

OUT & About



The Pacific Region Outreach Newsletter



Theme: Electronic Revolution!

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How to Develop Your Own Web Site

Practical tips on how and where to begin

By Judith Maule

As with all major undertakings, the best way to develop a new Web site is to start with a plan.

Is your immediate reaction “There is no time to plan. Everyone has a homepage. We need a page now!”

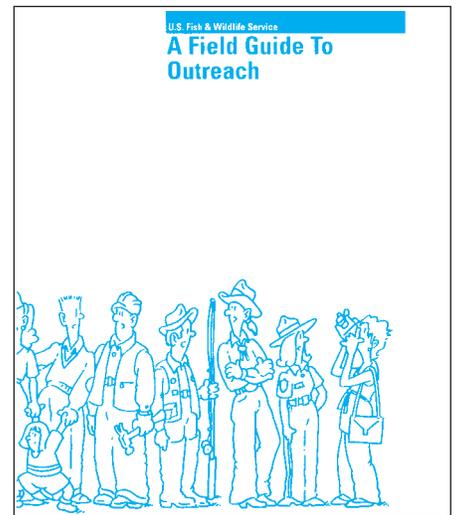
The Internet is a powerful communication tool. You upload information and it’s instantly available to online viewers around the world. Isn’t it essential to invest in planning time to assure that you have the best possible product before you begin world-wide distribution?

in discussion groups. You can also get information from NCTC (see page 14).

Then follow the simple planning steps outlined in the new “A Field Guide to Outreach” pictured below, a planning tool developed by your External Affairs Outreach Team and mailed to every field station. I used the guide to produce this article!

START WITH PLANNING HELP

For cutting edge information, check the instructions and guidance available from the Washington Office on the Service Internal Internet (SII) at <http://sii.fws.gov> Click on “Web Publishing,” listed under External Affairs. You’ll find links to information about Service policy, guidelines and procedures for Web page development, and links to other helpful sites. You can subscribe to list servers or participate



See HOW TO DEVELOP... Page 5

From the National Web Manager

Fast-evolving technology will consolidate FWS Web services

By Charlie Grymes

Like radio in the 1920s and TV in the 1950s, the Internet has swept across America in the 1990s. Nearly all Service offices now have at least one person familiar with the World Wide Web.

to the Jurassic. We now have 20,000 Web pages, with about 15 percent of Service offices actually producing their own Web pages.

Some office conversations are filled with techno-speak, as people share their favorite URLs and talk about “HTML this” and “listserver that.” When people grumble that the Internet is too slow, it shows that they are using the technology with a purpose, rather than just browsing.

Those without sites rely upon their Regional Web managers to provide and maintain information on the Internet about local field stations or offices. In the near future, IRM and Public Affairs (with help from Sky Bristol in Region 2 Ecological Services) will streamline the Web publishing process — radically.

The Service has been on the Web since 1993, equivalent in Internet time

Right now your Regional Office provides support to launch your

See FROM THE SERVICE'S ... Page 6

Automation and Human Resources

Computer technology is helping to improve customer service

By Dana Perez

The Human Resources Office is required by civil rights laws, rules, and regulations to track a plethora of facts, figures, and percentages. These records are used to generate reports to Congress, the Department of Interior, the Washington Office, and our Regional Directorate.

Historically, Human Resources staff manually developed and tracked statistical information needed for such reports. One of my goals as the new Assistant Regional Director for Human Resources is to automate many of our processes. This will boost the quality of service to internal and external customers by allowing us to quickly develop and furnish reports and operate more efficiently.

During FY 1999, the Human Resources staff developed several databases involving tracking and reporting. We will complete other activities during FY 2000 that should prove to be assets to the region as we move into the next millennium. I'd like to share some of our progress with you.

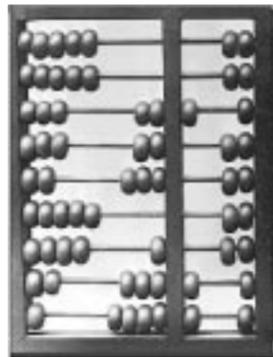
The *Affirmative Employment Tracking Database (AETD)*, for example, is currently being piloted in Region 1 and will be tested in Region 5 beginning September 1999. This database tracks and creates reports on all hires within the region. The database tallies information in a number of categories, such as field station, ecoregion, series, grade, and so forth. It also tracks diversity opportunities within the applicant and candidate pools so that hiring trends may be identified.

The *Student Career Experience Program Tracking Database* is another program being piloted in this region. This database tracks all data relevant to Student Career Experience Program (SCEP) participants and can create reports on the region's students by category, such as name, gender, diversity, fields of study, major, duty station, hours worked, and so forth. We can also learn about the student's school, his or her ethnicity, the names of key contacts and how to reach them, and the

status of our agreement with the school.

We are nearly finished upgrading the *Discrimination Counseling and Complaints Tracking Database*, which tracks EEO counseling requests and formal discrimination complaints. The database now includes a date/day calculation mechanism for each phase of the EEO counseling and discrimination complaint process. It can also generate reports on timeframe requirements for each case, and create regional reports regarding the number and types of complaints, their issues and bases — all sorted by category, such as duty station, or geographic or programmatic ecoregion.

In order to share the vast amount of information we receive and generate, during FY 2000 the Human Resources staff will construct a Web page linked to the Region's home page site. Some of the topics covered will include EEO and Human Resource laws, rules, and regulations; affirmative employment information on the SCEP and accomplishments related to workforce diversity; Region 1 accessibility data; the Region's recruitment team calendar; and links to Human Resources-related sites, such as



Historically Black Colleges and Universities <http://ericweb.tc.columbia.edu/hbcu/online.html>, Hispanic Association of Colleges and Universities <http://www.hacu2000.org/>, Tribally Affiliated Colleges and Universities <http://www.aihec.org/>, and the Job Accommodation Network for persons with disabilities <http://janweb.icdi.wvu.edu/>

We believe that automation of these and other important programs is putting Human Resources on the cutting edge; undoubtedly, computer technology will continue to play a vital role in our efforts to provide quality customer service to Region 1 employees, managers, and supervisors and a wide range of external customers.

Dana Perez is the assistant regional director of Human Resources.

Closing the Distance on Learning

NCTC brings learning and conferencing to your office

By Jeanne Clark

You and several workmates are sitting in a room in front of a large video monitor. In front of you is a small electronic keypad. Suddenly the green light on your push-to-talk key pad flashes and you hear the instructor say your name and ask for a comment. You are hundreds, even thousands, of miles away from the instructor, but you can see and hear him "live" and he can hear you and the dozens of others taking the class.

You also answer quiz questions throughout the training by pressing the appropriate button on the keypad. Your answer is transmitted to the instructor. He immediately sees how each student has responded. Moments later, someone in another region presses the "call" button on her keypad, indicating she'd like to speak. The instructor calls her by name and the dialogue continues.

This is not science fiction. It could be an endangered species overview course, a class on ethics, the latest on web publishing, or another of the more than 30 courses the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC) has developed during FY 1999 as part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's fast-growing "distance learning" program.

"The concept behind distance learning is simple," says Dick Georgen, NCTC's Distance Learning Coordinator. "We can complement our residential courses by using technology to deliver education and training opportunities to employees at or near their regular workplace. Not all instruction requires that we bring students to NCTC for instruction. Sometimes it's more efficient and just as effective to bring the learning to the students."

According to Georgen, a *Writing in Plain Language* class in residence (on the campus) may be able to accommodate just 25 or 30 people. By contrast, 110 employees were able to enroll in a three hour component of the course offered in July via distance learning.

This new instructional and communications tool drew the interest of Director Jamie Rappaport Clark in 1997, when she realized how many people did not understand endangered species issues. She asked Rick Lemon,

NCTC Director, to look into distance learning as a way to reach more people with a standardized message. Georgen and team members immersed themselves in this fast evolving technology.

"Since NCTC already had a video production studio, we had many of the pieces already in place for interactive distance learning. By installing some additional equipment at NCTC and a distance learning classroom in each regional office, we were able to move ahead quickly," explains Georgen. The Washington Office, the Western Washington Office, and the National Forensics Laboratory (NFL) in Oregon also installed distance learning classrooms. Field offices without classrooms can partner with agencies and universities that already have distance learning capabilities.



Photo by NCTC

The distance learning classroom costs between \$10,000 and \$20,000, depending on the equipment configuration. A full classroom includes the satellite downlink, a video monitor, multi-media PC with wireless keyboard and mouse, studio conferencing equipment, and other peripherals. All of this fits on a compact, two-shelved rolling cart.

Two of the ways Service employees might experience distance learning are through interactive video teletraining and audio-graphics conferencing. With interactive video

"Sometimes it's more efficient and just as effective to bring the learning to the students."

See CLOSING THE DISTANCE... Page 14

Short Stuff about the Web

Suggestions and how-to's for your Web site

By Judith Maule

SUBSCRIBE TO THE FWS-WEB LISTSERVER

The Washington Office created the "fws-web" listserver in May 1999 to facilitate discussions among people dealing with Web publishing. Listserver subscribers can discuss any topic relevant to FWS Web publishing, such as upcoming meetings or events, what's working or not, or the effects of new technology, budgets, and policies.

To subscribe to the listserver, send a message to listserv@www.fws.gov. Leave the subject line blank. In the body of the message, type: **subscribe fws-web [your name]** For example, subscribe fws-web Jane Doe.

Don't leave any blank spaces at the start of the message. Our cc:Mail often inserts a tab with five blank spaces; make sure to delete them or the listserver will get confused.

To unsubscribe, send a message to listserv@www.fws.gov with **unsubscribe fws-web [your name]** in the body of the message.

For more information about the listserve, check out <http://sii.fws.gov/webpublish>

IS YOUR WEBSITE "BOBBY" APPROVED?

Your Web pages should be accessible to everyone. We often think of hardware or soft-



ware limitations, but we also need to think about users with disabilities who need to be able to access our pages. Check out "Building Accessible Web Sites: Guidelines for Web Page Developers" provided by Larry Dean, Region 3 External Affairs, at <http://sii.fws.gov/webpublish> under "draft accessibility." Dean explains about the service called "Bobby" that will test Web pages directly from the Center for Applied Special Technology Web site.

DID YOU FIND A FWS WEB PAGE ERROR?

If you see an error, so do others who are browsing through the pages. Let the page manager know about the error in order to correct it. For Pacific Region pages, use the contact information on the page. If there isn't an E-mail connection or phone number, send an E-mail to Judith Maule or Ben Fell. They'll work with the responsible program or station to correct the problem.

See **SHORT STUFF...** Page 9

Launching Your Web Site

Follow this advice from the Region 1 Web Master

Your site must be linked to the Region 1 Web site. Here's what should happen, according to Web Manager, Ben Fell:

1) You will need to complete a Project Charter (see <http://sii.fws.gov/webpublish/> for a sample) and submit it to the R1 Web Manager.

2) The Web Manager will establish an FTP account and unique password so the Web page manager can send files directly to the Region 1 server.

3) The page will be posted on a preview site and reviewed by the Web Manager and appropriate representatives of the R1 Web Publishing Council.

4) After the site is approved, it will be posted as a new site with a listing on the Regional home page and links on the appropriate programmatic page(s).

5) The Web Manager will also notify Charlie Grymes, our National Web Manager, so the page can be listed on

the National home page.

6) Web page managers are responsible for updating the page and for the accuracy and quality of the content. **PROTECT THE PASSWORD!** Passwords allow direct access to your web pages. Only the person designated on the Web Charter should have direct access to make changes on the pages. Questions? Contact Ben Fell by E-mail or at 503/231-6293.

Upcoming Events

National Hunting and Fishing Day

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

Kern Valley Vulture Festival

When: Sept. 24-27
Where: Weldon, CA
Contact: 760/378-3340
krcc@kernvalley.com

National Wildlife Refuge Week

When: Oct 10-17
Where: Nationwide
Contact: Susan Saul
503/872-2728

How to Develop...

Continued from Page 1

WHAT IS YOUR PURPOSE?

Determine the main topic for your page. What types of information do you want to communicate? Are you trying to reduce repetitive phone calls? Do you need to share timely information about issues or events?

WHAT FACTS SUPPORT THE PURPOSE?

List some basic facts related to the purpose of your Web page or issues you want to cover. Support your facts with hardcore data to help you evaluate the success of your site. For instance, how many phone calls do you receive that might be better served by information on a Web site? Is the Internet a good way for people to get the kind of information they are seeking?

WHAT ARE YOUR GOALS?

List specific goals to achieve with your Web communications. Remember, the goals should support your purposes. Are you just trying to convey accurate information about a current issue? Or are you trying to change your audience's attitude or behavior? Try to select goals that can be evaluated.

WHAT IS YOUR MESSAGE?

Resist the temptation to say too much. People won't remember several detailed messages but they can remember a few that are simply stated. Are your messages engaging and presented in a way that will encourage people to visit your page again?

WHO IS YOUR AUDIENCE?

Knowing your audience will help you effectively publicize your issues. Remember, this is a WorldWideWeb! Who are your audiences and how much do they know about your station, issue, or project?

Do you need and are you ready to share specific information to a worldwide audience? For example, can you afford the shipping costs if a person from Holland wants to buy T-shirts you're offering for sale?

WHAT IS YOUR TIMELINE?

List key dates for developing and using your Web page. Do you need it to be up and running before Refuge Week? Another event?

Work backwards and assure that you'll have time to design the page, get it registered, and prepare and upload information.

WHAT RESOURCES WILL YOU NEED?

Is your current hardware and software adequate? Does the staff need training? Will your office staff try to develop the Web site, or will you work with a Web site developer? Have you allotted time to develop and maintain pages? Do you need to find partners or volunteers that can help? From NCTC to local courses, from the Internet to local bookstores, there are scores of classes and materials that can provide assistance.

ACTION PLAN AND COSTS

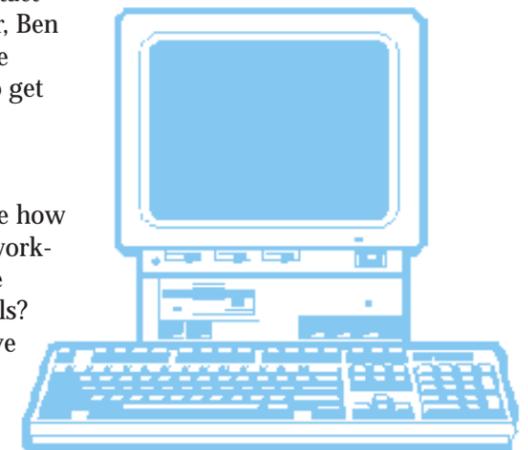
Who does what, how does it relate to your timeline, and how much will each step cost? You can produce a Web site in a matter of days using staff time and existing photos and art. You can also spend hundreds, or thousands, of dollars working with a private Web site designer. Contact Region 1 Web Manager, Ben Fell or others who have developed Web sites to get advice about costs.

EVALUATE!

Periodically evaluate how well your Web site is working. Are you seeing the fulfillment of your goals? Are you getting positive responses from Web page users? How many people are "hitting" your site?

Evaluate, then make needed changes. Learn from your mistakes! Browse the Internet and glean ideas from interesting and effective sites. And once you're up and running, continue planning for success. **O**

Judith Maule chairs Region 1's Web Publishing Council and is the outreach specialist for fisheries in External Affairs.



"Who does what, how does it relate to your timeline, and how much will each step cost?"

From the Web Manager...

Continued from Page 1

Web site. Sometime this fall, staff at even the smallest offices will be able to enter their local information into a standard form. This electronic form will be available on your screen at a special Web site — it won't be on paper.

You'll be able to type (or paste from WordPerfect) the basic information about your office into the standard fields on the electronic form. After filling in the blanks, you'll click on the "Hmm, I think this looks OK" button. That will create a Web page for your office. (Sorry, no drum roll, musical effects, or flashing lights come with this process.)

You'll be able to preview it, and modify the form until you're satisfied. Up to this point, no one else will see your drafts. When you're ready for prime time, you'll get your Web Publishing Council representative (there's one for each Region and Assistant Director) to give it a quick review. Then we'll make your site available to the public.

Did you think Web work was supposed to be complex, full of jargon and computer classes? Nyah. You know what to say about your office — how many times already have you explained to your friends and family what your office does? If you can fill in the blanks and click on a button, you should be able to publish those same explanations on the Web.

The process should be quick initially, and easy to revise, update, and expand the resulting Web pages later;

We're already busy with our current workloads. We're supposed to focus on the resources we're managing, not the technological tools.

Once Web publishing is as easy as fill-in-the-blanks and click, every office involved in public contact will probably have at least one Web page online. If nothing else, such a page can answer the common administrative inquiries so folks won't need to call us (or send E-mail) to find out the hours that we're open, the directions to the office to deliver packages, etc. That might even free up some time so we can focus more on fish,

current hassle of getting trained in Web publishing technology.

What else will you need to know? Well, the person doing the online publishing will still need to know the rules of the outreach game — when to release a draft document for public comment, when to announce an upcoming event, that sort of thing. And the Web publisher will need to stay up-to-speed about their local office information. If we can't keep the correct phone numbers and mailing addresses online (with correct area code and zip code), it will be harder



ducks, plants, ecosystems, public use programs, etc.

Of course, Web publishing needs to be flexible as well as simple. Those offices with Web-savvy staff and lots of information to share must still be able to create a wide range of Web pages, with facts, pictures, maps, resources, and reports. Not every office is large and full of computer specialists, however. This radical revision is necessary to eliminate the

to get public respect for our biological recommendations, right? **O**

Charlie Grymes is the Service's national web manager in Washington, D.C.

OUTREACH ACCOMPLISHMENTS

An Interview with Charlie Grymes

The national Web Manager answers some commonly-asked questions

Editor's Note: Some of Charlie's answers relate to the new, automated system for launching a Web site that will be inaugurated this fall (See "From the Service's Web Manager," page 1).

Who decides what should or should not be on a Web page?

The local project leader, refuge manager, etc. will determine how much to say. When we change over to the basic template being developed for use this fall, the online form you fill out will provide only the fundamental information, like office name, address, and responsibilities. After that, it's up to the local office manager to determine how much outreach is enough outreach, and how much should be done via the Web.

Can we afford all this Web publishing?

The Service is committed to outreach. We can't afford *not* to explain who we are and what we do, if we want to get the staff and funding to complete our mission. Fill-in-the-blanks forms should take no more than an hour to complete. Offices with major outreach initiatives may also discover that Web publishing can *reduce* some costs, such as distribution of documents with expensive color pictures and maps.

Is all of this sort of just happening?

There's been a lot of volunteer initiative and serendipity up until now. Web publishing has been a "bottom-up" rather than "top-down" process. Now we're shifting to a more professional approach, with both management direction and volunteer enthusiasm. In a few cases, there's even a budget identified for Web-related outreach.

What's ahead? Is there a plan?

We use tax dollars to publish with a purpose, not for fun. Our official Web sites need to be organized so key messages get communicated successfully to the target audience. To get there from our current muddle of material on the Internet, each region and assistant director now has a Web Publishing Plan (a Servicewide plan is being completed, too).

Each region and assistant director has a representative on the Web Publishing Council

to coordinate efforts and share ideas. But the real initiative will stay with the local offices.

Who makes FWS web policies?

It's all so new, so different — and we're adapting fast so our policies match reality as the Internet evolves. A lot of policy issues and other questions are being handled through regional Web Publishing Councils. The standard approaches to public affairs apply to Web publishing — be interesting, be accurate, be fair. Web pages and E-mail are effective, and they stimulate feedback more quickly than most other communication tools. A lot of the Service employees have discovered through trial-and-error how best to handle the feedback and update or expand Web sites.

Will there be enough security?

Yes. There's always the risk of "hackers." They are a problem for everyone using the Internet. We have locks on our office doors and keys for our vehicles. Web sites will require protection, as well.

Forgery in electronic communications is possible, just as with paper. The Service deals with some controversial issues, and we'll need to make sure our Web sites are distinctive. Through the logo and other tools, we'll have to be sure the public is not confused by imitators and so-called "friends" who aren't really supportive of our mission.

Where do I go for more information?

There's a listserv (fws-web@www.fws.gov), a Web site on the SII (sii.fws.gov/webpublish/), training support from NCTC, and flesh-and-blood people to call for help. In addition to Judith Maule, the Web Publishing Council representative for your region, you can also contact the Service's web manager (Charlie Grymes) in the Office of Public Affairs at (202) 208-5634 or Charlie_Grymes@fws.gov **O**

"The process should be quick initially, and easy to revise, update, and expand the resulting Web pages later."

"We can't afford not to explain who we are and what we do."



"Ducks are not the only ones connected to Webs!"



Take the Lead in OUTREACH!

Think in new ways, speak to new audiences

By Rick Coleman

"The world will not evolve past its current state by using the same thinking that created it."
Albert Einstein

Think about it! Our society's awareness and support for wildlife conservation will not evolve past its current state as long as we rely upon the same tools, programs, audiences, and intensity that created the current level of support. We need to think in new ways! And get bigger and faster with our ideas!

I am encouraged by the way Service personnel are showing an ever-increasing acceptance of the concept of "outreach." As an agency, we have evolved to a point just beyond "a grudging willingness to go along with outreach;" yet the actions we often take resemble a "more of the same" approach — often with disappointing long term results.

It reminds me of the classic story of a tourist in a foreign land who, when faced with a language barrier, simply SPOKE LOUDER in the wrong language! Our first challenge is to even attempt to communicate with a "foreign" audience. Our second is communicating in their language, reaching out to their values, and inspiring their natural passion to act on their own behalf.

Too often, we preach to the same old audience because it's easy and they speak our language. Ten years later, we find ourselves with the same constituents and little more.

We must dare to reach out to new audiences. To do this, we need to choose our audiences wisely, stay focused, set reasonable targets — and learn their language and communication methods. Our first goal is to see our conservation message printed in their materials, and written by them! Our second is to keep them going (and connected) with new information and encouragement, while we set our sights on another new audience.

An additional challenge we face is to make the common sense of doing outreach a common practice. This is our most powerful conservation tool. More powerful than a D-9 tractor. More influential than the best briefing statement ever written. Yet many managers delegate outreach duties to someone in the ranks and go back to using the more limited tools of doing business as usual.

Since you are reading this in "Out & About," you already believe! You are ready to **take the lead!** So try something really new. Get your supervisor to be the "first to follow!" Share the credit with your supervisor as you chart a new course and explore new ways to foster understanding and support for wildlife conservation!

"A leader may chart the way, may point out the road, but many leaders and many people must do the building." Eleanor Roosevelt

Rick Coleman is assistant regional director for External Affairs.

"Make the common sense of doing outreach a common practice."

Can You Pass the FWS Web Site Quiz?

What stations can I visit when I come to Region 1?

The "Visitor Directory" link takes you to a Region 1 directory of stations and also provides answers to frequently asked questions. Check it to see if information about your station is correct (and contact Judith Maule, if it isn't).

Where can I find a list of links to updates on important Region 1 issues?

The Regional homepage <www.r1.fws.gov>.

Where do I find employment updates?

Click on the link to "Employment" on the left side of the Region 1 homepage.

What information is available about specific programs?

Check the links on the left side of the Region 1 homepage.

How can I find out about national issues?

Go to the bottom of the Region 1 homepage and click on the link to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service at www.fws.gov.

How can I find out about other regions?

After you've linked to the national homepage, click on "where" to find links to other regions and a map.

Where can I find answers to frequently asked questions?

The national and regional homepages have a link to frequently asked questions, and also to each state agency's homepage.

Buzz Words in Web Publishing

Home Page — usually refers to the first page of a web site (like the title page of a book)

HTML — Hyper Text Markup Language is the computer code that a Web browser converts into the text on your monitor (images are converted from GIF or JPG files).

HTTP — Hyper Text Transport Protocol is the initial handshake between computers so they know how to talk to each other.

Launch — to start up a Web browser, typically by double-clicking on an icon. Also refers to initially creating a Web site, that is

developing Web pages and announcing the Web site's address via news releases, E-mail, faxes, skywriting, messages in bottles tossed into the ocean, etc.

URL — Uniform Resource Locator is the

address of a file on the Internet. The URL for the Service home page is www.fws.gov

Web page — a file on the Internet that can be viewed with a Web browser, like Netscape Navigator or Internet Explorer. It can include text, photos, and/or graphics, even audio and video clips.

Web site — a location on the Internet with Web pages.

WWW — World Wide Web. Not all Web sites have "www" at the start of their address, such as refuges.fws.gov and info.fws.gov



Short Stuff...

Continued from Page 4

TEST DRIVE YOUR NEW SITE

Ask a few office mates or housemates to find a particular bit of information on your station's page, but don't tell her or him where or how to find it (other than the URL to get to the right introductory homepage). As they begin working their way through your site, ask them to "think out loud." Record what they say and do; consider using a camcorder to catch all of the steps they follow.

Do the navigational elements guide the user as they should? Does the organization of the pages work as well for other users as it did for you? Note where the users get blocked or confused and develop solutions to make your site easier to navigate. Was your user frustrated by the time it takes for graphics to load? Was the music distracting or did it help focus on the content?

Now it's time to make corrections!

LOOKING FOR ANSWERS?

How many of your callers ask you generic questions about the Service or topics outside of your expertise? If they have Internet access

you can direct them to many resources that are already on FWS sites. Have you checked out the Region 1 Frequently Asked Questions Page? Have you directed them to current news releases listed under External Affairs? Browse and use these resources to provide more efficient customer service. See if you can answer the questions to the regional and national Web site quiz!

DON'T FORGET: PROMOTE THE FWS!

Use your Web site to convey these important Service messages:

- The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is a Federal agency whose mission, working with others, is to conserve fish and wildlife and their habitats.
- The Service helps protect a healthy environment for people, fish, and wildlife.
- The Service helps Americans conserve and enjoy the outdoors.

Judith Maule chairs Region 1's Web Publishing Council and is the outreach specialist for fisheries in External Affairs.

Scout Award

Marti Collins, Refuge Manager at Desert National Wildlife Range in Las Vegas, NV, was selected Region 1's Boy Scout/Girl Scout Employee of the Year. Collins was recognized for her continuing support for Boy Scouts and Eagle Scouts who helped with a variety of activities, including installing posts and barrier cables, preparing and planting a hillside and creek area, and building picnic tables and backpacking them to a remote cabin.

Girl Scouts in her "Linking Girls to the Land" program completed plant identification and desert survival training and learned about birding, animal adaptations, careers, and other conservation issues.

O&A on Web

Beginning with this issue, *Out & About* will be posted on the Region 1 Web site, under the Publications link listed on the left side of the page.

Three-peat! Out & About Wins Again

For the third year in a row, your Pacific Region outreach newsletter, *Out & About*, won a top award in the Association for Conservation Information's annual contest. The newsletter claimed first place in the "Internal Communications" category. In previous years, the newsletter has won first and second place awards.

Special thanks go to dozens of Region 1 employees who have submitted many interesting and timely articles. Recognition also goes to Editor Jeanne Clark, Designer Kathie Nute of Western Type and Telecommunications, and their Region 1 support team — Susan Saul (External Affairs) and Vaughn Ruppert and Kendal Morris (EPIC).

EEO Awards

The Office of Human Resources recently recognized three project leaders for their outstanding contributions with Regional Director EEO awards. **Mike Paiya**, Hatchery Manager at Warm Springs NFH, won praise for his ongoing involvement in regional and national diversity recruitment efforts.

Dean Rundle, Refuge Manager at San Diego NWR, has long been supportive of and involved in regional and national diversity-related activities.

Linda Watters, now Branch Chief of Operations and Administration for Refuges, received recognition for her multi-year role in furthering affirmative action employment goals while coordinating the Student Career Experience Program.

Contact Mandy Olund to make nominations at 503/231-2260.

Stopping Illegal Internet Sales

Special Agent Bob Snow (Burlingame, CA) was interviewed by the national media about FWS efforts to tackle sale of illegal items, including wildlife, through the Internet.

The nation's number one on-line auction house, eBay, often carries wildlife items which cannot be sold, such as migratory birds, endangered species mounts, and big game trophies that violate the Lacey Act. Agent Snow worked with eBay to remove the illegal items and warn would-be sellers about the law.

Refuge Week

Oct. 10-17 is Refuge Week! Please take time to enter your events on the FWS special events calendar at <http://sii.fws.gov/r9refuges> and consider inviting members of the regional directorate to attend. Contact Susan Saul for assistance at 503/872-2728.

More Upcoming Events

Walk on the Wildside

When: Oct. 16
Where: Stone Lakes NWR
Contact: Jeanne Clark 916/979-2086
Jeanne_Clark@fws.gov

Nisqually NWR Celebration

When: Oct. 16
Where: Nisqually NWR
Contact: Sheila McCartan 360/753-9467

American River Salmon Festival

When: Oct. 22-24
Where: Sacramento, CA
Contact: Bruce Forman 916/358-2885

Sandhill Crane Festival

When: Nov. 5-7
Where: Lodi, CA
Contact: Bruce Forman 916/358-2353

THE MEDIA CORNER

Public Affairs Gets Wired!

Internet is boosting efficiency and customer access

By Joan Jewett

The widespread use of the Internet has revolutionized the way those who deal with public affairs do business. To see what I mean, check out the Region 1 home page or the Service's national web site. Both are chock full of information that in the past would have consumed reams of paper and days of labor to disseminate.

Now, with the click of a mouse, reporters and other members of the public can see our news releases and get additional information about them, such as species population statistics or locator maps. Increasingly, photographs that can be downloaded are becoming part of the packages. And I'm told that video images also will be available in the not-too-distant future.

This all adds up to making the Internet an extraordinarily powerful tool for the Public Affairs Office staff, and many information and education specialists, who deal daily with members of the media who always want everything "yesterday."

In the fast-paced news business, where every split second counts, immediacy is everything. In the past, our ability to get information out could be unacceptably slow. All but the most important news releases were mailed out, meaning that reporters sometimes received them a week or more after they were dated. By then, it's old news and few reporters will pay attention.

For an example of how the Public Affairs Office is using the Internet, go to the regional home page, click on news releases, and find the one titled "The Bald Eagle Is Back." Scroll to the bottom of the news release. Click on the blue statement offering more information. Immediately you are linked to the Washington Office's home page. There, you can find just about anything you want to know about bald eagles.

The same treatment is being done with the proposed delisting of the Aleutian Canada goose. Readers will be able to link to an Aleutian Canada goose web site that Region 7 created.

Think how much time, paper, and expense this saves over the old method of sending



The Region 1 Web site provides instant breaking news and links to national issues and related resources, such as updates on bald eagle recovery efforts.

out bulky press packets in overnight mail! There are still small newspapers and radio stations that don't have Internet access, so we still send out some press packets; but increasingly, media outlets are getting online and their reporters prefer receiving their information electronically.

To meet that demand, the Public Affairs Office now gives reporters or anyone else the ability to receive our news releases via e-mail. All they have to do is go to our subscriber site, sign up for one of our four listservers and they will automatically receive news releases instantaneously, the moment we post them. The listservers are divided geographically: the entire region; California and Nevada; Oregon, Washington and Idaho; and Hawaii. That way, subscribers can receive only the news releases of interest to their area. If you would like to subscribe to our news release server, just go to FW1ListServer@r1.fws.gov and sign up.

All of this means that those of us who deal with the news media can be more responsive and give better customer service than ever before. If we are going to continue to fulfill our mission and build support as stewards of the public trust resources we need to be better at getting the word out about what we are doing.

The Internet is an indispensable direct wire to our customers!

Joan Jewett is chief of Region 1's Public Affairs Office.

"In the fast-paced news business, where every split second counts, immediacy is everything."

Planning for Lewis and Clark Bicentennial

Commemoration will bring new audiences to FWS sites

By Susan Saul

Lewis and Clark's exploration of the Uncharted West is one of America's greatest stories of adventure. From 1803-1806, their expedition traveled 8,000 miles, experiencing lands, rivers, wildlife, and peoples that no Americans ever had before.

By the end of their journey, Lewis and Clark had described 178 plants and 122 animals previously unknown to science. They introduced ecological methods of study and paved the way for other scientists who followed in succeeding expeditions.

The national commemoration of the Lewis and Clark Bicentennial in 2003-2006 will bring thousands of visitors to the some 35 refuges and hatcheries along the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail that stretches from St. Louis, Missouri, to the mouth of the Columbia River. People want to revisit this historic event and recapture the spirit of romance and adventure.

These visitors will place additional demands on refuge and hatchery facilities that often are inadequate to handle existing visitation, and they will put pressure on sensitive sites such as colonial nesting bird islands and endangered species habitats. They will increase the risk of spreading non-native plant and animal species.

But, they also will present a huge, brand new audience for the Service. This historic expedition offers a pathway to talking about the Service, its mission, and the ways in which the land, fish and wildlife, and people along the Lewis and Clark Trail have been changed in the intervening 200 years.

The Service has begun planning for the bicentennial, including the development of a six year budget plan. It is one of 14 Federal agencies that have signed a memorandum of understanding with the National Lewis and Clark Bicentennial Council to cooperate and collaborate on bicentennial projects and events.

In cooperation with state, federal, and tribal governments and the Council, the Service intends to provide information, interpretation, and educational programs, and sustain stewardship of natural and historical resources along the Lewis and Clark Trail.

For more information, contact Susan Saul at 503/872-2728. **O**

Susan Saul is the regional Lewis and Clark bicentennial coordinator as well as the outreach specialist for refuges and wildlife in External Affairs.

Favorite Web Sites

Take a moment to visit some of these excellent resources!

Fws-web@www.fws.gov

This site has lots of great Web-related information, ranging from updates to distance learning opportunities.

<http://sii.fws.gov/webpublish/>

Browse here for guidance on setting up Web sites and current policy information.

<http://www.r1.fws.gov/pacific/>

One of the Pacific Region's newest Web sites and maybe one of the most sophisticated and complex in Region 1! Lots of information and wonderful images.

<http://www.r1.fws.gov/crfpo/>

The Columbia River Fisheries Program site is a good example of using links to other sites to provide useful information to employees and the general public. Routinely check the links to keep up with current information.

<http://www.sfwr.org>

Send a friend a postcard as you check out this great marketing idea provided by Sport Fish and Wildlife Restoration.

<http://fedpage.doi.gov>

Looking for current information about issues affecting California's natural resources? From news releases, decision documents, and public meetings to environmental impact statements, you can find it all at this site featuring the latest from the USFWS, BLM, BR, USGS, USFS, and NPS.

<http://www.nctc.fws.gov/history/heritagecommittee.html>

If you're a history buff, be sure to visit this site developed by NCTC Historian Mark Madison.

<http://www.recreation.gov>

This site provides links to recreational opportunities on federal lands. Are you listed?

<http://www.wta.org>

The Washington Trails Association provides an engaging set of Web pages. Check out their navigational devices (tools for getting from one page to another).

<http://www.oregon-plan.org/book/home.html>

Check this site for a simplified approach to a complex topic — and some very enjoyable artwork.

How to Get Good PR from Garbage

Stockton FRO volunteers for highway litter pickup program

By Mark Pierce

We haven't figured out how to turn garbage into gold, but we have found a way to turn it into positive public relations!

Employees from the Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary Fishery Resource Office in Stockton, California adopted a three-mile section of Highway 12, east of Lodi, through Caltrans' Highway Litter Pickup Program. Since first enrolling in the program in the fall of 1997, twelve of the staff and friends have volunteered more than 50 hours of time to collect over

70 bags of trash.

The most unusual items found have included Monopoly money, various undergarments, and more vodka bottles than the crew can count. No real money has been discovered, but the staff of the SSJEFRO is getting their reward by helping to beautify a small piece of their community, getting an occasional friendly honk from passers-by, and receiving recognition and good PR from the freeway signs announcing who's adopted this stretch of road.



FWS employees get good PR on California highway sign.

Mark Pierce is a supervisory fishery biologist at the Sacramento-San Joaquin Estuary Fishery Resource Office in Stockton.

Events and Festivals Workshop

This half-day workshop will cover the basics of festival planning, from developing partnerships and timelines to the costs and economic benefits to communities. It is being offered as a pre-conference workshop separate from but prior to California's Rural Tourism conference in Palm Springs September 27-28. Cost is \$70.

Where: Palm Springs, CA
When: September 26, 1-5 p.m.
Contact: Jeanne Clark E-mail or 916/979-2086

Building Community Support

Need some help dealing with people management issues with those who may not understand the science behind proposals, scientific documents, or other plans? This NCTC course provides field case studies that include approaches for increasing support for your plans.

When: November 14-19, 1999
Where: Shepherdstown, WV
Contact: Sharon Howard at 304/876-7494

Keep the Wildlife Alive

This six week, online workshop will explore the topic of endangered species. Weekly topics include the Diversity of Life, Threats to Species, Exploring Places for Wildlife, Independent Study, Teaching Endangered Species, and Making a Place for Wildlife. Register for \$90, get 2 credits through Hamline University for \$240, or audit for \$35.

When: October 4 - November 12, 1999
Where: Internet
Contact: www.nwf.org/wildalive/workshop/registration.htm

Cispus Communication Skills Workshop

The Cispus Workshop covers communication skills related to natural resource management. Explore in depth one of three topics: Successful Teams, Meetings Management, or Outreach and Public Involvement. Cost for instruction, lodging, and meals is \$300. Learn more at: <http://cispus.r1.fws.gov/welcome.htm>.

When: March 6-10, 2000 - Must register by 12/15/99
Where: Randle, WA
Contact: E-mail or call Susan Saul at 503/872-2728
Or Tony Faast (Federal Aid) at 503/231-6128

Closing the Distance...

Continued from Page 3

“Distance learning allows us to provide the right training, to the right person, at the right time.”

teletraining, students assemble at a “learner site” where they can see and hear the instructor and the instructor can hear and receive electronic responses from the participants via the keypad system or telephone.

“Don’t go wandering out of the room, thinking the instructor won’t know,” jokes Georgen. “Instructors can and do ask questions of individual participants. Learner accountability is as important in distance learning classes as it is for residence courses.”

Unlike the classroom, where it is impossible to ask an “anonymous” question, distance learning keypads include an anonymous button, which allows the participant to ask a question or make a comment without being identified.

Audio-graphics conferencing offers another dimension for distance learning. Students cannot see the instructor, but can hear and see presentations and digital images via a computer with conferencing software.

For example, NCTC asked Stu Mitchell (National Forensic Lab) to instruct 50 law enforcement personnel regarding the conversion from analog to digital radios. He did not have time to travel across the country to make a 45-minute presentation at an NCTC class. Instead, Mitchell prepared images and graphics using PowerPoint and presented them via the Service Wide Area Network (SWAN) to an NCTC classroom computer. The images were displayed on a projection screen and students were able to hear Mitchell and watch him use his mouse to point out various features of the radios. Mitchell was also able to direct questions to the students to check their understanding.

The Service created the NCTC out of recognition that a well-trained staff can better achieve the Service’s mission and goals. Distance learning has become an important part of the center’s overall training strategy.

Instructors are busy looking at the hundreds of courses already offered at NCTC to determine which portions can be “transitioned” to a distance learning format. The technology can also be used in other training venues.

“There is an ongoing push at the center to develop tools to accommodate individual needs,” says Georgen. “Distance learning does just that by allowing us to provide the right training, to the right person, at the right time. This new technology allows us to maintain a high standard of quality instruction — and to do it cost effectively.”

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



Photo by NCTC

The Web via Distance Learning

NCTC has produced several distance learning broadcasts for home page developers and other who want to learn more about the potential for communicating using the Intranet. Each broadcast has been videotaped and is available from NCTC:

- *Optimizing the Impact of Your Home Page* (October 1998) shows how to use Web trends reports to evaluate who’s looking at your pages.
- *Creating Great Web Graphics* (January 1999) focuses on the basics of using Paint Shop Pro software to create images for Web pages.

- *Web Publishing Technology: Solutions vs. Headaches* (May 1999) covers the strengths and weaknesses of Web publishing and other outreach tools.
- *Web Policy Violations: How to Avoid Career-Limiting Events* (August 1999) deals with policy issues.

For an interactive form to order videotapes, course schedules, descriptions, and a list of downlink sites, see the NCTC Web site at: <http://www.nctc.fws.gov>

ENTIRELY
EPIC

Less Is More... But It Ain’t Easy

Hints for producing better publication and Web page designs

By John Ivie and Ken Morris

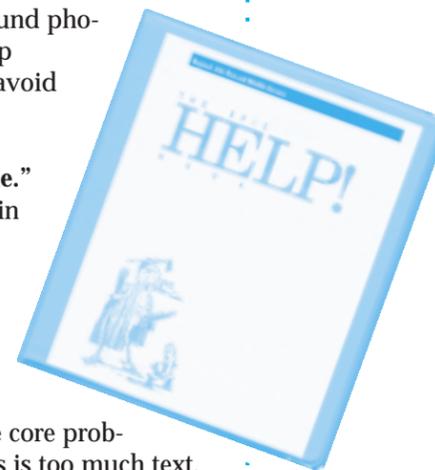
The author E.B. White liked to recount a story about his writing professor, William Strunk: “When he delivered his oration on brevity to the class, he leaned forward over his desk, grasped his coat lapels in his hands, and in a husky, conspiratorial voice said, ‘Rule thirteen. Omit needless words! Omit needless words! Omit needless words!’”

In design, we might paraphrase Professor Strunk’s admonition to read: “Omit needless design elements!” Simplicity is not only the basis of good writing: It is also the basis of good design. Simplicity is also deceptive. Sometimes the simplest designs take the most time—the product of ruthless pruning and reworking. White confessed that after 40 years, he was still working on the problem.

Today, because of advances in computer technology, people have easy access to multiple fonts, clip art, and design templates. All too often, the result is design that looks cluttered. Here are a few simple rules that will simplify your designs and ultimately result in a product—whether it is printed or electronically published—that more effectively reaches your audience.

- **Avoid the “ransom note” school of design!** Keep type to a single family (for instance, the book, bold, and italic versions of the Times Roman font). Or, at most, use two fonts that provide simple contrast, such as the sans serif Univers face for headlines, and the serif Century Expanded face for text—as specified in the Servicewide design standards. (A “serif” font has additional, small strokes added to the tips of each letter; these strokes aid readability by helping the eye slide from one letter to the next. A “sans serif” font is plain and doesn’t have additional strokes on each letter.)
 - **Use borders, boxes, “frames” for photos, etc. sparingly.** Use only what you need to draw attention to text, organize information, and guide people around a page. Keep these elements as subtle as possible. Don’t use a 2-point border when a hairline will suffice. Don’t put
- outlines or frames around photos. In Web pages, keep backgrounds subtle—avoid distracting textured or embossed wallpaper.
- **Let your page “breathe.”** Give it plenty of margin or white space; there’s no need to cram each page full of stuff. Designing a page is like decorating a house, not packing a moving van. Often the core problem with “busy” pages is too much text. Remember Rule Thirteen!
 - **Limit the number of elements.** An element is any text block, photo, illustration, chart, etc. that appears on a single page. Ask yourself: If I eliminate that element, will my message still get across? If the answer is yes, you’re better off removing it. In Web pages, stay away from memory-hogging images and graphics, so that the maximum number of users can view your site easily.
 - **Place multiple similar elements in groups.** If you do have a lot of essential elements (such a bunch of “mug shots” of speakers for a symposium), place them in groups to help the reader make sense of the page.
 - **Don’t mix different illustration/clip art styles on the same page.** If you are producing a multi-page publication, remember that using art from a similar style family will help give the publication a unified look.
 - **Make sure you have plenty of contrast between type and background.** This is especially true in Web page design, where bright colors may display very differently on various monitors. Avoid neon greens, bright reds, etc. Also avoid placing large blocks of light type on dark backgrounds as this is hard to read.
- For design examples, consult your EPIC “HELP” book.

John Ivie and Kendal Morris are visual information specialists.



Creating a “Link” to the Past

Earthwatch expedition at Malheur NWR documented on the Web

By Virginia Parks

*“To the students
the site offered
both a medium
for creativity
and a lifeline to
their families.”*

We wondered if we were off to a shaky start when a student wrote in the community journal after the first day of field work, “I think it’s safe to say that we all understand why archaeologists are so weird. I guess after you’ve been stung by mosquitoes and roasted in the sun, your brain starts to get warped.”

What she and the seven other high school students from around the country soon learned is that the mosquito-sun warp is not an affliction restricted to archaeologists. In fact, by the end of the two-week project, this group of creative young adults was nearly as peculiar as their four archaeologist-mentors. And the community journal was just one medium the students used to express their fresh and quirky perspectives on their archaeological adventure.

“Rock Art of the Malheur Marshlands” was one of ten projects funded nationwide in 1998 by the Durfee Foundation through the Earthwatch Student Challenge Awards Program (SCAP). The aim of SCAP is to “excite the imagination and expand the potential of especially bright, creative young people, and stimulate these students’ curiosity about science and technology.”

For this project, the science was archaeology and the technology was primarily ancient (think stone-tool making, spear throwing, and tule boat construction). But in the summer of 1998, we also tested the waters of modern technology with gratifying success.

Conceived as a way for student team members to share their day-to-day experiences with family and friends and also educate the

public about archaeology, we designed a Web page using relatively primitive software (a shareware html editor) and little training (a one-day workshop).

After submitting a Web page charter for the regional web manager’s review, we produced the skeleton (we are archeologists, after all) of the project’s home page before the project began. During the project, we used a digital camera to take candid photos at work and play for downloading into the computer at our Malheur Field Station laboratory.

Each day, one or two students selected photos, wrote captions, and composed a virtual journal entry, sometimes excerpted from the written community journal they passed around. The following morning, we E-mailed the updated htm files to the web manager in Portland, who uploaded them onto our Web site.

By project’s end, the Web site chronicled some of the team members’ most memorable desert archaeology moments: mosquitoes drawing blood, finding arrowheads in the screen, taking dips in the canal, encounters with leeches and sagebrush bathrooms, and of course, their revelations about the fascinating science of archaeology.

To the students the site offered both a medium for creativity and a lifeline to their families. But for the Service, this World Wide Web link provided much broader outreach benefits by educating the general public about the rich cultural heritage of the National Wildlife Refuge System and the Service’s efforts to protect and interpret it. Archaeologists may be weird, but we know a great outreach opportunity when we see it!

Note from the author: Many Earthwatch SCAP projects are biological in nature. Find out more at the Earthwatch home page: <http://www.earthwatch.org/ed/scdurfee.htm>. You can access our “Rock Art of the Malheur Marshlands” page from there, or go to: <http://www.r1.fws.gov/crm/rockart.htm> 

Virginia Parks is an archaeologist with the Region 1 Cultural Resources Team.



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