Turnbull Wildlife Refuge
Friends Newsletter

Friends of Turnbull
Winter 2024

by Lorna Kropp

President's Report:
As you all know, the times and current administration in the other Washington are bringing uncertainty to the budget at the Refuge so needs and requests have been higher than ever before. The FOT Board set a goal for meetings in November and December to discuss and determine how we would best respond to the long and varied list of potential projects on the Refuge. The new policy statement is:

> The mission of the Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge (FOTNWR) is "To advocate for and support the mandate of the Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge to protect and enhance wildlife and their habitats through education, research, habitat preservation and restoration, and compatible public uses."

In accordance with its mission, requests for funding support from Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge (TNWR) staff to the FOTNWR Board should be in direct support of environmental education, research, and habitat preservation and restoration on the refuge.

During the meetings in November and December, the FOT Board members met without Refuge staff present. In addition to our 7 Board members, we invited the chairpersons of two committees to join in: Peggy O'Connell, chair of the Research Grant Committee, and Diane Reid, chair of the Activities Committee, to join in. The discussion was lively and open with consensus reached that we wanted our support to focus on the Refuge and Friends' Mission and programs and not on staff salaries, equipment and furnishings and other administrative costs in the buildings. We will be planning with the Refuge management and accepting requests related to our mission twice a year (December and June). A big thanks to Peggy O'Connell who was a great help in our process.

The Board has appreciated the current practice, instituted by Refuge Manager, Cassandra Roeder, of organizing Quarterly meetings at the Refuge, featuring one Refuge department manager each time, with a report on current projects and future work. In the past year we have benefited from reports from Molly Dixon, Refuge Biologist, Brian Walker, Private Lands Biologist, Ken Meinhart, Fire Management Specialist, Brian Czulinski, Wildlife Officer, and Kelly Moroney on the Spokane County Wind Energy Facility Planning regulations.

At the start of the Quarterly Meeting in January, the Board was treated to a hands-on activity created by Jaelyn W. in her role as Wildlife Educator. The task was to match small real and realistic models of bird beaks, webfeet, and wings with the correct birds found on the Refuge, as described and pictured on cards.

Friends group members joined the farewell party for Jaelyn Wesche, AmeriCorps and SCA intern "Wildlife Educator" for the past year and a half. If you have visited the Refuge in that time, you have encountered her in the Visitor's reception area, on the trails, helping out on workdays, leading fieldtrips, and generally being an energetic, knowledgeable, and welcoming presence at the Refuge. Thank you to Jaelyn Wesche and farewell for now – her long-term goal is to work for the Refuge/USFWS and join FOT(!). Her short-term goal is to be an in-person student and complete her degree in Environmental Science at EWU. Best Wishes to Jaelyn!!

The Environmental Education Planning Committee is continuing to review the work of the contractor preparing the updated EE curriculum to support the Refuge Fieldtrip/Environmental Education program. The goal is to have seven lessons spread over the K-12 age levels

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on topics related to current science standards: adaptations, habitats, wetland ecology, geology of Channeled Scablands ecoregion, migratory birds, fire ecology. The lessons will be set up so that teachers and other field trip leaders will have everything they need to lead an engaging, successful fieldtrip at the Refuge. The plan is to have the curriculum completed, along with a teacher training workshop, prior to the beginning of the next school year, 2025/2026.

Looking ahead to Spring

- Inland NW Complex Booth at the Big Horn Outdoor Show at Fairgrounds March 20-23 – Come to the event and check out the Inland NW Complex booth, #333
- Earth Day Potting and Activities Day at the Refuge – Plan now to join in the tree-potting workday and other spring work activities on April 26 at the Refuge
- Activities for Spring and Summer – Watch for notice of bird walks, MayFest activities and more in the coming months.
- Nature Store "Refuge Ambassador/Nature Store Volunteer" – Sign up for training sessions March 28, 29 and April 5. The Nature Store opens for the season on Friday, April 4, 2025. The Store is open Friday, Saturday, Sunday, and Monday each week from 10am – 4pm.
- Want to get more involved in being a Refuge Volunteer for Biology? – Watch for lists of volunteer jobs from Molly D.

Nature Store Wrap-Up 2024 Season

The 2024 Nature Store season seemed successful while we were in it and has proved to be successful in the wrap-up calculations. The success included increased sales, 3-4 new volunteers helping, new barcodes on all items and a barcode reader to facilitate sales, new items in inventory, and a new sign near the Pine Lake overlook and bathrooms about Nature Store location and operation season.

We are looking forward to continuing success in the new 2025 season, April through October.

The Nature Store profit is designated to support environmental education at the Refuge. Last year, we supported Jaelyn Wesche in her first year AmeriCorps position,. This year (2025) the support is going toward the creation of an updated curriculum for Fieldtrips to the Refuge by area schools/classrooms, homeschool groups and youth organizations.

The calculations to identify annual Nature Store operation profit result was $9,935.45!! Good job everyone and we are looking forward to this new season starting April 4, 2025! Look for dates for FOTNWR Nature Store volunteer signup and training for the end of March. Contact the Nature Store Management Team (naturestore@fotnwr.org) for more information.

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The Big Horn Show is a well-known event in Spokane hosted by the Inland Northwest Wildlife Council, focusing on outdoor and hunting gear, camping equipment, and other related outdoor items. It's held annually at the Spokane County Fairgrounds and features a variety of exhibitors showcasing products for hunting, fishing, and outdoor activities. It's a great place for those interested in adventure, gear, and outdoor sports to gather and learn more. This year's event is being held March 20-23.

The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service will be hosting a booth at this year's Show, which is the first time staff have attended since 2010. This year will be unique in that the booth represents, not just Turnbull NWR, but also the Little Pend Oreille NWR and the Kootenai NWR. The Service is looking to promote all of the refuges, not just Turnbull. We are seeking volunteers who are willing to help staff the booth. Volunteers will represent all 3 refuges, interact with the event attendees, and generally provide information about the wildlife and recreational opportunities at each refuge. This is a wonderful opportunity to interact with staff from across the Inland Northwest Complex, but also Friends members from the other refuges . Currently the biggest need for volunteers is on Thursday, March 20, Friday evening (5 - 8:30 pm), and all day Sunday, March 23.

For questions or to sign up for a shift, please email Josh Contois, Visitor Services Manager, at joshua_contois@fws.gov.

New Banner!

Big Horn Show Raffle

Molly Zammit

Several years ago, we were given a box of Ducks Unlimited numbered prints. Over the years we matted and framed them for the Friends annual Wild Refuge Auction (working on the details). This year we will be having a raffle at the Big Horn show featuring three of these prints and a Duckstamp print; After the Storm by Phillip Crowe (Ducks); Woodland Mist by Rosemary Milette (white tail deer): and Washington 2001 Duck Stamp by Adam Grimm. The drawing will be Sunday afternoon.

We have reached out to the other Friends group in our complex and hope to have them join us in preparing the prints and sharing in the costs and rewards. If you have time, check out the Turnbull booth March 20-23 where you can see the prints and other offerings at the booth. Tickets will be available for purchase. We look forward to seeing you!

Woodland Mist by Rosemary Milette

After the Storm by Phillip Crowe

Carlene's Eagle Trip

On Thursday, my husband, daughter and I headed out to see the Bald Eagles at Lake Coeur d'Alene. We took exit 15 and made our way towards Higgins Point, a popular place to view eagles. As we neared our destination, we began to see photographers walking along, carrying their small to (really) large cameras; and we saw a few eagles perched in trees on both sides of the road. We pulled off into a couple of parking lots along the way to see the eagles. It is surprising how easy it was to spot white heads against a backdrop of tall pine trees!

Eventually we arrived at Higgins Point itself where we parked and walked down to the boat launch and picnic area that overlooks the lake. The closer we got to the boat launch, the more I smelled the dead Kokanee salmon on the shore. So MANY of them! The Kokanee typically live for four years before they spawn and die. It is these very fish returning to their spawning grounds that attract the Bald Eagles every year.

We saw some eagles flying above us and over the lake and some resting in the trees. Sometimes we would spot two eagles in the same tree. They can perch for many hours to conserve energy so there was no real hurry to take pictures! We were thrilled to see around 20 eagles!

If you are interested in seeing the Bureau of Land Management's eagle count, you can go to this website: https://www.blm.gov/programs/fish-and-wildlife/wildlife/about/idaho/lake-coeurdalene-eagle-watch

All eagle photos by Carlene Hardt

Friends of Turnbull NWR
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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