

# WILD GOOSE TALES

FALL QUARTER 2017



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## President's Column



**Dave Landkamer**

Greetings Friends! As many of you who attended already know, we held our Annual Membership Meeting last Saturday at the Finley Wildlife Refuge headquarters, and enjoyed a festive afternoon of laughter and holiday treats to celebrate our many accomplishments during the past year (see the summary story on page 6). The articles in this issue of Wild Goose Tales provides a satisfying overview of our past and present successes in 2017, and a glimpse of what is yet to come, for your winter reading enjoyment.

As I reflected upon our progress this past year, I experienced a deeper sense of appreciation

for who we are as an organization, and of the ongoing and lasting impacts we have toward the conservation of our natural resources. We are a small all-volunteer organization that started up just 11 years ago, with an active membership of less than 150 and a Board of Directors of just 12, yet we add a great deal of value to our local conservation community. This fall we supported a commemorative event at Ankeny National Wildlife Refuge to honor the work of David B. Marshall in establishing our three central Willamette Valley refuges, to highlight our partnership with Salem Audubon Society and the US Fish & Wildlife Service in creating the Ankeny Hill Nature Center, and to showcase the outstanding natural resources at Ankeny NWR (see pages 2 & 3). As this newsletter is released, we are nearing completion of our new Woodpecker Loop Observation Deck and Environmental Education

## FRIENDS' MISSION

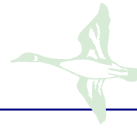
*The Friends of the Willamette Valley Refuge Complex is an independent nonprofit organization whose mission is to:*

- *Promote the conservation of the natural resources of the Refuge Complex*
- *Foster awareness and appreciation of the Complex through educational and recreational opportunities*
- *Participate in activities that help the Complex achieve its goals.*

Shelter (see page 4). And throughout the year, we conduct and support numerous activities across the refuges to expand understanding and appreciation of our outstanding resources, including elk surveys, trail maintenance, and bulb plantings (see pages 5, 7-11). The heartbeat of our weekly impact comes from the Wild Goose Nature Store (see page 12), which generates a steady stream of income for our projects, and serves as a welcoming and orientation presence at Finley NWR

(continued on Page 14)





## Ankeny Refuge Open House

The annual Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuge Complex Open House was at Ankeny Refuge this year on Sept. 23<sup>rd</sup>. Refuge volunteers and representatives from the Friends, the Salem Audubon Society, the Big Sit Team, the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, and refuge staff hosted several activities, stations, and exhibits. The sun was shining and the folks that came out really enjoyed learning about the refuges and the habitats and wildlife they protect.

Thanks to Friends volunteers Jeanne, Debbie, Bruce, Katie, Doug, Carroll, Elizabeth, Gerry, Azizah, and Dave! And thanks to Salem Audubon, the Big Sit team, the Marion Soil and Water Conservation District, and new Refuge volunteers Charnee and Steve.







Doug Spencer, Graham Evans-Peters, Ray Temple



Tom McAllister

## In Honor of David B. Marshall

By Doug Spencer

**Have you ever wondered how our Willamette Valley National Wildlife Refuges were established and by whom?** David B. Marshall was a wildlife biologist who worked for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service during the early 1960's and was requested to search out important wintering areas within the Willamette Valley for the threatened dusky Canada goose. Through thorough investigation of habitat in the Valley, David came up with 13 sites. Three that eventually became national wildlife refuges were Muddy Creek, now William L. Finley, Baskett Slough, and Ankeny NWRs.

Recently, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Friends of the Willamette Valley NWR Complex, and the Salem Audubon Society wanted to honor David Marshall for helping to establish the refuges. David not only was a wildlife biologist but was on the board of Portland Audubon Society and a strong advocate for environmental education for our children and adults. Knowing this, we all felt that the proposed outdoor environmental education classroom to be located adjacent to Peregrine Marsh off of Buena Vista Road on Ankeny NWR should be named in his honor.

On September 23<sup>rd</sup>, 2017, family and friends of David and representatives from the organizations mentioned above attended a special recognition for David at the future site of the Ankeny Hill Nature Center on Ankeny NWR. This recognition was the naming of the outdoor classroom in his honor. David passed a few years ago, but his wife Georgia and children were able to attend and speak on his behalf. Everyone had a great time and enjoyed listening to the comments from David's friends. His best friend from childhood and beyond, Tom McAllister, retired Outdoor Editor of the Oregon Journal and the Oregonian, spoke and had some very enlightening stories of their adventures from childhood, which made everyone laugh. This memorialization event for David was heartwarming and everyone left with heightened spirits knowing that this classroom will be honoring David Marshall's life of great achievements here in the Valley and elsewhere.

Presently funds for this classroom have not been acquired, but phase #1 of the Ankeny Hill Nature Center is funded and construction of this structure will begin in late 2018.



## The Woodpecker Loop Environmental Education Shelter

Woodpecker Loop at William L. Finley Refuge is one of the most popular trails on the Complex. In the 1970's an observation deck was built under a large oak tree next to the trail to increase visitor's enjoyment of the Loop. It was a shady place to rest and looked out onto a beautiful view of the oak savanna and points beyond.

Over time, the deck started to show signs of deterioration and the Refuge added it to its list of maintenance projects. As attractive and popular as the deck was, Refuge Managers ultimately decided that rebuilding it under the oak tree created safety problems.

The Refuge often has large limbs fall and the trees themselves have come down. The oak at the top of Woodpecker Loop is a good example. The trail was rerouted this year. The oak near the Cabell barn lost a large limb last year and smaller diameter trees are cleared from trails frequently.



Since the new structure needed to be re-sited, we worked with the Refuge to design a structure that could meet even more needs and enhance a visitor's experience. We wanted the overlook replacement to be used both as a rest stop for the passing hiker while also having the ability to use the space as an outdoor classroom for the many organized groups that visit the Refuge. In an area close to the original deck we built the open-air Environmental Education Shelter. From inside the shelter, protected under the roof, you can still see the same hilltop view that is visible from the old overlook. Right now, the ground around the shelter looks raw and unfinished, but in the spring, natives will be planted and the Shelter will eventually fit seamlessly into the surrounding landscape.

Recently we were delighted to learn that the environmental education shelter will become a centerpiece for a larger project to improve the trail; a project designed to turn Woodpecker Loop into an environmental education destination! Thanks to a \$15,000 grant from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, there will be educational nodes at each of the habitat types offering changing curriculum that helps folks learn more about what's around them in a fun and creative way. Whether you visit the trail alone, with your family, as part of an organized group like the Boy Scouts or 4-H, or as part of a formal classroom field trip, we hope to offer you the opportunity to learn even more about your local Refuge, its rare habitat types, and the critters that call this special place home.

If you want to get involved in the Woodpecker Loop project, we'd love to have you! We'll need help with the curriculum we develop and rotate at these nodes and we'll have a work party in the spring to reseed the area around the new structure. Email the Friends' chair of the Woodpecker Loop Project, David Landkamer [djlandkamer@yahoo.com](mailto:djlandkamer@yahoo.com) or Visitor Services Manager, Samantha Bartling with the Refuge: [Samantha\\_bartling@fws.gov](mailto:Samantha_bartling@fws.gov).





# Refuge Updates

By USFWS Refuge Staff

## Snag Boat Bend Unit

The fish habitat and riparian restoration project at Snag Boat Bend is nearly complete. All berms have been removed and just the construction of a low water crossing remains. As the river and Lake Creek rise this winter, the full benefit of the project will be visible. So make sure to get out there this winter!



## Oak Habitat Restoration

Numerous Douglas firs in the Mill Hill prairie unit at Finley Refuge were removed to open the area for white oaks. After the slash piles are removed in the winter, we will go in and seed the area with grasses and forbs.

## Prescribed burning to benefit Kincaid's Lupine and Fender's Blue Butterfly

Prescribed burning is wildland fire that is planned, ignited, and managed by professional fire managers. Low intensity fires were commonplace in the Willamette Valley prior to European settlement. Prescribed fire is used by the Refuge in a safe and controlled manner to emulate the natural processes that are no longer part of the landscape. Many of the ecosystems in the Valley require periodic fire to thrive. The areas will quickly turn from black to green as the vegetation is infused with much needed nutrients from fire and competition from thick vegetation is gone.







## *The 2017 Friends Holiday Party and Annual Meeting* *by Diane Young and Doug Spencer*

A joyous crowd descended upon the refuge headquarters for the annual meeting and holiday party. The weather was grand with clear blue skies and geese parading upon the pond behind the headquarters. Attendees were greeted with grand table settings festooned with greenery, oranges and silver decorations.

The tables were full of delicious desserts and "white elephant" gifts. The best gift was a porcelain Goose cookie jar that was picked by Kindergartener Cooper Bartling. He fell in love at first sight and moved it beneath the table placing himself as guard! No one dared exchanging his delightful gift! Staff filled his Goose cookie jar full of cookies near the end of the party and his happiness was apparent. Joy is best seen through the eyes of a child during the holidays.

Damien Miller, Refuge Manager, thrilled the group with his rendition of a Bull and female elk call using a special elk call which was placed in his mouth and blown through a tube. Everyone felt transported to green refuge meadows while hearing this beautiful yet shrill call of the Roosevelt Elk.

David Landkamer, president of Friends gave a short introduction and re-cap of accomplishments this past year. The new Woodpecker Loop shelter was the Friends' crown jewel. Some had a chance to walk up to the new shelter, and were treated to great views of the refuge and the mountains in the distance. We could see the Three Sisters and Mt. Jefferson. We thank all who have helped us in completing this project.





## News from the Refuges and Beyond

by USFWS Refuge Staff



Restoration continues on the Fender's Blue Butterfly Prairie on the SW slope of Pigeon Butte. Unwanted vegetation was removed with a prescribed burn in September, followed by invasive plant treatments in October. Then new patches of Kincaid's Lupine and Golden Paintbrush were seeded, along with overseeding of a diverse mix of native flowers.

Through the **Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program**, conservation has spread beyond the refuges to private lands, and native plants are being planted, including:

- 48,000 wildflower bulbs were planted in November at 14 sites, with a mix of wet prairie and Fender's Blue Butterfly nectar enhancement
- 50,000 native trees and shrubs have been planted on 4 sites since October, as part of forest restoration (largely riparian bottomland)

## Volunteer Opportunities

1. Amazing progress continues on the Woodpecker Loop Project! Let the Visitor Services Manager, Samantha Bartling, or the Friends know if you would like to help. Re-seeding and curriculum development are on the horizon.
2. Winter is planting season at the Willamette Valley Refuges. The Ankeny Refuge planting date February 3rd. If you want to help us enhance native habitats (and get a little muddy!) contact me.

**Interested? Contact Samantha at [Samantha\\_bartling@fws.gov](mailto:Samantha_bartling@fws.gov)**





## 2017 Benton County Big Sit

by Isaac Denzer



Western Grebes

The Benton County Big Sit happened on Sept. 25th, and it was a great success! We ended the day with a total of 81 species, all seen between 5:30 AM and 8:30 PM! Overall the weather was quite nice, with a high of about 72 degrees; however in the morning it was pretty cold with the lowest temperature being just above 40 degrees. We raised about \$3,152.

We started the day with a couple of calling Great Horned Owls followed by a lot of birds that we could hear only. As it grew lighter the bird life increased. There were some shorebirds, including a juvenile Short-billed Dowitcher (a pretty good bird for the area). By 9:30 AM we were at 60 species and it started to slow down quite a bit. We didn't reach 70 species until about 1:30 PM, but we're not going to complain as we only got to 70 at about 5PM last year!

Soon after we broke 70 when two Western Grebes showed up; we hadn't seen them before this and were quite surprised. We figured the grebes flew in while we weren't looking. Bird sightings during the rest of the afternoon slowed, but we had a lot of people stop by and donate. Close to dusk we got our 80th species, a heard-only California Quail! Soon after dark we heard a Western Screech-Owl, our last and the 81st species for the day.



### Habitat Detective by Diane Young

Where can you  
find this beautiful creek  
at Finley?

(The answer is at the  
bottom of page 14.)







## Welcome Back Beatrice!

**Beatrice Serrano-Martinez**, The Refuges Environment for the Americas intern who worked for the Willamette Valley NWR Complex last year, has rejoined the Complex. She says: "I will continue to work on Latino outreach for the refuge and support Visitor Services. I will lead two bilingual nature walks at each Refuge and develop a Spanish speaking station for Winter Wildlife Field Day next year."

This summer I spent my time at Diamond Lake Campground as a fee collector/ranger. It was fun despite the five feet of snow in May, the clouds of mosquitoes in June and July, and the wildfires in August-September. I got to see Crater Lake, explore trails and swimming holes, visit Bend, and learn a lot about the Cascades and Central Oregon".

Beatrice will be here through April of 2018. Say "Hi" when you see her around the Refuges!

## Mark Your Calendars!

### Winter Wildlife Field Day

Sat, March 10th

11 AM to 3 PM

This year's theme:

"Our Big Backyard"



**Volunteers Needed! Contact [samantha\\_bartling@fws.gov](mailto:samantha_bartling@fws.gov)**

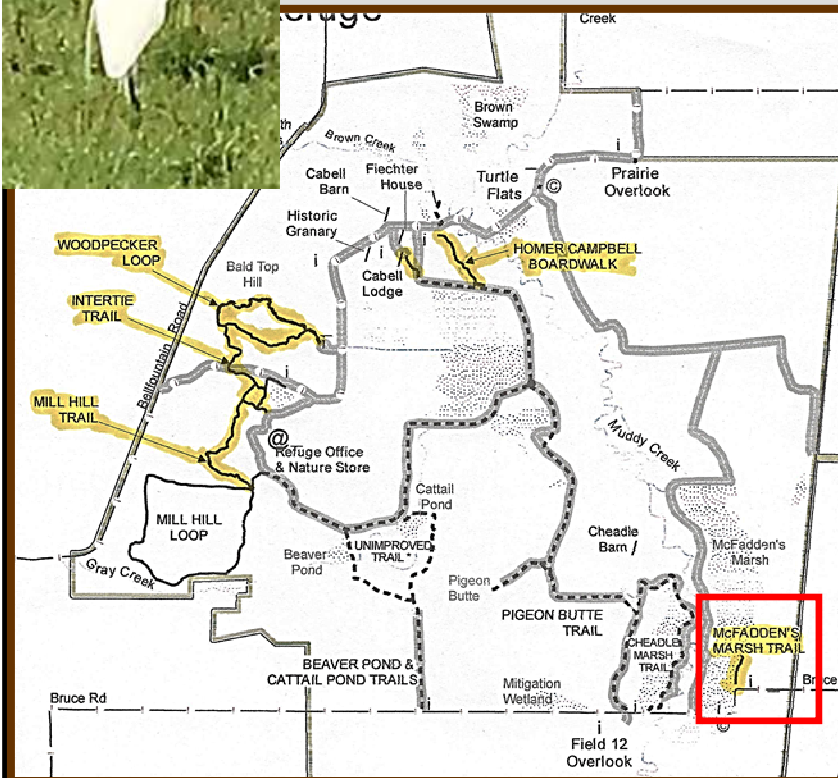




# Trails of the Refuges: McFadden's Marsh Trail



During Sanctuary Season at William L. Finley NWR (November 1, to March 31), only certain trails are open to visitors. These open trails are marked in yellow on the map. One of them is the **McFadden's Marsh Trail** (in the red rectangle).



This trail packs a lot of enjoyment into a small area. It is easy to get to, located only 1 mile west of Hwy 99 on Bruce Road. It is easy to find, with a portable toilet on the roadside at the trail entrance. And as a flat, accessible trail and boardwalk, it is easy for everyone to navigate. The round trip from the trailhead to the marsh and back again is a bit less than a third of a mile, so even people or children who cannot walk long distances can still enjoy a stroll here.

The trail meanders beside McFadden Marsh, ending in an observation blind overlooking the Marsh. During the winter season, visitors may see thousands of waterfowl using the Marsh. Raptors soar overhead searching for an easy meal. Shorebirds frequent the water's edge. Songbirds use shrubs along the trail for food shelter and nesting.

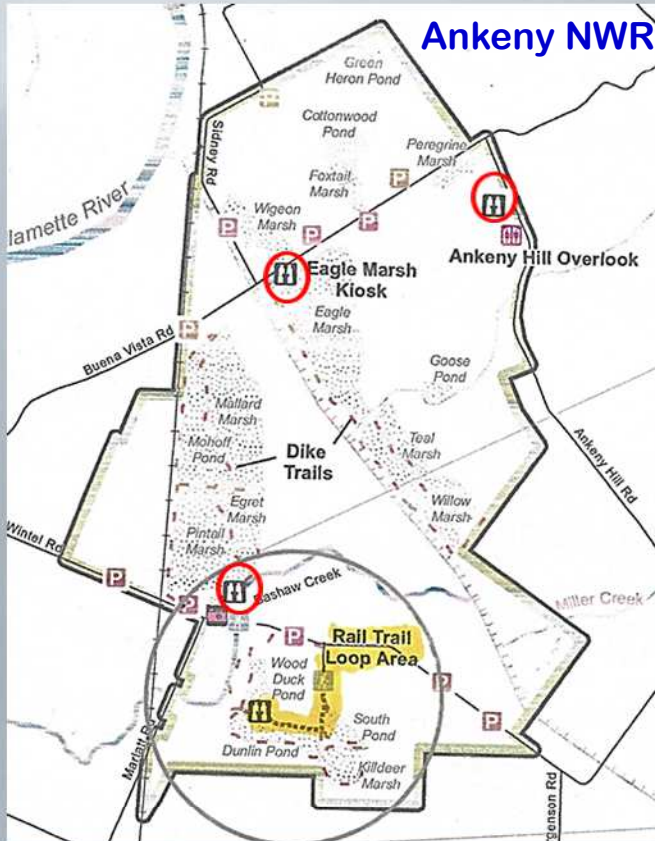
So if sometime you find yourself on the road, frazzled from the pressures of holiday shopping, or the pace of modern life, remember that just a short distance away is the peaceful beauty of nature along the McFadden's Marsh Trail.







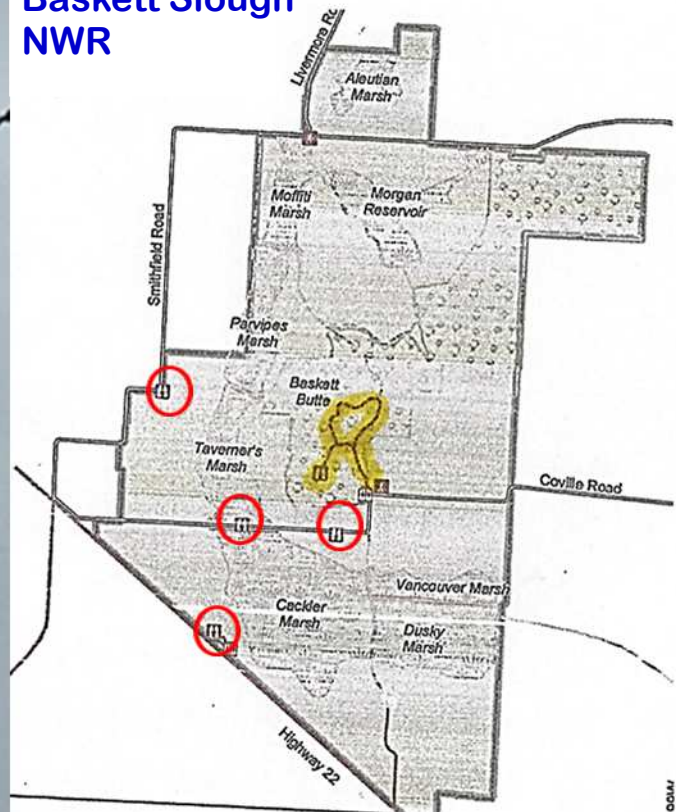
## Sanctuary Season is here: Hike on the year— round trails.



### Sanctuary Season at the Willamette Valley Refuges:

Ankeny: October 1 to March 31  
Baskett Slough: October 1 to March 31  
William L. Finley: Nov. 1 to March 31

### Baskett Slough NWR



To protect migrating wildlife during the Winter Sanctuary Season, access to the refuges is limited to the trails marked in yellow on the maps. After April 1, 2018, all the rest of the refuge trails will reopen. However, during the winter there are still many great places from which to get excellent views of wildlife. Observation points (circled in red) are still open. There are also many places to pull over and park and observe the animals. Those places are marked on the map with a "P".



## The Wild Goose Nature Store: Supporting Our Refuges Since 2009

By Doug Spencer

When the Friends organization was established around 2006, one of its' goals was to raise money to help fund various refuge projects. At first, this funding came from membership fees and donations. However, everyone knew that having a retail store would raise additional funds for these projects.

At that time, the refuge staff members were working out of historic Cabell Lodge. The building had many safety and health issues that were affecting the staffs' ability to function well in it. Eventually, an Occupational Safety and Health study found that the Lodge was both a safety and health problem that had to be corrected. The US Fish and Wildlife Service felt that a new administrative building would be best for the staff. During the building planning stages, Refuge Manager Doug Spencer and Deputy Refuge Manager Jim Houk both agreed that a section of this new building near the front entrance be made available for the Friends of the Willamette Valley NWRC to use as a second floor office / storage area and a ground floor retail space. The first Friends store manager, Nancy Zanotti, planned out the store layout, helped purchase all

of the store equipment. She also purchased all of the first items for sale and recruited the volunteers needed to staff the store. It took some time for the public to discover this store, but eventually, it became very successful. The Friends have an official agreement with the Service to manage this store and the Refuge reviews the operation of the store and provides guidance when needed.

Today's Wild Goose store is capably overseen by the present co—managers, Lena Proebsting and Jeanne Taylor. They make sure the store is stocked with a wide assortment of both recreational and educational items for children and adults at all price levels. They visit other nature stores, and keep current on new products and books. They provide their customers with items that help them enjoy and understand the natural world.



Nancy Zanotti and Regional Director Robin Thorsen

**Wild Goose sales have funded:**

**Restoration of the Turtle Flats restrooms**

**Refuge educational program supplies**

**The Woodpecker Loop Project**

**Restoration of historic Fiechter House**

**The current store co-managers:**  
Lena Proebsting

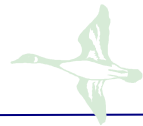


Jeanne Taylor



**Top of page: one of the many quilt runners hand-pieced by Lena Proebsting. They come in all colors and are for sale in the store.**





**Wild Goose  
Nature Store  
at  
William L Finley NWR**

**Open Fri, Sat, Sun  
All year  
10AM — 4 PM**





President's Message (continued from Page 1)  
*every single weekend throughout the year.*

An underlying and yet essential element of all that we accomplish is our outstanding relationship with the USFW employees and leadership at our local national wildlife refuges. Through my relationships with other Friends groups at refuges through the country, I have come to realize and appreciate just how talented and supportive our local refuge staff are, and I look forward to continuing and expanding our mutually beneficial interactions.

All of our organizational outcomes are the result of our members, donors, volunteers, and Board of Directors, who unselfishly donate their time, skills, and passions to make all of these things happen for the ultimate benefit of wildlife, their habitats, and our overall community and future. To each and every one of you who contribute your energies and resources, in your own particular ways, to our organization and our conservation mission, I wish to express my sincere gratitude and appreciation. Best wishes to all of you for a Happy Holiday Season and New Year!



**Muddy Creek Bear by Stephen Suckow**



**Campfire in Acorn Woods"**

<http://inspiringfelicity.blogspot.com/2013/07/>

*Our holiday wish for  
all our members,  
volunteers and the  
staff at the refuges:  
Peace on earth and  
goodwill to mankind  
and to all creatures  
great and small!*

### **Habitat Detective: the answer**

Mill Hill Loop Trail: This popular 2.5 round trip trail is open all year. It's always a treat on a winter days walk.



# Membership Form

☐ New Membership ☐ Renewal

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Address: \_\_\_\_\_

City/State: \_\_\_\_\_ Zip: \_\_\_\_\_

Daytime Phone: \_\_\_\_\_

Email: \_\_\_\_\_

☐ Please check this box if you **DO NOT** wish to share your information directly with the Refuge Volunteer Coordinator for additional volunteer opportunities.

I am interested in these volunteer opportunities:

- ☐ Work Parties ☐ Special Events ☐ Wild Goose Nature Store  
☐ Education Programs ☐ Board Member  
☐ Habitat Restoration ☐ Grounds Maintenance  
☐ Other \_\_\_\_\_

## Annual Membership Categories

- ☐ \$10 Senior / Student  
☐ \$15 Individual  
☐ \$25 Family  
☐ Volunteer\*

**All contributions in excess of membership fees are tax deductible under corporation guidelines.**

\$\_\_\_\_\_ Tax deductible donation

**Please make checks payable to FWVNWRC.**

\* Please contact the Friends Volunteer Coordinator to see if you qualify.



Friends of the Willamette Valley  
National Wildlife Refuge Complex

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**VISIT US ONLINE AT  
WWW.FRIENDSWVNWRC.ORG**