

OUT About



The Pacific Region
Outreach Newsletter



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Laboratory Searches for Answers

And finds ways to share its work with the public

By Jeanne Clark

Forensic science and wildlife science. What a combination! Did the freezer-wrapped steak come from a Colorado deer or an endangered Asian bighorn sheep? Is the imported chess piece made from a restricted African elephant tusk?

Combine wildlife and forensic investigation under one roof at the Clark R. Bavin National Fish and Wildlife Forensics Laboratory in Ashland, Oregon, and you have the reason for countless requests for tours.

Unfortunately, the sensitive nature of information submitted by wildlife law enforcement agencies worldwide and chain-of-custody requirements for evidence prevent this FWS "Starship" of good public relations from offering public tours. So, the staff has had to find other ways to respond to the growing public interest.

laboratory representatives make enforcement cases and research problems both interesting and tangible.

Their talks focus on the need for wildlife laws, law enforcement, and the complexities of wildlife investigations. It's a page out of the Service's outreach strategy, using forensics laboratory activities to advance wildlife conservation and the mission of the Service.

See **LABORATORY** ... Page 7



Visiting scientist (left) and lab staff discuss laboratory activities.

Photo by: ISEWS

SITE VISITS

Many groups requesting a tour are happy with a staff visit to their site. Armed with notebook computers, PowerPoint® presentations, and boxes of carved elephant tusks, crocodile purses, wolf hides, and other items,

Illegal Asian Medicine Trade

Education and enforcement efforts making a difference

By Lawrence Farrington

Make a plaster of tiger bone to treat arthritis or rheumatism? Give a capsule containing rhino horn and herbs to reduce a fever in a child?

Many Asians look to these and other substances for strength, renewed youth, or healing. The problem is that tigers, rhinos, and many other wildlife species are protected and it is illegal to sell these products in the United States.

To help stop this illegal trade, in October 1995 the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service launched a first-of-

its-kind outreach program designed to inform the public that certain products available through traditional Asian medicine may contain parts of critically endangered wildlife species. Many products also contain impurities and toxins that are harmful to humans.

At a press conference held in Los Angeles announcing the program, then Assistant Interior Secretary for Fish and Wildlife and Parks George

See **ILLEGAL** ... Page 12

Challenging Times for Law Enforcement

Agents succeed in face of budget shortfalls and vacancies

By Dave McMullen

It was the best of times, it was the worst of times — or so the story goes. In the positive vein, today the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has a small, but successful, corps of special agents who do everything from educate people that may be involved with the illegal wildlife trade to arrest hardened criminals involved with felony crimes.

While they frequently use special tactics and carry weapons, you might be surprised to know that outreach is an important tool of their trade. This issue of *Out & About* focuses on a variety of law enforcement outreach efforts. You'll read about a program aimed at stopping the sale of illegal animal products in Asian markets, a new watercraft safety program, and how our Forensics Laboratory in Ashland is handling public interest in its work. You'll also hear from refuge personnel charged with law enforcement duties, and how outreach plays into their work.

These successes take on an even greater meaning today because this is not the best of times for law enforcement programs involving special agents. Many of our partners are unaware that 20 percent of the Pacific Region's 45 authorized special agent positions are now vacant due to lack of funding. The vacancy rate is expected to surpass 25 percent by the end of this year.

And, unfortunately, the current funding base will adequately support only 27, or 60 percent, of the region's 45 authorized special agent positions. Even at full strength, the Service pits what amounts to a handful of officers against well-organized and equipped wildlife criminals who operate from coast to coast, and around the globe.

There is some reason to feel hopeful. The President's budget request for fiscal year 2001 includes a big funding increase that will not only enable the Service to fill some vacant

positions, but also help to preserve vital enforcement partnerships.

For example, the Service has traditionally worked with state and tribal agencies to enforce wildlife protection laws. We often provide these groups with training and investigative support on key cases in exchange for access to the larger numbers and broad local reach of state and tribal conservation officers. Agreements that now cover about 70 percent of the states and many Native American tribes are in jeopardy because we cannot fulfill our end of the bargain. The President's budget would enable us to honor this commitment.

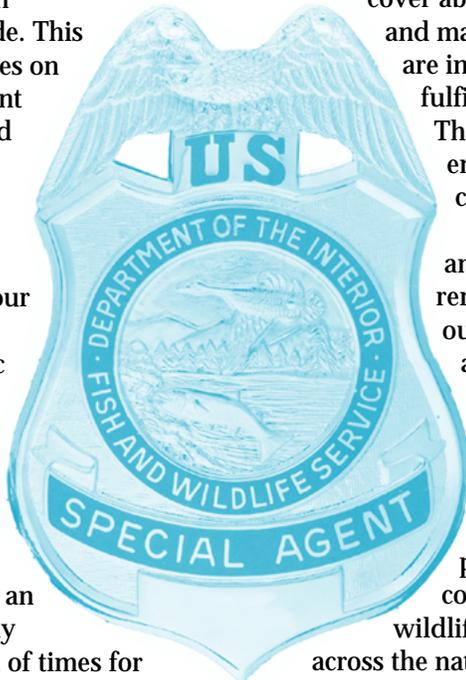
Regardless of staffing and resource levels, outreach remains a vital component of our law enforcement program, allowing us to interact positively with the public.

For example, partnerships with industry and trade groups include public education to promote voluntary compliance with Federal wildlife laws. Special agents across the nation are partnering with the oil and gas industry to reduce migratory bird mortalities caused by open oil-covered brine water evaporation pits.

They are also working with rural electric companies to save raptors from electrocution by working with them to install raptor-proof devices on hundreds of miles of power lines.

Outreach efforts to encourage companies to voluntarily clean up oil pits and retrofit power lines are often more productive and more beneficial to our wildlife resources than seeking court-imposed remedies. They also serve as a reminder that high caliber outreach efforts are among the most effective weapons our law enforcement agents have available.

Dave McMullen is the assistant regional director for Law Enforcement.



Out & About is published quarterly for Region 1 Fish and Wildlife Service employees.

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SUBMISSIONS

We welcome your submissions to **Out & About**. Regular sections in the newsletter are:

Feature Articles
Case Studies
Outreach Accomplishments
Trainings & Workshops
Announcements
Q & A
Letters to the Editor
Outreach Resources

Articles should be submitted by E-mail or 3-1/2 inch floppy and run 150 to 500 words. Gear writing to newsletter style; avoid technical jargon. Photos welcome. Publication is not guaranteed, though every effort will be made to use submissions.

Submit articles to Jeanne Clark:
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SUBMISSION DEADLINES

Spring	April 1
Summer	May 15
Fall	August 15
Winter	November 15

Out & About has received U.S. Department of the Interior and Fish and Wildlife Service DI-550 approval.

It is the policy of the U.S. Department of the Interior to ensure that individuals are not denied employment opportunities or program delivery because of their race, color, age (40+), sex (gender), national origin, religion, physical or mental disability. Unlawful discrimination in any form is strictly prohibited by agency policies and should be reported to the Fish and Wildlife Service Region 1 Equal Employment Opportunity Counselor, Office for Diversity and Civil Rights, 503/231-2081, 911 NE 11th Ave., Portland, OR 97232-4181.

Artifact Thief Caught Cold-Handed

Communication skills help make case at Malheur NWR

By **Carla Burnside and Pete Revak**

Refuge law enforcement officer Pete Revak had finally caught the man cold-handed. With video camera rolling, he recorded this suspect, known for his history of illegal artifact collection, at three sites on the refuge and two that were nearby. Even though more than 100 stolen artifacts, digging tools, a loaded handgun, and drug paraphernalia were eventually seized, much more was involved to make a solid case.

Malheur National Wildlife Refuge encompasses 187,000 acres of high desert located in southeast Oregon. A mecca for wildlife, its more than 300 archaeological sites are also evidence of a Native American presence that has spanned over 11,000 years. This rich cultural history has challenged refuge and law enforcement staff to use a variety of tools to protect these sites from violations of the Archeological Resources Protection Act of 1979 (ARPA).

TRAINING REFUGE STAFF

Revak makes it a point to take out new employees to show them where popular digging sites are located. He also keeps tabs on local offenders and routinely shares their descriptions, vehicle types, license plate numbers, and other information with refuge staff. This informal training process paid off in May 1999, when refuge personnel recognized a repeat offender collecting artifacts and alerted Revak and collateral duty officer Kevin Sittauer, who responded immediately.



Photo by: Carla Burnside, USFWS

An assortment of stone knives and arrow and dart points seized from illegal collection at archaeological sites.

GIVING INTERVIEWS

Following surveillance and videotaping his activities, Revak approached the suspect and interviewed and searched him to gather more information. Officers are “armed” with interview techniques that are non-threatening and avoid confrontation. The communication training proved essential in this case, since the suspect had both a loaded handgun and narcotics in possession.

ESTABLISHING EVIDENCE

As the investigation proceeded, refuge archaeologist Carla Burnside conducted an archaeological damage assessment, determining a “cost” of \$3445 in commercial value and damages to the refuge sites. This information will be available to government attorneys presenting the case.

Revak and an Oregon State Police officer talked with the adjacent landowner, who said he had not given the suspect permission to remove artifacts from, or access the refuge, through his property. This discussion produced two signed complaints against the suspect, triggering involvement from a state district attorney.

INVOLVING LOCAL TRIBE

Through years of day-to-day contacts, the refuge has developed a positive relationship with the local Burns Paiute Tribe. Upon hearing of the violations, the Tribe contacted the Native American Liaison in the U.S. Attorneys’ Office, in Portland, Oregon.

Their interest in prosecuting the case and being a presence during the trial clearly accelerated the Federal prosecution process. The trial has been set for mid-May and the suspect will be prosecuted in Federal Court for ARPA violations and felony weapons charges.

There is little doubt that this incident, and others like it, would never reach court without the use of strong communication and outreach skills to establish evidence and build the case.

Carla Burnside is a refuge archaeologist and Pete Revak is a refuge officer at Malheur NWR.

“Officers are armed with interview techniques that are non-threatening and avoid confrontation.”

National Eagle Repository

Dead birds part of Native American outreach effort

By Dave McMullen

For Native Americans, the long sturdy feather of an eagle is significant. So are the curved talon, bone-crushing beak, and other body parts. But little more than a quarter of century ago, many of these sacred items were not readily available to Native Americans.

Recognizing an opportunity to make use of confiscated eagle parts, the Division of Law Enforcement created the National Eagle Repository to facilitate the donation of eagles and other bird carcasses to Native Americans for traditional religious and cultural uses. Originally established in Pocatello, Idaho, in the early 1970s, the repository moved to Ashland, Oregon, and then, to its current home near Denver, Colorado.

Through its repository, the Service has salvaged and collected several thousand eagles, and donated them to Native Americans. To be eligible, applicants must be enrolled members of one of the more than 500 federally-recognized tribes and obtain a permit from the nearest Service regional office. Because eagles are protected by the Bald and Golden Eagle Protection Act, the repository is the only place that Native Americans can legally obtain them. There is no fee for permits or eagles.

Most of the salvaged birds have died as a result of electrocution, collision with vehicles or wind generating towers, lead poisoning, unlawful shooting and trapping, and natural causes. Despite growing efforts to salvage all available eagles, the supply has never caught up with the demand.

Each year, special agents and other federal and state wildlife managers submit about 900 whole eagle carcasses to the repository; with over 1,000 annual applicants, the waiting list for whole eagles now exceeds 4,000 people. It's fairly easy for the repository to quickly fill requests for up to 15 feathers; however, it may take three years to fill a request for a whole bird.

To support this effort and help address the growing backlog, President Clinton signed an order that reserves virtually all dead eagles for Indian religious uses.

You can help, too, by salvaging all eagles you encounter during field work, collecting those that are reported, and spreading the word. Your gesture contributes to a positive outreach effort that is helping to preserve Native American traditions. 

Dave McMullen is the assistant regional director for Law Enforcement.

“The eagle carries our prayers to the Creator and reminds us of our commitment to respect life and creation.”

*Scott L. Aikin,
Native American
Affairs Liaison
(Region 1)*

Caught on Film

Video a training tool and catalyst for community partnerships

When a handful of staffers from the Ventura Fish and Wildlife Office were at the beach filming the local wildlife, they weren't just having fun. They were filming closeup views of endangered snowy plovers and least terns and the actions of Oxnard Police Department Officers patrolling the beach. The video project was the brainchild of Greg Sanders and Cynthia Snell, both in the Ventura Office. The intent was to provide local law enforcement with information about natural resources at Ormond Beach and tips about how to

conduct effective patrols without harming endangered birds nesting in the area.

First copies of the video went to the Oxnard Police, who immediately shared it with the Port Hueneme Police Department. Copies reached the Service's Carlsbad Office, who are asking for copies to share with their partners, including the U.S. Navy and California Department of Parks and Recreation. And word is still spreading!

Sanders and Snell wrote, filmed, and edited this excellent educational tool. The help they mustered is a lesson in effective outreach itself! The Oxnard Police



LE Chief Receives Award

Director Jamie Rappaport Clark presented David L. McMullen, assistant regional director for Law Enforcement, the Department of the Interior's Meritorious Service Award during an award ceremony in Portland, Oregon on April 17, 2000.

McMullen received the award for his significant contributions in managing and advancing the Service's Law Enforcement program, both nationally and in the Pacific Region, during his 26-year career with the Service.

Some of his contributions include protecting Columbia River chinook salmon from illegal netting, curtailing illegal trade in eagles and migratory birds, and overseeing controversial endangered species take investigations.

Advertising Clarification

In the Fall 1999 *Out & About* (see "Hollywood-Style Partnering"), Barbara Simon shared her success in getting a local movie theater company to run slides she provided as public service announcements. It was great PR for refuges, but does this "advertising" jive with Service policy?

According to this page out of the FWS manual, "...it is the Service policy to avoid paid advertising in any media in connection to its programs, except where specific legal authority or requirements exist. In the

event paid advertising is necessary because of the significant benefits it affords in enhancing public participation, prior approval must be obtained from the Washington, D.C. Public Affairs Office and the Office of Communications."

Simon did it correctly: She received prior approval and got a non-Federal partner to cover the expense. You can run ads in the legal notice section of the newspaper to comply with required notification for public comment periods, meetings, procurement processes, recruitment, etc. But beyond this, get advice and seek approvals from the D.C. offices. Also, be sure to let them know about all paid advertising, as it is required for Congressional reporting.

Refuge Video Now in Spanish

El Sistema Nacional de Refugios de Vida Silvestre de los Estados Unidos: Donde la Vida Silvestre es lo Primo is an excellent new outreach tool for both domestic and international Latino communities.

Marc Weitzel, project leader at Hopper Mountain National Wildlife Refuge, coordinated the translation using many Central and South American contacts to ensure that it would be understood across multiple Spanish-speaking borders. The Division of Refuges in Washington, D.C., which funded the project, gave Weitzel an on-the-spot award for this superior effort. To receive copies, contact Deborah McCrensky at 703/358-2029.

More LE Awards

Special Agent Ed Dominquez, based in Las Vegas, Nevada, has just learned he will be recognized for over 19 years of service in the field of law enforcement at the National IMAGE Conference in Puerto Rico.

Awards are not new to Dominquez, who has received numerous commendations and awards during his career.

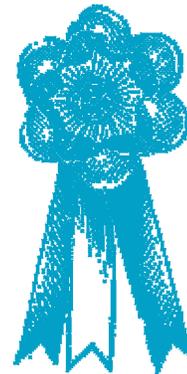
He is described by one United States District Attorney as "...the finest agent with whom I have worked in the Federal System."

He has won praise at all levels for his covert work, training skills, diplomacy, and fair-mindedness.

In the law enforcement training area, Senior Wildlife Inspectors Erin Dean and William Myers in the San Diego, California office were recognized with a commemorative award from the U.S. Office of Border Coordination.

Dean and Myers developed, designed, and paid for a "Quick Reference Guide" to assist Border Patrol agents with wildlife identification.

The U.S. Customs Service Training Office in San Diego is reproducing 200 copies, and has requested that Dean and Myers also provide training for their agents and inspectors.





The Moment of Truth!

Don't miss chances to shape the public's impression of the FWS

By Rick Coleman

Game Warden!" "Park Ranger!" Which one are you? The public perception is that all Service employees in uniform are either a game warden or a park ranger. To them, we all enforce the law, we probably carry a gun, and we certainly know when and where the next load of catchable fish will be planted.

When you tell them that you are not a game warden and that you work for the Federal government, not the State, they may seem surprised, relieved they haven't been caught without a fishing license, or just disappointed that you can't give them the inside scoop on a good fishing spot.

If the interaction ends there, public perception of the Service remains unaltered. Here is another missed opportunity to inform the public and leave a positive, and personal, impression during a "moment of truth."

Whether we're who they think or not, any encounter offers a chance to share information about the Service. Remember, people don't care what you know, they want to know that you care! Whether you're answering a phone call or talking with the public on a trail or at a meeting, don't miss the chance to do outreach for the Service, even if you've been mistaken for someone else.

Use these chance meetings to let them know who you are, what you do, and make

an effort to "connect" with them. "Oh, so you like fishing? So do I," or "I see you have kids with you. Did you know that the refuge has education programs for youngsters each summer?"

This may be the first encounter they've ever had with our agency and it may be their only one, especially if it was not satisfying. They will remember how they felt about the Service long after they've forgotten the information you may have provided. And they will tell others about it, good or bad, so their experience and impression will persist and spread.

The public needs to "put a face" on public ideals and policy. All of the outreach programs, media contacts, and glossy publications the Service initiates will never be enough to influence public opinion and support for wildlife conservation without that personal touch.

We need to take advantage of every public encounter, each moment of truth, to listen well, respond well, provide a good impression of our agency in order to inspire positive feelings and actions about wildlife conservation.

Rick Coleman is the assistant regional director for External Affairs.

Upcoming Events

Volksmarch Wildlife Walk

When: June 17
Where: Cheney, WA
Contact: Richard Odell
509/534-7056

Return of the Terns

When: June 25
Where: Alameda, CA
Contact: East Bay Regional Park
510/521-6887
www.ebparks.org

TRAININGS & WORKSHOPS

Interpretive Talk & The Process of Interpretation

The course describes interpretive talk development and effective delivery techniques. Learn how to give interpretive talks that help the audience form intellectual and emotional connections with the resource at hand.

When: July 2000
Where: Shepherdstown, WV
Contact: Sharon Howard 304/876-7494

Building Community Support

Need some help dealing with people management issues related to scientific documents or other plans? This NCTC course provides field case studies that include approaches for increasing support for your plans.

When: July 24-28
Where: Shepherdstown, WV
Contact: Sharon Howard 304/876-7494

Volunteer Recruitment & Management

Explore the value of volunteer programs. Learn how they can help meet FWS objectives and needs. Get tips on putting together an effective volunteer program.

When: August 1-3
Where: Shepherdstown, WV
Contact: Sharon Howard 304/876-7494

National Watchable Wildlife Conference

Are you trying to build good viewing programs? Attract tourists to your site without harming the environment? Learn more about the economic value of wildlife conservation? Don't miss this great professional gathering and the chance to network with other professionals.

When: September 12-15
Where: Casper, Wyoming
Contact: Dave Lochman 307/777-4543
<http://outreach.uwyo.edu/conferences/wildlife>

Doing More, With More!

Saturation patrols combine resources and talent

By Lisa Nichols

Seven years ago, two law enforcement rangers from separate federal agencies had a simple, great idea. After talking or meeting with officers from ten agencies with jurisdictions in the area, they formed the *Coachella Valley Conservation Officers Group* to pool information and resources to fight environmental crimes in remote areas of southern California.

Combining information and resources, such as airplanes and undercover vehicles, has allowed the group to be more successful than individual officers could have ever been on their own — and at considerably lower monitoring levels that individual agencies might not be able to support.

Since conservation officers work in very large and remote areas, having multiple “eyes and ears” has increased the number of violators who are contacted by officers.

For example, a single saturation patrol resulted in investigation of 15 spotlighting

incidents, six fish and wildlife violations, three cases involving dumping, two incidents involving alcohol, two illegal fires, and one hazardous material violation.

Another patrol prevented carloads of underage drinkers from leaving their mark in a beautiful remote canyon on Federal land.

Working with a National Park Ranger, FWS Special Agents, to locate a known reptile and bring him to prison on

Efficient and effective, the *Coachella Valley Conservation Officers Group* has recently been nominated for the Vice Presidential Hammer Award, which recognizes Federal employees and their partners whose work results in a government that works better and costs less.

Lisa Nichols is a special agent in the San Diego Law Enforcement Office.

“Combining information and resources ... has allowed the group to be more successful than individual officers could have ever been on their own...”

Laboratory...

Continued from Page 1

LAB WEBSITE

Telephone callers are directed to the lab’s website, which has already received more than 130,000 hits. Inter-linked web pages provide an overview of daily operations and describe analytical procedures in a series of Identification Notes. The lab has designed and produced 35 Identification Notes on topics ranging from ivory identification to differentiation of crocodile skulls. There are also links to other websites. (See <http://www.lab.fws.gov>)

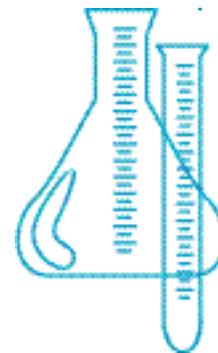
TRAINING AND PRESENTATIONS

The lab staff is asked to provide wildlife forensics information and training to law enforcement agencies worldwide. This includes specialized training for FWS special agents and wildlife inspectors, game wardens and conservation officers in all fifty states, and special agents and customs officers from other federal agencies.

They also interact with forensic scientists at national and international meetings. Last year, the laboratory hosted the first ever Wildlife Forensics Symposium in Los Angeles, California, where 13 FWS scientists presented papers or posters on their own groundbreaking research.

Conventional outreach wisdom suggests that outreach begins at home. While the lab staff can’t invite the public in the front door, they’ve demonstrated how a variety of outreach tools have allowed them to showcase their skills, scientific savvy, and services to customers around the world.

Jeanne Clark is the public outreach coordinator at Stone Lakes NWR and editor of Out & About.



Watercraft Safety

Region 1 develops model training program

By William Zimmerman

Performing fish and wildlife duties can be exhilarating and dangerous. In 1990, the Service vessel Kittiwake capsized in high surf on the west side of Adak Island, Alaska, resulting in the deaths of two Service employees.

During the same year, four other boating-related deaths occurred within the Department of the Interior. Panels convened to investigate these accidents concluded that all six deaths were preventable if watercraft safety procedures had been followed.

Special agent Ed Wickersham from the Vancouver Field Office in Washington gleaned what he could from these tragedies. He then used his own extensive boating experience to develop a regional law

enforcement training program in 1992 that served as a model for the training program later adopted by both the Service and Department of Interior (DOI). Wickersham is a recent recipient of the DOI's Safety Champion Award for his contributions to the Services's and Department's watercraft safety program.

From Nevada's Ruby Marsh, to Washington's Puget Sound, to Johnston Atoll, Service biologists, special agents, and refuge employees are continually exposed to a beautiful, but deadly, water environment. They are required to operate watercraft in diverse environments, often under adverse weather conditions, sometimes in darkness.

Statistics reveal that most drowning victims unexpectedly capsized or fell overboard; many were not wearing personal flotation devices or survival suits and died from hypothermia or drowning.

The tragic boating accidents in 1990 had one positive outcome: DOI's new watercraft safety training program was initiated and all DOI employees who operate motorboats must now complete an approved 24-hour Motorboat Operator Certification Course.

In 1995 Wickersham was selected Regional watercraft safety coordinator. With his leadership and help from a cadre of certified instructors, over 500 Region 1 employees have been certified in motorboat operator safety.

In February 2000, the Service appointed Wickersham as the national watercraft training coordinator. Anne Sittauer (Malheur NWR) and Aaron Garcia (Idaho Fishery Resource Office) have assumed his regional responsibilities.

Wickersham now works with the seven regional watercraft safety coordinators and safety officers to maintain quality and consistency throughout the Service. Through their outreach efforts, this effort has moved from a vision to a results-oriented program designed to protect Federal and State employees who work on the water.

William Zimmerman is the deputy assistant regional director for Law Enforcement.

More Upcoming Events

Washington Water Weeks

When: Sept. 10-Oct. 15
Where: Statewide
Contact: Washington Dept. of Ecology
 360/943-3642

Oregon Shorebird Festival

When: Sept. 8-10
Where: North Bend, OR
Contact: Cape Arago Audubon Society
 541/267-7208

Wenatchee River Salmon Festival

When: Sept. 14-17
Where: Leavenworth, WA
Contact: Leavenworth NFH
 509/548-6662
www.salmonfest.org



Photos by: USEFWS



FWS Special Agents give "hands on" water safety training.



Dead Eagles Spur Outreach

Misreported deaths stimulate formation of communications team

By Jenny Valdivia

Not long ago, a television reporter capped the evening news with story about two bald eagles that had been shot in a field near the Oregon coast.

I cringed and made a mental note to call our law enforcement agents the next day to find out about the case.

As it turned out, the agents determined that the eagles hadn't been shot: They'd run into powerlines and been electrocuted. In the days that followed, I received calls from friends, folks at the Audubon Society of Portland who knew I worked for "one of those wildlife agencies," and a few local newspapers.

After relaying the whole story to Bob Sallinger, director of the Audubon's Wildlife Care Center, during one of my volunteer shifts, we realized that we needed a communications plan for handling these types of issues.

So I made some calls and what has become known as the Interagency Law Enforcement Communications Group met for the first time last fall.

It was also literally the first time some of us had ever met! The group included Federal and State law enforcement officers and communications specialists, state biologists, Portland Audubon staff and volunteers, and the veterinarian who voluntarily cares for critically injured birds.

None of us had a clear understanding of each other's responsibilities regarding

wildlife law. We asked questions, shared media communication mistakes, and gave suggestions and ideas. It was a lively, productive two hours. At this first meeting, we resolved to:

- Function as if we were all members of the same agency;
- Share information and get to know each other before issues arise;
- Immediately talk with each other when an issue occurs;
- Agree on communication strategies for and deliver consistent messages to the media and general public; and
- Have at least a cursory knowledge of pertinent wildlife laws, such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

Our communications process is in place and everyone has a vested interest in making it work. We are now functioning as one communications team. Great "spinoffs" are also occurring.

When Portland Audubon recently launched their "Coexisting with Wildlife" campaign aimed at urbanites who find themselves sharing their backyards with wildlife, they used their communications link with the team to help shape and promote the program.

All this from the misreported deaths of two bald eagles! 

Jenny Valdivia is a public affairs specialist in the Public Affairs Office.

"...we realized that we needed a communications plan for handling these types of issues."

Caught...

Continued from Page 4

Department provided police "actors." Southern California Edison and Reliant Energy gave access to the beach through their facilities and allowed filming of their access procedures and safety precautions.

The Ormond Beach Observers, a group dedicated to the preserving the area's natural resources, worked with the League of Women Voters to provide \$500 for editing expenses. The Oxnard City Corps, a group dedicated to

helping inner-city youth, donated planning and labor to place signs and fencing materials — which were purchased with funds from the local Fish and Game Commission. Images Video offered technical editing assistance and many hours of volunteer help. For information, contact Greg Sanders at 805/644-1766.



Illustrations by: Allison Banks/USFWS

Arms of the Law Reach Out

Exhibits and programs popular in Southern California

By Mike Osborn

In Southern California, the arms of law enforcement have stretched far and wide — largely because we've filled them with exotic animal parts, colorful literature, and interesting facts about enforcement activities.

Our outreach effort began several years ago, when wildlife inspectors took some endangered species parts and products to a few neighborhood schools. It continued to expand with our first Earth Day celebration, where our eye-catching display drew invitations to other large events.

Our growing outreach program now averages about 50 events and reaches an estimated 300,000 to 400,000 people annually. We often team up with our Ecological Services Office and special interest groups to reach larger and more diverse audiences.

For example, we've provided S.T.A.R., a local non-profit educational program, with a wildlife articles display to use in 80 inter-city Los Angeles schools.



Photo by: USFWS

Law enforcement's traveling outreach exhibit.

Over ten years ago, members of Safari Club International considered us an oddity at their International Convention. Today, they expect us to be there and look forward to visiting our booth to hear the most current information about hunting regulations or importing their trophies. 

Mike Osborn is a supervisory wildlife inspector in the Torrance, CA Law Enforcement Office.

Lewis & Clark Bicentennial Planning

Summer student program at Ridgefield NWR

By Susan Saul

Attracted by the chance to get involved with planning for the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial, EDAW, an international environmental planning, site design and landscape architecture firm, has selected the Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge as the project for its 20th annual Summer Student Program in June 2000.

The EDAW Summer Student Program is a widely-recognized work-study program that attracts students from all over the world for an intensive two-week workshop addressing real project issues. Following the workshop, the students are hosted by one of EDAW's worldwide offices for a paid 8-week office internship.

At Ridgefield NWR, students will identify opportunities for education, interpretive sites, trails, etc. to help the refuge prepare to host the thousands of visitors anticipated during

the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial in 2003-2006. A Lewis and Clark camp site and an ancient Chinook town site they described are both located within the refuge boundary.

These sites will form the foundation of the education and interpretation program the students will design. At the end of their workshop, the students will publicly present their final product to the Service and others who are interested.

EDAW anticipates 150 applicants for the 15 spaces in the Summer Student Program. Selection will be made based on originality, creative conceptual design, critical thinking, technical skills, written and graphic communication skills, and team-level participation skills. Be sure to check the EDAW website at www.edaw.com. 

Susan Saul is an outreach specialist in the Office of External Affairs.

More Upcoming Events

Spring Creek NFH Open House

When: Sept. 23-24

Where: Underwood, WA

Contact: Spring Creek NFH
509/493-1730

National Hunting and Fishing Day

When: Sept. 25
Where: National
Contact: National Shooting Sports Foundation
203/426-1320

Kern Valley Vulture Festival

When: Sept. 29-Oct. 2
Where: Weldon, CA
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When a Soft Sell Is Best

Indirect approach increases visitor compliance

By Ken Morris

A major challenge in managing wildlife lies in managing human behavior that could damage wildlife, habitat, and facilities. The majority of violations on refuges and hatcheries are unintentional; visitors are simply unaware of the regulations or the effect of their actions on their surroundings.

The traditional “direct” approach to law enforcement, such as giving warnings or tickets, can stop the behavior but may lose folks who feel they are our allies. In such cases, an “indirect” approach looks at facility designs, interpretive and regulatory signs, brochures, and environmental education programs as ways to encourage people to behave in ways so they will not adversely impact wildlife.

Signs are the most frequently-used indirect approach, but to be successful their message, appearance, and placement must be carefully planned. Signs should:

- Use simple, everyday language;
- Inform and encourage rather than demand;
- Tell visitors what they *can* do as well as what they can't;
- Tell visitors *why* they are being asked to do (or not do) something;
- Ask visitors to help and thank them for doing so;
- Be well-designed; and
- Be well-placed to ensure that visitors encounter signs in the correct sequence, and can read them easily.

As an example, EPIC's John Ivie and Matt Hasti designed a series of “soft enforcement” signs for the auto tour roads at Ridgefield and Sacramento NWRs. The purpose is to keep people in their cars, except at designated viewing platforms. Colorful cartoons of birds driving cars lend an element of humor and encourage visitors to read the messages, which include *Wildlife Only Outside of Vehicles*; *Your Car Is Your Viewing Blind*, *Stretch Your Legs at the Platform Ahead*; and *They'll Stay Out There If You Stay In Here* [your car, that is].

The signs have been in place at Ridgefield NWR for several months and



Illustrations by: John Ivie and Matt Hasti



reports are encouraging. Complex Manager Tom Melanson says even though the language of the signs is not legally enforceable, visitor compliance is up to over 95 percent. (An “enforceable” sign was placed at the refuge entrance.)

“Initially several staff members, including myself, were skeptical about how well the signs would work,” said Melanson, “but decided to give them a try. I feel the signs are effective because they get the visitors to actually stop and read them, they are written in plain English, and they provide the logic behind the need for the regulation.”

In fact these signs are so popular with visitors, they not only stop to read them, they even take pictures of them!

Ken Morris is a visual information specialist in EPIC. Thanks to Refuge Officer Dan Sheill at Mattamuskeet NWR for content from a course he taught recently at NCTC.

“Inform and encourage rather than demand.”

Illegal...

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“...targeted operations, visits with shop owners, and media stories are having an impact on this significant threat to endangered wildlife.”

T. Frampton, Jr. told the large crowd, “We greatly respect the ancient tradition Asians have of using medicines derived from animals and plants... It is incumbent on us to get the word out that by purchasing such products, whether or not they actually contain any trace of these animals, consumers are fueling the illegal trade. And, of equal importance, consumers should understand that the very medicines they buy to improve their health or that of their families may pose serious health risks.”

One result of this initiative was the Los Angeles Wildlife Task Force, formed in 1996 to halt the illegal import of and domestic trade in traditional Asian medicines containing parts of endangered or threatened species or those which are otherwise prohibited.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Customs Service, and the U.S. Food and Drug Administration were original members of the task force, which has since been expanded to include several other local, State, and Federal agencies which routinely communicate and coordinate their operations.

To date, the task force has conducted 13 successful operations. These efforts have clearly heightened public awareness of the problem. The task force’s coordinated enforcement activities are also allowing more effective and efficient use of resources.

One notable operation involved the review of import records from several large companies that trade with foreign countries.

Acting on information received through another criminal investigation and analysis of the records, the task force obtained Federal search warrants for two separate warehouses loaded with Asian medicines smuggled into the country. The haul: eight, 40-foot ocean cargo containers filled with medicines made from prohibited species.

Another involved examination of an entire commercial airline flight of 233 passengers and crew that arrived in Los Angeles from China. The result: Forty-five violations of a broad range of laws and regulations including

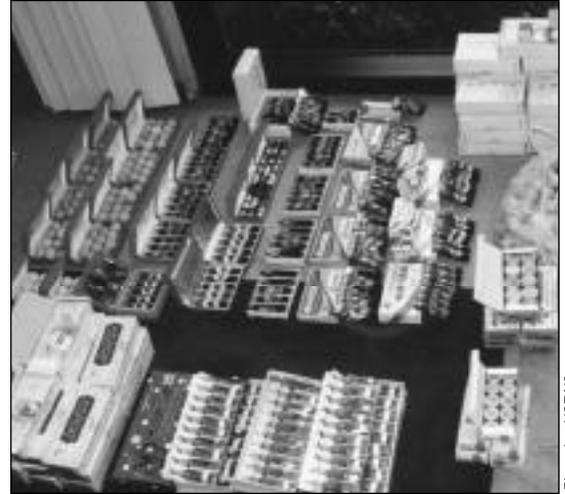


Photo by: USFWS

Task force activities helped to seize many shipments of Asian medicines containing parts or products from prohibited species.

the Endangered Species Act and CITES regulations.

The task force also turned its attention to the shops within Los Angeles where such medicines can be purchased.

Using a wide range of inspection and audit authorities, the task force conducted several “walk through” visits to Asian shops known to sell or suspected of offering medicines for sale. The results were somewhat surprising, and gratifying.

In Los Angeles, very few prohibited items were found and even fewer citations were filed. During the same period, the World Wildlife Foundation’s Traffic USA conducted its own study on the availability of Asian medicines in major U.S. cities.

The study, published in 1998, confirmed that very few Asian medicines containing protected species of wildlife were found in shops in Los Angeles, while such products were available in varying quantities in other North American cities.

It is perhaps too early to judge, but these recent evaluations suggest that targeted operations, visits with shop owners, and media stories are having an impact on this significant threat to endangered wildlife. **Q**

Lawrence Farrington is a senior resident agent in the law enforcement unit in Torrance, California.

