly enter the picture under engagement. Friends can work to reduce their own carbon footprint and that of their organization. Friends can also work in their local communities, collaborating with refuge staff to explain management determinations, providing transparency about challenges and tough decisions.

“Make it local, make it relevant,” advises Schmerfeld. “What is your local story? How is climate change affecting your community? What are your local problems and your solutions?”

More on the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Climate Change Strategy at fws.gov/home/climatechange/strategy.html.

The Service has some information tools you can use to communicate about climate change: fws.gov/home/climatechange/toolkit.html

Surging Seas report and map at <http://sealevel.climatecentral.org/surgingseas/>

From the Chief—Continued from page 1

real insight in developing and nurturing active and vibrant Friends groups.

I attended the Community Partnerships implementation team’s face-to-face meeting earlier this year. In fact, I attended each of the nine *Conserving the Future* implementation team meetings, and here’s what I found across the board: enthusiasm, creativity, stick-to-it-ness. Out of those meetings and further refinements came the work plans you can see online by mid-April at Americaswildlife.org.

March 2 gave us another reason for optimism: the White House

Conference on Conservation, which brought together about 700 community partners, farmers and ranchers, outdoor enthusiasts and private industry representatives. President Obama quoted from “The Farmer as a Conservationist,” a 1939 Aldo Leopold essay that I didn’t readily recall, but is well worth reading.

So let me leave you with a quote from the essay: “Our present skill in the care of mechanical engines did not arise from fear lest they fail to do their work. Rather was it born of curiosity and understanding. Prudence never kindled

a fire in the human mind; ‘I have no hope for conservation born of fear’.”

“No hope for conservation born of fear.” Not a problem.

Those who assembled *Conserving the Future* brooked no fear of failure. Nor do the nine *Conserving the Future* implementation teams.

As the Refuge System works with Friends and others to implement our vision, we are making progress. Follow the news at Americaswildlife.org. Let us know what you think by emailing conservingthefuture@fws.gov.

Q&A send us your questions

What is capacity-building?

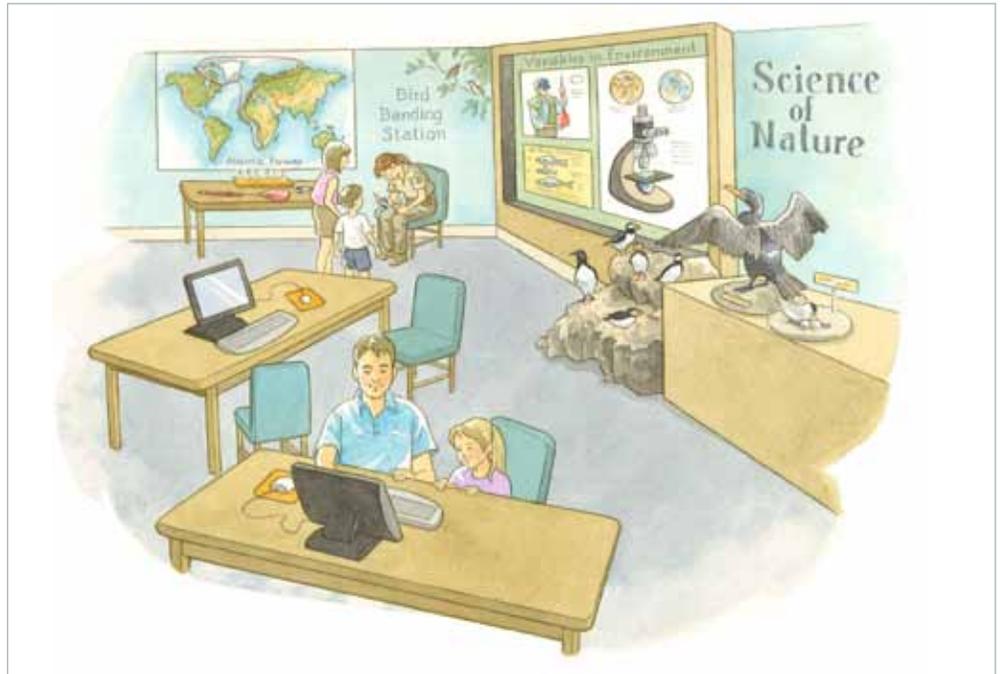
By Joanna Webb

This year's National Wildlife Refuge Friends Grant Program focuses on start-up and capacity-building projects, but sometimes Friends struggle to come up with innovative proposals because the term "capacity building" is not well understood.

Start-up projects assist with formative and/or initial operating support while capacity-building projects strengthen established refuge Friends organizations by addressing a specific need. Examples of start-up projects include initial membership drives, tuition for nonprofit management training programs, brochure and newsletter development, logo design, office equipment, or consultant fees to help develop a mission and strategic plan.

Capacity-building projects strengthen your organization, and might cover consultation fees for strategic, business, marketing and board plans; tuition for skill-building training courses at the National Conservation Training Center or through a local program; developing a new outreach event or exhibit that expands your ability to serve more people; a targeted membership drive among minority groups in the community; nature store start-up expenses; purchasing office equipment; creating a professional-looking Web site; or creating a portfolio to fundraise for special projects.

The Friends of Maine Seabird Islands received a capacity-



Friends of Maine Seabird Islands used a Refuge Friends grant to create a portfolio of sketches to encourage donors to fund particular areas of the new visitor center.

building grant in 2011 to develop a fundraising portfolio to engage partners (local individuals, businesses and foundations) in development of new visitor center exhibits and educational displays.

Building a strong capacity-building proposal requires a project that 1) strengthens an organization's business operations, fundraising, community involvement, partnerships, volunteer and member development, or infrastructure; and 2) has measureable, sustainable results that address a need.

A good example is a membership expansion project for which the Natural History Association of Cabeza Prieta in Arizona received a 2011 Refuge Friends grant. The association implemented a membership-based, multicultural Outdoor Adventure Camp to educate young people about responsible stewardship while expanding Friends membership to include all the campers.

The Refuge Friends Grant Program will again provide competitive seed grants (\$1,500-\$5,000) twice this year for start-up and capacity-building projects. The first round of awards will be announced on June 21; the second round is in September, with dates to be determined. Grants will not fund printing, political advocacy, travel, staff salaries, nonprofit filings, or food and beverages.

The best way to come up with capacity-building projects is to know and understand the needs of your organization and your refuge. Then develop a project that will help meet one of the needs. Strong capacity-building grants connect the organization's vision to its goals, its goals to its plans, its plans to its actions, and its actions to results.

Joanna Webb is national Friends and partners coordinator for the Refuge System. 

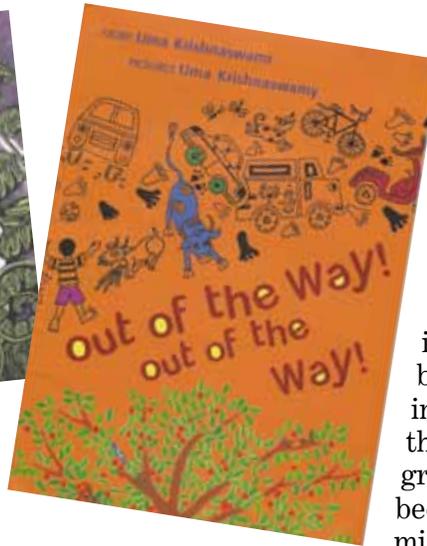
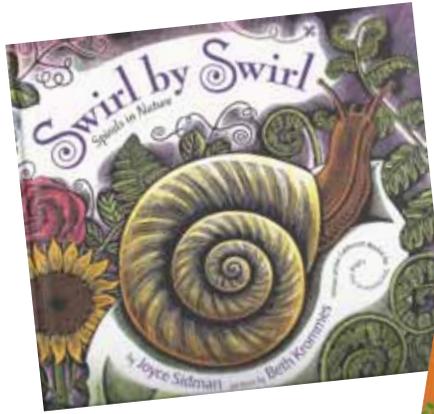
The Book Shelf

Swirl by Swirl: Spirals in Nature

By Joyce Sidman,
illustrated by Beth
Krommes (Houghton
Mifflin, 2011)

“A spiral is a
snuggling shape,”
writes Newbery
Honor author Joyce
Sidman in *Swirl
by Swirl: Spirals
in Nature*. With

scratchboard illustrations in deep earth tones,
Caldecott winner Beth Krommes shows spiraling
hedgehogs and snails, fur in a burrow, unfurling ferns,
ram’s horns and breaking ocean waves. They elegantly
prove their point that “spirals occur over and over in
nature because they work so well in so many ways.”



Out of The Way! Out of the Way!

By Uma Kirshnaswami,
illustrated by Uma
Kirshnaswami
(Groundwood Books, 2012)

The village looks
Indian, but the message
is universal. A young
boy protects a seedling
in the middle of a busy
thoroughfare. The seedling
grows into a giant tree which
becomes a meeting place in the
midst of urban chaos.

Sometimes the drivers /stop and stay awhile...and listen.
A simply delightful celebration of the need to save a
tree where we can stop and listen in the midst of hectic
lives: an opportunity provided so perfectly by national
wildlife refuges.

Calendar

May 12

**International Migratory Bird
Day—20th Anniversary**
Request discounted materials for
special events at bday@birdday.org
www.birdday.org

May 18

Endangered Species Day
www.fws.gov/endangered/index.html

June 2

National Trails Day
[www.americanhiking.org/
national-trails-day/](http://www.americanhiking.org/national-trails-day/)

June 2 – 10

**National Fishing and
Boating Week**
www.takemefishing.org

June 9

Get Outdoors Day (Fee Free Day)
www.nationalgetoutdoorsday.org/

September 29

**National Public Lands Day
(Fee Free Day)**
www.publiclandsday.org

October 14 – 20

**National Wildlife Refuge Week
The Big Sit!** <http://bit.ly/yfnjPt>
or Michael_Carlo@fws.gov

Fee Free Day October 14

Note: National Wildlife Refuge
Week is the second full week in
October.

Science Awards

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has bestowed its highest science leadership awards on the **Kenai National Wildlife Refuge, AK, biology program; Jeff Williams** of Alaska Maritime National Wildlife Refuge; and geneticist **Jeffrey Olsen** in the Service Conservation Genetics Laboratory, AK.

The eight biologists on the Kenai Refuge team received the Rachel Carson group award for consistently leading from the field in developing a scientific approach to deal with climate change. As part of its plan to inventory and monitor biodiversity, the team has documented 1,069 species on the refuge, including one insect family and five insect species new to Alaska, two new sedges for the refuge, and an expansion of the range for Hammond's flycatcher.

Olsen received the Rachel Carson individual award for his varied and innovative work emphasizing genetic diversity, species identification and estimation of effective population size.

Olsen's research applies state-of-the-art genetic methods to answer questions related to ecology, conservation and resource management, often at a landscape scale beyond the boundaries of a single refuge.

Jeff Williams, who received the Science Leadership award for exceptional scientific accomplishments, is responsible for inventory, monitoring and research on the 3.3-million-acre Aleutian Islands Unit of Alaska Maritime Refuge. He is also the chief scientist aboard the largest research vessel in the Service, the *M/V Tiglaâ*, and has collaborated with an incredible array of scientists investigating the marine and terrestrial resources around the Aleutian Islands.

Along with the honors, they will each receive \$50,000 to be used at their field stations to support additional scientific work.

Recovery Champions

The Service presented 2011 Recovery Champion awards to

56 teams and nine individuals for their work to conserve endangered species, including two teams and two individuals working on national wildlife refuges:

- The **piping plover team** working at national wildlife refuges along the Atlantic Ocean from Maine through Virginia to protect more than 16 percent of the Atlantic breeding population in the United States;
- Alaska Region wildlife biologist **Susi Miller** and Arctic National Wildlife Refuge visitor services supervisor **Jennifer Reed** working to conserve polar bears through partnerships with Alaska Native Villages; and
- The recovery team that released 24 endangered **Nihoa millerbirds** on Laysan Island in the Papahānaumokuākea Marine National Monument, culminating decades of research and planning to save a species from extinction.



Who's Listening?



Todd Paddock

A Refuge Friend never knows where he can deliver a message.

Todd Paddock of the Friends of the Refuge Headwaters for the Upper Mississippi

River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge, WI, was flying home after having joined several other refuge Friends to testify before the House Appropriations Subcommittee on Interior, Environment and Related Agencies about the proposed FY 2013

budget. He noticed the familiar face of a congressman from Wisconsin.

So Paddock grabbed a business card and jotted some quick facts about the refuge—acreage, 300 bird species, 100 fish species, 3.7 million visitors per year—along with four examples of underfunding, like no fisheries biologist and no forester. “I summed it by asking him to please support adequate funding for the National Wildlife Refuge System,” Paddock reports.

He stepped into the aisle behind the congressman to have a moment

of conversation and give him the business card. “I told him that I had written a message concerning an important national wildlife refuge.” Turns out the congressman knew of the refuge because he sometimes hunted and fished there.

The familiar face? Paul Ryan, Republican of Wisconsin and chair of the House Budget Committee. “He’s probably one of the least likely members to support additional federal funding,” says Paddock, “but you never know.”





STANDARD PRESORT
POSTAGE AND FEES
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U.S. DEPARTMENT OF THE
INTERIOR
PERMIT G-77

Friends Forward

USFWS-NWRS
4401 North Fairfax Dr.
Room 634C
Arlington, VA 22203-1610
www.fws.gov/refuges

Save Vanishing Species

The U.S. Postal Service has issued a special stamp to benefit elephants, rhinoceros, tigers, great apes and marine turtles as part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service *Wildlife Without Borders* program. The stamp is the fourth in the program and will be on sale in post offices nationwide for at least two years. The price of these semipostal stamps is slightly more than the regular cost of postage. By April, more than eight million stamps had been sold, raising more than \$1 million dollars to support global conservation efforts directed at targeted endangered species.

The Service is working with the Multinational Species Conservation Fund Coalition to promote sales of the stamp, which gives the public an easy way to help wildlife around the world. The MSCF Coalition includes wildlife organizations, zoos, aquariums, circuses, veterinarians, outdoor enthusiasts and wildlife protection groups. 



Friends Forward

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