



Willapa Tidings

Newsletter of the Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge • Vol. 3, No. 3 • Spring 2003

Spartina Control Plan Ready

By Kelly Rupp

Funding in the amount \$1 million dollars for spartina control on the Willapa Bay Refuge was recently approved in the latest federal budget. These funds will be used this summer to tackle over 3,000 acres of the most infested areas of the refuge - over five times as much area as has been treated in past years.



Spartina alterniflora

Commencing in June, the treatment program will begin with the mud flats at the southernmost reaches of Willapa Bay. By summer's end, the program will reach all infested areas in the southern and eastern extremities of the bay and Long Island Sound. This year's treatment will be followed by five additional years of summer spraying that will realistically give Refuge managers the upper hand in spartina control. "We might actually do what hasn't been done-put spartina on its heels," notes Charlie Stenvall, Program Manager for the Willapa Refuge Complex. The Refuge plans a six-year program that proceeds from south to north, methodically eradicating spartina throughout the bay. The early years of the plan are among the most critical. The objective is to reach all spartina for initial treatment by the third year. Eliminating spartina from the south bay subregion is the goal of the first phase.

The overall management plan for spartina control is jointly authored by USFWS Willapa Refuge management with support from the Washington State Department of Agriculture, Willapa Bay-Grays Harbor Oyster Growers Association, Pacific Coastal Shellfish Growers Association, Coastal Resources Alliance, and the Willapa Bay Water Resources Council.

Ongoing federal and state funding will be needed to continue the management program. The Friends need to continue our outreach to the public and to our legislators to help educate and inform others about spartina, the #1 enemy of our refuge!

Plover Habitat Restoration Starts

by Marie Fernandez, Refuge wildlife biologist

On February 7th, the 2003 Snowy Plover Restoration Project got off to a good start when Leonard Peet of Nutter Corporation (Vancouver, WA) began driving his John Deere 750 Dozer slowly up the beach. Leonard had plenty of time to admire the sweeping landscape before him where land meets the sea.

By February 26th, thanks to Leonard's attention to detail and his expertise with the bulldozer, six acres of refuge covered with introduced American beachgrass (*Ammophila breviligulata*) and European beachgrass (*Ammophila arenaria*) were returned to their former landscape when Leadbetter Point consisted of short rolling dunes mostly free of vegetation. This

topography is the historical nesting habitat preferred by the threatened Western Snowy Plover.

Portions of the high foredune were breached with the bulldozer, creating cuts approximately 20 feet wide. These cuts will not only allow plover chicks hatched in the restoration area to travel to and from the beach, but also salt water may be carried into the restoration area during storm surges, thus adding yet another weapon in the fight against re-invasion by exotic beachgrasses. After Leonard completed the cuts for each section, he cleared the acreage behind the foredune of its cover of exotic beachgrass and carefully shaped the ground as much as possible following natural contours.

In the next phase (weather permitting) herbicide will be applied to beachgrass sprouts and natural washes will be enlarged to create more habitat for the nesting plovers. Herbicide treatment will occur prior to nest initiation by the plovers. The refuge staff hopes that the enlarged restoration area will attract at least one nesting plover pair. Nesting

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already occurred last year in a much smaller (1 acre) restored area.

In addition, refuge staff will transport and spread a dump truck load of oyster-shell in patches in the restoration area.



The shell was generously donated by Mark Wiegardt of Taylor Resources (Thanks Mark!). The oystershell will aid in the concealment of any nests and potentially reduce problems associated with blowing sand.

Leonard Peet of Nutter Corporation readies the snowy plover nesting ground at Leadbetter Point. (Photo by Bev Arnoldy)

Friends Members Attend Centennial Conference

by Kelly Rupp

Willapa Friends attended the Centennial conference of the National Wildlife Refuge Association in Washington D.C. in early February. The Willapa Friends were represented by Rudy and Winona Schuver, Bev Arnoldy, and Kelly Rupp. Willapa NWR was among approximately 120 refuges represented at the conference, which was attended by over 400 refuge supporters from 46 states. Co-sponsored by the NWRA and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, this conference celebrated the centennial birthday of the national refuge system. Sessions focused on enhancing the refuge system to ensure a healthy future in its next one hundred years. Our special concerns with invasive species at Willapa were highlighted during a well-attended conference breakout session, where Rudy Schuver co-lead a

(From left to right) Friends Presidents, Bev Arnoldy of Willapa NWR and Jim Maul of Ridgefield NWR meet with US Representative - 3rd District Brian Baird during the 2nd Annual Friends Conference in Washington DC. (Photo by Rudy Schuver)



panel discussion and shared details of Willapa's fight with spartina. Willapa's long-running battle with spartina and our comprehensive management plan for eradication was recognized by attendees as indicative of the urgency with which attention needs be directed to invasives management. Gail Norton, Secretary of the Interior, underscored the importance of invasives' eradication in her presentation to the conference, citing it as one of the Administration's top priorities relative to the refuge system.

While in Washington, our Willapa contingent visited the Capitol Hill offices of Senators' Patty Murray and Maria Cantwell and Representatives' Brian Baird and Norm Dicks. The senior staffs in all visited offices were well briefed on Willapa NWR and appreciative of the Friends ongoing advocacy of the various fiscal and policy issues that affect the Refuge. All the staffs pledged their support to the (then-pending) appropriations budget items for spartina control and land acquisition; our thanks to all our legislators!

Willapa Tidings

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Sandy Profeta, *Editor*

To request an address change, to contribute items of interest (including photos), or to write articles for publication, please contact Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

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Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge

A nonprofit 501(c)(3) corporation, Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge was established in July 2000 to provide support and assistance to Refuge programs and to enhance awareness and appreciation of the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge.

Board of Directors

Bev Arnoldy, *President*
Ocean Park, WA

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Kelly Rupp
Fund-raising Committee
Ocean Park, WA

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Ocean Park, WA

Melissa Herrold
Ilwaco, WA

President's Letter

The Friends group began 2003 with new board members and new officers, Michal Miller as Secretary, Kelly Rupp as Fund Raising Chair, and myself as President. Former President, Rudy Schuver remains on the board as our Vice-President and Winona Schuver, Melissa Herrold, Joanne Jambor, Bette Arne, and Suzy Whitley continue to serve as vital board members. The 2002 board worked incredibly hard in supporting our education and awareness programs and with the funding for spartina control. A special thanks goes to Rudy and Winona, who were instrumental in starting the Friends group in September, 2000 and have continued their unwavering support throughout.

Earlier this year, I attended the Second Annual Friends Conference in Washington DC. With three other board members, we met with Senator Murray, Senator Cantwell, and Representative Baird and their staff on Capitol Hill. At that time, both legislative branches were in conference to resolve the differences between the two versions of the 2003 appropriations bill. While there was every indication that we would receive most of the money allocated for spartina control, budget negotiations were still taking place. We thanked them for their support, but urged them to make sure that these proposed funds would not be cut. Shortly after our visit, we were informed that the spartina control funding was set at \$1 million -- a clear example of how organizations such as the Friends can impact what happens on Capitol Hill! (See article "Friends Members Attend Centennial Conference".)

The board is in planning meetings to define long term goals and the activities that meet those goals. We have great programs already in place, but we would like to extend our activity list. We need more people to get involved to help us realize our goals. I urge you to attend our board meetings which are open to the public. What better way to get involved in the planning stages of our proposed activities! I look forward to an exciting and fulfilling year working with a great board of directors and meeting new people like you! -- Beverly Arnoldy



(From left to right) Member Alan Miller and new board members Michal Miller, Bev Arnoldy, and Kelly Rupp join Willapa Refuge biologist, Marie Fernandez (center) on Leadbetter Point during a recent Refuge tour for new board members. (Photo by Bev Arnoldy)

Calendar of Events

April - June 2003

Refuge Friends Activities

To participate in any of these activities, contact the Friends volunteer coordinator, Suzy Whitley, 360-642-2239.

- Board meetings April 17, May 17, and June 19, 7:00 pm, PUD Building, 95th & Sandridge Road, Long Beach. Open to the public.
- Fourth education program - field trip to the refuge
- Nature walks on Refuge to commemorate the National Wildlife Refuge Centennial
- Waterfowl and shorebird monitoring
- Booth display at Gay's Harbor Festival, Nacotta Festival, Garlic Festival
- Trail maintenance work parties

Refuge Staff Activities

The Refuge will be working on these projects:

- Bog loosestrife control
- Shorebird and waterfowl monitoring
- Snowy plover monitoring
- Marbled murrelet monitoring
- Brant monitoring
- Headquarters shop rehabilitation
- Tree planting
- Amphibian monitoring
- Wetland management

- New membership
- Renewal

Membership Form

Invite a friend to become a member!

Make checks payable to: Friends of Willapa NWR

Send to: Friends of Willapa National Wildlife Refuge
PO Box 1130
Ocean Park, WA 98640

Name: _____
Address: _____
City, State, Zip: _____
Phone: _____
E-mail: _____

Volunteer interests

- Special Projects and events
- Community outreach
- Environmental education
- Membership recruitment
- Fund raising
- Public relations
- Habitat restoration

Amount Enclosed:

- \$10 Individual Membership
- \$15 Family Membership
- \$50 Patron Membership
- \$100 Benefactor Membership
- \$500 or over Advocate Membership

All dues and donations are fully tax deductible.

- Trail and campground maintenance
- Shorebird and waterfowl monitoring
- Fish and amphibian monitoring



Meet our New *Willapa Tidings* Editor

by *Bev Arnoldy*

Beginning with this spring issue, Sandy Profeta, a new Friends member from Portland, OR, takes over as editor of the *Willapa Tidings* newsletter.



Sandy is an accomplished technical writer with a strong journalism background. She is also an avid birder and environmentalist. She can be seen on occasion

on Leadbetter Point and the Lewis Unit with bird book and binoculars in hand. Thanks, Sandy, for taking this project on. We look forward to your contributions to the newsletter!

The Friends group also wants to thank Michael McDowell for two and a half years as our newsletter editor. He has done an extraordinary job of laying out and editing our newsletter since its

inception in the Fall of 2000. Thank you, Michael, for a truly fine job!

Michael will continue to be our Friends Web site webmaster and is taking on a new role as e-mail administrator. He will be setting up an e-mail list so we can send our members up-to-date announcements on events and volunteer opportunities.

Refuge Holds Centennial Event

On Monday, March 17th, Willapa National Wildlife Refuge celebrated the Centennial Anniversary of the National Wildlife Refuge System by hosting the Time Capsule / Pot Luck Lunch / Salmon Trail Design Selection event. Refuge staff, Friends members, and other invited guests were in attendance. The next issue of *Willapa Tidings*, Summer 2003, will include a full write-up of the event.

NEW MEMBERS (Since 1-1-2003)

Benefactor Membership

William & Nancy Rosenfeld

Family Membership

John & Janet Charlton
John & Sally Gould
R. Allan & Anne Kronenberg
Warren Olson & Janice Harding
Sandra Profeta
Royce & Linda Rotmark
Harold & Linda Schleef

Charles & Marilyn Windham
Sharon & Charles Mills
Rita & Earl Doane
Steve & Mabsie Walters

Individual Membership

Mrs. E. Stonebreaker
Nancy McKimens

MANY THANKS TO OUR BUSINESS MEMBERS FOR THEIR SUPPORT

The Bank of the Pacific—Aberdeen Branch

The Bank of the Pacific—Naselle-Grays River Valley Branch

Bay Center Mariculture, Inc.

Charles Nelson Guest House, Ltd.

Coast Seafoods Co.

Ekone Oyster Co.

Herrold Oyster & Fish Co.

KeyBank National Association

Lion's Paw Inn

Dr. Kenneth D. Nanson, DMD

Northern Oyster Co.

Oysterville Sea Farms

Pacific Oyster Co.

Sandpoint Clam Farms, Inc.

Sea Tow Portland/Vancouver

Sheldon Marine Enterprises

Shorebank Enterprise, Pacific

Sid's Supermarket

The Shoalwater Restaurant

Lighthouse Realty

STAMP

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