



## Sauvie Island wetlands get a new look

**C**onstruction crews wrapped up work in October on a project that will restore more than 100 acres of wetlands on the state's Sauvie Island Wildlife Area.

Placement of new water control structures at the outlets of several seasonal lakes was one of the final steps in a series of projects undertaken over the past three years by Ducks Unlimited and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife. Much of the work had been delayed until this year by flooding and high water levels that persisted through the construction season.

Other components of the project on the wildlife area northwest of Portland include fencing of sensitive shoreline areas, to be completed before next spring, and new structures and pumps that allow managers to flood areas and draw down water levels in ways that mimic natural seasonal patterns. The overall project is intended to restore or enhance more than 1,900 acres of wetland and riparian habitats.

The work is part of a \$1.5 million project put together in 1995 that also includes habitat restoration in Washington's Vancouver Lowlands and Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge. About half of the funding came from a federal grant under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act.

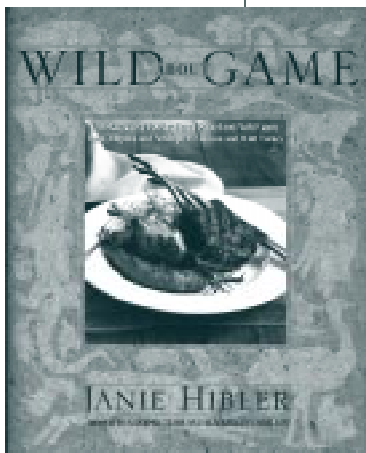
A second phase plan put together by Ducks Unlimited would tap the same federal grant program to help pay for restoration and enhancement of another 1,985 acres of wetlands on the north end of the Sauvie Island Wildlife

Area and on Metro properties along the adjacent Multnomah Channel. Projects on the Washington side of the Columbia River include more than 2,500 acres of wetland acquisition and restoration in the area between Vancouver and Woodland.

Working under the umbrella of the Pacific Coast Joint Venture, partners in the overall initiative include both state's wildlife agencies, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service, Ducks Unlimited, the Oregon Duck Hunters

Association, Metro, Clark County and Clark Public Utilities.

*Contact: Mark Nebeker, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, 18330 NW Sauvie Island Road, Portland OR 97231; 503-621-3488.*



Inside: Discounted prices on shirts, hats and books in this issue's Wetlands Gift Guide.

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### Sauvie Island wildlife

More than 250 species of birds use Sauvie Island's diverse habitats. Waterfowl numbers top the 150,000 mark during the peak of fall migration. Several thousand sandhill cranes pass through in spring and fall. Bald eagles are common in the winter. Year-round residents include 37 species of mammals, ranging from red fox to black-tailed deer, and 12 amphibian and reptile species.

## Focus shifts to fish habitat at Wood River Wetland

**L**ittle more than a canal for the past forty years, the lower Wood River is well on its way back to becoming a real river where it flows through the wetlands above the stream's mouth on Agency Lake.

A project spearheaded by Oregon Trout is putting the river's lower three miles back into the narrow, sinuous channel it carved through the marshes before the wetlands were diked and drained

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*After \$830,000 worth of work this summer and fall, most of the stream course has been rebuilt to provide a meandering 50-foot channel that averages six feet in depth.*

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and dredging obliterated the natural stream course in the 1950s.

Four thousand native plants line the new channel's banks, where restored riparian wetlands are expected to provide critical habitat for two endangered species of suckers as well as the Wood River's famed trophy trout.

The river channel work is just the latest in a series of projects to restore the rich natural system of marshes and riparian habitats on the Bureau of Land Management's 3,200-acre Wood River Wetland.

Aided by Ducks Unlimited and a host of other partners, BLM completed work earlier this year on a \$1.5 million project to restore almost 2,800 acres of wetlands on the site, which is 25 miles north of Klamath Falls.

The Oregon Trout project focuses on the river itself. Just a few months ago, the Wood River's lower reaches flowed through a 200-foot wide dredged canal that was only two feet deep.

After \$830,000 worth of work this summer and fall, most of the stream course has been rebuilt to provide a meandering 50-foot channel that averages six feet in depth. About half is in the historic channel, but the rest had to be rebuilt in a way designed to replicate the natural river. Additional work planned for next summer will route flows back into

the deepwater marsh that occupies the river's historic delta on Agency Lake.

Oregon Trout's partners in the \$1.5 million river project include BLM, the Bureau of Reclamation, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Klamath Basin Working Group,



**New Wood River channel**

Wedge Watkins/BLM

Pacific Power, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, the Klamath Tribes, the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the Oregon Department of Environmental Quality.

*Contact: Rich McIntyre, Oregon Trout, 117 SW Front Avenue, Portland OR 97204; 503-222-9091.*

## Wetlands Reserve Program funds NE Oregon projects

**T**he U.S. Natural Resources Conservation Service has approved funding for three major wetland projects in northeast Oregon's Union and Baker counties.

Two of the projects funded under the Wetlands Reserve Program involve properties in the Grande Ronde Valley, where The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited and the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife have combined efforts to purchase and restore key wetlands. One 308-acre property is

immediately adjacent to the state's Ladd Marsh Wildlife Area. The other includes 160 acres on Conley Lake east of LaGrande.

The third project funded by the Natural Resources Conservation Service will help a private landowner restore wetlands on 760 acres along Baldock Slough near Baker City.

*Contact: Roger Borine, Natural Resources Conservation Service, 625 SE Salmon Avenue #4, Redmond OR 97756; 541-923-4358.*

## Biodiversity project highlights wetlands

**W**etlands are a key target for conservation in a new statewide blueprint for action to conserve Oregon's native biological diversity.

The Oregon Biodiversity Project, a collaborative effort by Defenders of Wildlife, The Nature Conservancy, the Oregon Natural Heritage Program and more than 40 other cooperators, identified 42 "conservation opportunity areas" around the state as priorities for targeted efforts to conserve biodiversity.

More than one-third of the highlighted areas contain major wetland systems, ranging from coastal estuaries and river floodplains to mountain wet meadows and high desert marshes.

Wetlands are among the habitat types that have experienced the greatest declines from historic levels in Oregon. They also harbor a disproportionate share of the state's rare, threatened and endangered species. Wetlands of the upper Klamath Basin, for example, support more than 40 plant and animal species that are considered critically imperiled or vulnerable to extinction at the state or global levels, according to the Oregon Biodiversity Project's analysis.

Thirty percent of Oregon's terrestrial vertebrates (164 species) regularly use freshwater marshes, and Oregon's estuaries alone are used by more than 100 bird species and 35 species of fish and shellfish. Wetlands have particular significance for biodiversity because of their importance for migratory species, which depend



Klamath Basin wetlands

on these habitats as critical links in a chain that may extend far beyond the state's borders. All of Oregon's native salmon stocks depend on wetland habitats at one or more critical stages in their life history, as do millions of birds traveling the Pacific Flyway.

The Oregon

Biodiversity Project's findings are summarized in an atlas-style publication, *Oregon's Living Landscape* (available through the *Wetlands Gift Guide* included in this newsletter). Project data and software that allows users to conduct their own analysis is available on a CD-ROM. A separate publication, *Stewardship Incentives*, outlines a variety of options and incentives for land owners to improve management for biodiversity.

Contact: Sara Vickerman, Defenders of Wildlife, 1637 Laurel Street, Lake Oswego OR 97034; 503-697-3222.

### Conservation plans for small land owners

**S**mall land owners in Multnomah, Washington and Clackamas counties can get free assistance in developing plans to conserve water, soil and wildlife habitat on their properties under a new program established by local Soil and Water Conservation Districts.

Owners of city lots with a creek or wetlands are eligible for the program, as well as small nurseries, row crop, berries and Christmas tree farms.

For more information, contact Clair Klock, Soil and Water Conservation District, 2215 SE Morrison, Portland OR 97214; 503-231-2270 x103; klock@teleport.com.

### Clarifications

The article on the Brant Monitoring Project in the July issue of *Oregon Wetlands* indicated that the Pacific brant population had declined by about one-third since 1981. According to Tom Rothe of the Alaska Department of Fish and Game, the 1981 count was the highest on record, and the 1998 count of 129,700 brant was only five percent below the 34-year average. In Oregon, the number of brant wintering on the Oregon coast has declined by about 50 percent since 1992, with a record low of 580 birds counted in January 1998, according to U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service surveys.

The photo in the July issue of sandhill cranes on the Williamson River Delta was taken by Bob Main for The Nature Conservancy of Oregon.

# Refuges slated for major expansion

Last-minute congressional action in October cleared the way for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to move ahead with plans to expand Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge. Legislation sponsored by Oregon's Rep. Peter DeFazio and Sen. Ron Wyden

*Wetland restoration would improve habitat for waterfowl in the largest wintering area on the Oregon coast...*

would allow the agency to acquire up to 600 acres along the Coquille River estuary near Bandon.

In the meantime, the Fish and Wildlife Service is moving ahead with plans to expand two other national wildlife refuges in western Oregon to protect key wetland habitats. Tillamook County's Neskowin Marsh is the largest unprotected freshwater marsh along the Oregon coast. South of Corvallis, Snag Boat Bend includes one of the largest remaining blocks of native floodplain habitat along the Willamette River.

The Fish and Wildlife Service kicked off the planning process for the Neskowin Marsh and Snag Boat Bend additions with a formal public announcement of the proposals in September. Public review of the Bandon Marsh expansion proposal is expected to begin later this fall.

## 1. Coquille River estuary.

The proposed addition to the Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge includes diked former tidelands along the north side of the river just above the Highway 101 bridge. The Archaeological Conservancy has obtained an option to purchase a key property known as the Philpott Ranch for eventual transfer to refuge status. The property includes about 300 acres of diked pasture lands with high potential for restoration to tidal wetlands. Wetland restoration would improve habitat for waterfowl in the largest wintering area on the Oregon coast and boost recovery of Coquille River salmon and steelhead populations.



Philpott Ranch on Coquille River

Roy Lowe/USFWS

the sand dunes, and the proposal has drawn support from Tillamook County officials. The Nature Conservancy has already purchased about half of the area and hopes to eventually transfer the properties to the Fish and Wildlife Service.

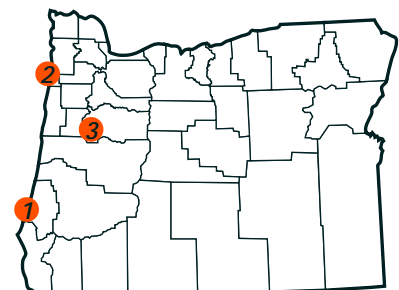
## 2. Snag Boat Bend.

Located on a big bend in the Willamette River a mile south of Peoria, this 290-acre property includes extensive backwater sloughs and high quality riparian habitats. The area would be added to the William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge three miles to the west. State and federal wildlife biologists consider the site one of the most significant habitats in the southern Willamette Valley. The site attracts large concentrations of migratory waterfowl during the winter and supports a great blue heron colony as well as western pond turtles and red-legged frogs.

Contact: Jim Houk, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 26208 Finley Refuge Road, Corvallis OR 97333-9533; 541-757-7236.

## 2. Neskowin Marsh.

The proposed addition to the Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge includes 320 acres just north of the community of Neskowin. Local residents have long sought protection for the marsh, which occupies a mile-long trough behind



# Oregon Dunes project builds on unique partnerships

**W**aterfowl hunters and off-road vehicle enthusiasts contributed to an unusual partnership that helped the U.S. Forest Service enhance a block of coastal wetlands on the Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area.

A September dedication ceremony at the Horsfall Wetlands north of Coos Bay marked a major step in the Forest Service's campaign to maintain shallow freshwater wetlands in areas that are rapidly changing to shorepine forest.

With support from a half-dozen partners, the Forest Service cleared invading pines from more than 20 acres of wetlands and constructed two shallow ponds totaling 7.5 acres in an area that is off-limits to vehicle use. The project also included a new year-round access route further north to allow off-highway vehicle users to cross from the dunes to the beach and minimize impacts on adjacent wetlands.

Partners in the \$65,000 project included Oregon

Duck Hunters Association, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, National Forest Foundation, Reedsport Ducks Unlimited, Oregon Department of Transportation ATV Fund, and Symms National Trail Fund.



Shorepines encroach on dune wetlands

The deflation plain wetlands found throughout the Oregon Dunes are a relatively recent phenomena. European beachgrass introduced earlier in the century stabilized the shifting sand dunes, and wind scoured the land in between the dunes down to the groundwater level. The resulting shallow ponds and seasonal marshes provide important habitat for waterfowl, shorebirds and songbirds. But without intervention,

the wetlands are soon invaded by shorepines and eventually become forests.

Contact: Kerrie Palermo, Oregon Dunes National Recreation Area, 855 Highway 101, Reedsport OR 97467; 541-271-6040.

## Oregon Coast's top 10 areas for wintering waterfowl

area	total waterfowl
Coquille Valley	48,088
Tillamook Bay	11,680
Siltcoos Lake	3,798
Coos Bay	2,317
Nestucca Bay	1,706
New River	1,424
Tahkenitch Lake	1,370
Devils Lake	1,109
Umpqua River	1,106
Siuslaw River	1,101

Source: U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 1998 Winter Waterfowl Trend Survey for Oregon Coast (Nehalem Bay to Goat Island). Survey conducted January 7-8, 1998.

## Congress OKs \$1.25 million for West Eugene project

**T**he Bureau of Land Management is slated to get another \$1,250,000 over the next year to buy wetland properties in West Eugene.

Congressional budget writers included \$750,000 for the West Eugene Wetlands Project in the final 1999 spending bill approved in October. The project was earlier awarded another \$500,000 out of 1998 funds that had not previously been allocated.

The final budget bill also included \$100,000 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to purchase a private in-holding within the Klamath Marsh National Wildlife Refuge in northern Klamath County.

The federal land purchases in West Eugene are a key element in local strategies to protect a network of remnant native habitats and restored wetlands in an area facing intense development pressure.

# Oregon Waterfowl Stamp marks 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary

By Brad Bales, Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife



*"The Gathering" by Robert Steiner, 15<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Oregon Waterfowl Stamp Image*

Fish and Wildlife has increased marketing efforts of commissioned artwork to raise needed funds for management programs. The print program was almost discontinued four years ago, but new strategies have improved sales. Royalty payments have increased tremendously in recent years and are now generating \$30,000 to \$40,000 per year for waterfowl and wetland programs.

The celebration of the 15<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the waterfowl stamp is highlighted by the quality of this year's painting. Robert Steiner, who also won the 1998 federal duck stamp contest, has provided a magnificent painting of a group of pintails with a mallard that truly portrays the beauty of these birds. With this type of quality artwork and new marketing strategies the importance of waterfowl stamps and their contribution to wildlife management and habitat conservation will expand the Oregon

conservation tradition.

*For a full color flyer describing the Oregon Waterfowl Stamp Program please contact the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife, P.O. Box 59, Portland, OR 97207. Or call 1-800-225-3971. All sales of stamps and prints directly fund management programs in Oregon, especially the ongoing efforts of the Oregon Wetlands Joint Venture.*

## *Projects supported by Duck Stamp funds*

- **Habitat restoration** on private lands and at state wildlife areas (Sauvie Island, Fern Ridge, Ladd Marsh, Summer Lake, Klamath, E.E. Wilson)
- **Duck banding and breeding population surveys**
- **Mallard nesting ecology study**
- **Oregon Wetlands Joint Venture communications:** newsletter, brochure, web page

1983 *Fifteenth* 1998  
*Anniversary*

**T**he conservation of wetlands and migratory birds is truly one of the most progressive, ongoing efforts in North America. Hunters have footed much of the bill for these efforts raising billions of dollars from the sale of waterfowl stamps and artwork across the nation.

In 1984, the first state of Oregon Waterfowl Stamp was issued depicting a flight of dusky Canada geese in the Willamette Valley. This event triggered the beginning of a new era of waterfowl and wetland management in the state raising funds for the protection of habitat and wildlife.

Waterfowl stamps currently produce revenues of about \$165,000 per year, with non-resident stamps generating another \$125,000 for migratory game bird programs. These dedicated funds have made possible the completion of numerous habitat projects across Oregon and the Pacific Flyway. Funds have also been used for population monitoring and research on numerous migratory bird species. Many projects supported by the Oregon Wetlands Joint Venture would not have been possible without support from these important funds. Even this newsletter is provided to you mostly by support from Oregon Waterfowl Stamp funding.

Much has changed since the first waterfowl stamp was issued but the continuing need for conservation has accelerated. In recent years, the Oregon Department of

# Volunteers aid Willamette Valley projects

**L**ocal volunteers are providing key support for wetland restoration efforts around Oregon. Examples of some community-based wetland projects in the Willamette Valley include:

**Fanno Creek.** A local volunteer group is working with a consortium of state and local agencies to restore native habitats on a two-acre site along the creek near Englewood Park in Tigard. Fans of Fanno Creek spear-headed the project and has recruited local citizens to help replant native shrubs and trees in the degraded wetlands along the urban creek, which still supports native cutthroat trout. Other project partners include the Unified Sewerage Agency, Metro, the Division of State Lands, the city of Tigard and the Oregon Community Foundation. *Contact: Fans of Fanno Creek (503-768-9592).*



Volunteers at Tualatin refuge

Dana Abel/Tualatin Riverkeepers

alder, Oregon ash, and red-osier dogwood. *Contact: Tualatin Riverkeepers (503-590-5813).*

**Cannery Park.** Volunteers from a half-dozen community groups and the Oregon National Guard helped construct a half-acre wetland this summer in Salem's Cannery Park. Local citizens turned out again in October to help plant 5,000 native wetland trees, grasses and shrubs. The idea for the project originated with

**Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge.** More than 100 volunteers turned out in June to plant trees, shrubs and other plants in recently restored wetlands on the refuge near Sherwood. Volunteers from the Tualatin Riverkeepers, Friends of the Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge, and Friends of Trees planted almost 7,000 plants, including soft-stemmed bulrush, wapato, red

neighborhood residents and was adopted by the Pringle Creek Watershed Council and the City of Salem. Almost a dozen other local groups, businesses and schools contributed to the project, which is expected to improve water quality and improve habitat for fish and wildlife. *Contact: Scott Duckett, City of Salem (503-588-6211).*

## Newsletter Survey

**W**e need your help to change and improve this newsletter. Please give us a hand by answering a few questions.

1. Overall how would you rate the quality of the newsletter?

- Excellent
- Good
- Fair
- Poor

2. Overall how would you rate your interest in the topics covered in this newsletter?

- Very interested
- Somewhat interested
- Not very interested

3. Are there other topics or content you would like to see in the newsletter?

4. What parts of the newsletter do you find most interesting?

5. What other wetland news and information sources do you read?

6. Would you consider ordering wetland products from the gift guide knowing that proceeds from sales benefit wetland restoration projects?

**Return to:**

- Oregon Wetlands Joint Venture, 1637 Laurel Street, Lake Oswego, OR 97034
- Or fax to: Joint Venture at 503-872-5269
- Or email comments to: BTaylorwet@aol.com

We appreciate your helping us improve the Oregon Wetlands newsletter.



## About Oregon Wetlands Joint Venture

**O**regon Wetlands Joint Venture is a coalition of private conservation, waterfowl, fisheries and agriculture organizations working with government agencies to protect and restore important wetland habitat.

The Joint Venture helps put together partnerships for a variety of wetland-related projects, including habitat restoration and enhancement on private and public lands, acquisition of key areas for permanent protection, and development of educational and interpretive programs.

Oregon Wetlands Joint Venture coordinates state-level activities for two regional partnerships under the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, an international effort to conserve wetland habitat for waterfowl and other fish and wildlife. The ***Pacific Coast Joint Venture***, created in 1991, includes all of western Oregon, as well as coastal British Columbia, Washington and northern California. The ***Intermountain West Joint Venture***, started in 1995, covers eastern Oregon and portions of nine other western states.

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Defenders of Wildlife  
Ducks Unlimited  
National Audubon Society  
Oregon Duck Hunters Association  
Oregon Farm Bureau  
Oregon Trout  
The Nature Conservancy  
The Trust for Public Land  
The Wetlands Conservancy

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Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife  
Oregon Division of State Lands  
Oregon Parks and Recreation Department  
Oregon Department of Transportation  
U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Bureau of Land Management  
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