

Turnbull Wildlife Refuge

Friends Newsletter



Messages from the President by Lorna Kropp

FOT Board/ Rabe Trust House / Long Range Planning ideas

The Friends of Turnbull Board of Directors held an expanded meeting in February to brainstorm ideas to develop with the anticipated substantial gift of Rabe Trust. The mission and purpose of FOT is:

The Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge is a nonprofit organization that advocates for and supports the mandate of the refuge to protect and enhance wildlife and their habitats through education, research, habitat preservation and restoration and compatible public uses.

Projects which might be undertaken will fit our mission; and will “seed” our efforts to raise money through donations and not supplant our fund-raising and charitable giving efforts. Board members, Refuge staff and several additional FOT members attended the potluck meeting at Wren Pierson Community Center. Several small groups formed to brainstorm ideas and then shared in the whole group. The following is a summary of the ideas suggested.

Brainstorming Session in February, 2020

Ideas generated for consideration to enhance Environmental Education programs and the Refuge potentially with support from the Rabe Trust gift.

Biological program equipment

- 5 wildlife cameras at \$500 each = \$2500
- 2. iPad minis GPS receivers for noxious weeds program \$800 each = \$1600

Environmental Education program

- Scopes for pond, stream and water studies
- Nets
- Additional Taxidermy mounts for EE program/ Classroom

Refuge Projects

- Kepple Lake Overlook
- Stubblefield Trail improvements (wait for Public Use Review*)

Friends Equipment/Classroom enhancement

- Digital projector for use in Classroom and FOT programs
- Environmental Education Day Camp in Summer;

Set aside a major portion for investment for FOT future projects

- Seed money for annual EE Intern support
- Seed money to leverage grants for larger projects
- Research grants for graduate students: Annual \$1000 grant for research on the Refuge

Rabe Trust House

On March 1, 2020, the house was vacated to ready it for the real estate market. We solicited, with help from the Century 21 Property Management company, bids for painting and replacing flooring throughout the house, plus repairs necessary after use as a rental property for many years without substantial upgrades. The chosen contractor (Belgarde Construction, LLC) began work at the end of March. The FOT Board-appointed Task Force agreed to tackle the outside of the house and yard, which also showed signs of neglect. A group of four people, led by John Barber (John, Andrew Bennett, Molly Kennington, and Lorna Kropp) met on Saturday, March 21st, to carry many

(Cont. on p. 2)

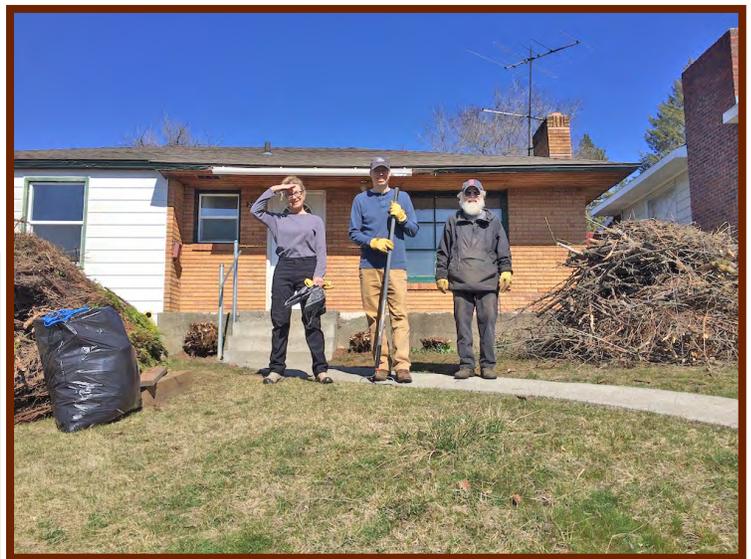
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branches and green waste, along with trash and junk to the front of the house for removal by a hauling company. We are hoping that the completion of the project will come together as the gradual re-opening of commerce following the pandemic happens.

April 10 update:

The house cleanup has been completed, with fresh paint and floors. It will go on the market as soon as the real estate business opens. Located in the NW quadrant of Spokane near Audubon Park, this house, with two bedrooms up, two more rooms down and two baths will be a great starter home. It is built into a hill, with entrance into the lower level and backyard terraced into three levels up. It has lots of potential and friendly neighbors for a new owner.



**Visit our great website!
www.fotnwr.org**

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Nature Store opening delayed by Pandemic Stay Home Social Distancing Order

The FOT Nature Store Management Team got a good start in ordering and organizing the tasks for beginning our season (normally April – October); however, all is on hold until the “stay at home” order is lifted. When the store re-opens, you will find the popular Moose collage T-shirt, introduced last year, in new colors, and in a kids’ version as well. Check out the new look:

We encourage you to visit the store on your excursions to the Refuge, and to consider joining the ranks of store volunteers. Volunteers contribute 2.5 hours per shift. There are four shifts per weekend and four weekends per month. Our goal is to have a cadre of 16-20 trained volunteers. We also would like to have the store available on some weekdays.

The Nature Store provides a special service to our greater community with the items we offer for sale. In addition to T-shirts, sweatshirts, and hats, we have books for bird watchers, for kids, and for teachers and others who want to find out more about nature, the environment, wildlife, birds, and our region. We also have jewelry, coffee/tea mugs, postcards, and photos. Volunteering is fun and helpful to visitors as well as augmenting funds for Friends programs. We provide training and coaching for using the sales iPad Square system. To apply as a volunteer, go to our website and then the Membership page (under About Us) to download a volunteer application --

<http://www.fotnwr.org/VolunteerSignupform.pdf>

or

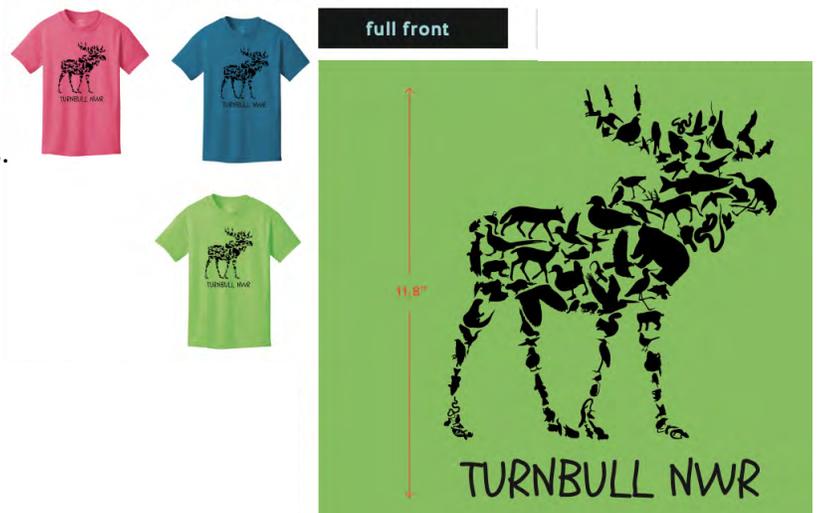
email: activities@fotnwr.org



Adult colors

Kid's colors

The moose graphic is on the front for both shirts.



Refuge Happenings

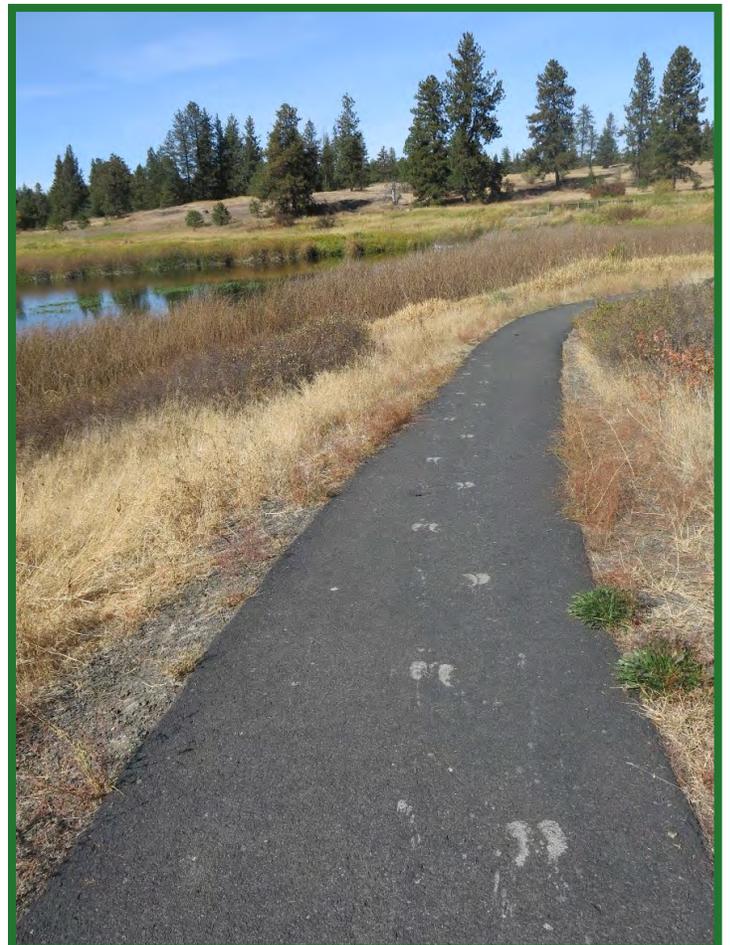
by **Sandy Rancourt**
Visitor Services Manager

In the Fall newsletter article, I mentioned that every year seems to pass by more quickly. Perhaps I spoke too soon. Since Covid-19, time seems to be passing uncomfortably slower these days. Although weather has not been a deterrent for schools participating in Turnbull's Environmental Education Program in the past, the virus has had a devastating toll on every aspect of communities throughout the world. Wildlife, however, seems to be faring better than people in the places we have set aside for them, an important lesson for all on just why that may be. A long time ago, a very wise person suggested that I choose the following quote for my high school yearbook; "All the darkness in the world cannot extinguish the light of one small candle." This quote seems especially appropriate at this time. The light from that candle will assure that life will go on, and this will pass. Until that time comes, I have no doubt that I speak for all at Turnbull wishing the very best health to each of you and your families during this trying time.

Since this article is supposed to be about the winter happenings at Turnbull, here is a much shorter report of what we did before the onset of our new reality.



With Turnbull's gates closed, wildlife explore a whole new and much quieter world. (S. Rancourt)



Moose tracks. (S. Rancourt)



Of things to come. (S. Rancourt)

Environmental Education and Outreach

Winter Outreach Program & Science Fairs

Starting in mid-November, Turnbull presents its Winter Outreach Program in which our facilitators travel to local schools and provide up to 11 age-appropriate environmental education programs. AmeriCorps members, volunteers and refuge staff presented topics covering endangered species, owls, habitat, wetlands, adaptations, domestic vs wild animals, birds, crayfish dissection, animal defenses, animal tracks, and mammals. Even though a few weeks of winter outreach programs were cancelled because of the pandemic, more than 3,500 students were able to participate. An additional 1,000 children and adults learned about Turnbull, the National Wildlife Refuge System, and wildlife and habitats at several science fairs at which the refuge hosted an information and interactive booth. Posters and other fun take-homes were provided. These included Sunrise, Otis Orchards, Holmes and Longfellow Elementary schools.

A few science fairs, Earth Day events and senior tours that we normally host during spring break were cancelled. One of the most disappointing cancellations of course was our spring field trips. There is nothing quite like getting the students outdoors in a natural setting to really show them what wildlife and habitat is all about. Turnbull is an ideal setting for this activity, and our staff facilitators do a pretty good job.

AmeriCorps members Katii Abell and Erik Lewis staff Turnbull's booth at Sunrise Elementary Science Fair (S. Rancourt)





4th grade students from Trent Elementary listen to a power point presentation on the Create a Creature Program. (S. Rancourt)

Volunteer Program

Riparian Restoration

Projects that were scheduled for early spring were temporarily put on hold. Before the shutdown, Jim Gladden, who needed 40 hours of volunteer service for the master hunter program, completed a major project. Jim has volunteered at the refuge previously, and his completed projects were excellent, so we were happy to have him return. Jim removed $\frac{1}{4}$ mile of deer fence and posts at the oxbow planting site south of Middle Pine Lake. This was a difficult project. The fence was overgrown with reed canary grass, an aggressive invasive species, and the posts were well settled in the ground after many years. When he finished, Jim helped us with another project that we have been working on for the past couple of years. Jim removed hardware cloth cages from several individual trees that needed to be released in the Pine Creek Riparian Unit. After the hardware cloth cages were removed, Jim replaced them with large cages to protect the willow trees from beaver.



Master Hunter James Gladden finishes up with the fence removal project on the oxbow south of Middle Pines (S. Rancourt)



The finished project. (S. Rancourt)

Friends of Turnbull NWR
P.O. Box 294
Cheney, WA 99004

The Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, a nonprofit organization, supports the mandate of the refuge to protect and enhance wildlife and their habitats through education, research, habitat preservation and restoration.

Got email? Add it to your membership form for quick activity updates!

Membership Application

YES! I want to support the Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge and its programs with my membership.

Name _____
Address _____
City, State, and Zip _____
Daytime Phone _____
E-mail _____

Annual Membership: (Circle one)

Individual \$15
Family \$25
Business/Group \$35
Patron \$100
Benefactor \$500
Donation \$ _____
Endowment Fund Donation \$ _____
Amount Enclosed _____

New _____ Renewal _____

I would like to volunteer _____
Nature Store _____
Committee _____
Environmental Education _____
Where needed _____

My check is enclosed payable to
Friends of Turnbull N.W.R.
P.O. Box 294
Cheney WA 99004