



# Friends of Turnbull

Volume 5, Issue 3

Friends of Turnbull N.W.R. Quarterly Report

Fall 2003, 3rd Quarter

## PRESIDENT'S CORNER

### Annual Meeting:

Our Annual Meeting and potluck went very well. We were all well fed and there was cake left over. Sorry if you missed it. Thanks to everyone who brought delicious items for our potluck. Gene Kiver's presentation on the Great Missoula Floods and how they impacted our area of the Channeled Scablands was very good. If you get a chance to hear one of these presentations on the Floods, don't miss it. Some of the slides give an aerial view that shows there was definitely a lot of water that came through this area a number of times in the past, causing the formation of the Channeled Scablands.

This is the time when we do our annual review of the accomplishments of the Friends group. I will try to give you a short version here:

- **Environmental Education**—We funded an Americorps volunteer for the fall 2002 programs and will fund another this fall if the program allows Turnbull to hire another this year. We are hopeful the same young man would be rehired, as continuity in the program is always a challenge. We were also able to obtain funds for Nicole Bronson, who was hired by a Fish & Wildlife Service grant. We accepted the leftover funds from the grant and were able to keep her on as an Independent Contractor through February. We obtained another grant from the New Priorities Foundation and some of that money went toward hiring an additional Student Conservation Association volunteer for the spring.
- **Refuge Support**—Our members continue to put in many hours as volunteers in various programs at the Refuge. Volunteers join in both the spring and fall Riparian Planting Days and it is gratifying to see the growth of the trees and bushes that have been planted and maintained in the past. The Refuge chose this year's Spring Riparian Planting Day as their Centennial Celebration.

- **Funding**—The 2002 Combined Federal Campaign will yield about \$329.00 in donations. We have also been accepted for the upcoming 2003 CFC, so contribute if you are able. Your Endowment Fund grew to \$3861.45 as of June 30<sup>th</sup>, and doesn't yield much in interest currently, but we are still working on it. As mentioned above, we received a \$5000.00 grant from the New Priorities Foundation this spring, which is specifically for support of Environmental Education. Many of you have come through with a little extra money along with your membership dues. Thanks!  
We are in better financial shape currently than it appeared we would be at the beginning of this year. Hopefully, we can sustain this.
- **Conferences**—Three of us attended a Regional Friends Conference in Portland last fall. I also attended the 2<sup>nd</sup> Annual National Refuge Friends Conference in Washington, D.C., this February. These conferences help establish networking relationships, help give us ideas for fundraising, etc., and keep us abreast of legislative actions that affect the Refuge system. They have decided to do the national conference every other year and hope that we will have regional ones in the off years.



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- **Outreach**—We helped man the Refuge’s booth at the Spokane Interstate Fair last fall and also had a booth at the Cheney Rodeo Days this July. We also conducted a T-shirt sale and membership drive at Cheney Trading Company last fall and one at Safeway this spring. We could do more of these type promotional activities, but need more help from the membership. Some of our most dedicated helpers have moved from the area. We have had some challenges keeping our website current, but hope to have that solved. Don’t forget—Chuck Kerkering’s outstanding photos are featured. Look elsewhere in this bulletin for the web address.

- **Membership Activities**—We continue offering field trips and lectures for members and the public. Gene Kiver has been arranging and scheduling some interesting activities for the membership. See inside for the next quarter’s activities. This last quarter we offered Chuck Kerkering’s Nature Photography Workshop and they spent all day at it, so they must have had fun. I also attended the July Bats of the World presentation by Sandy Rancourt, along with 60+ other people. I think a big draw was the walk after the presentation to demonstrate the nets used and the sonar detectors. She had some bats for people to see, plus one was caught in the net while we were there. If she does this again, wear mosquito repellent.

- **Store**—The bookstore receipts for 2002 were \$4037.55 and restocking expenses were \$3225.15, leaving a net profit for last year of \$812.40. This year receipts through July are \$2904.89 and restocking expenses so far are \$2839.83. We had donations of \$225.00 to go toward set-up fees and initial orders of the Centennial design T-shirt and etched Centennial glass mugs. It looks like our profit for the year should be better than last year’s, so this helps as it all goes toward the EE program.

**Bookstore:**

We continue to add new book titles from time to time. As the Lewis & Clark Bi-centennial is coming up, we have the National Geographic Guide to the Lewis & Clark Trail

and have Plants of the Lewis & Clark Expedition on order. It looks interesting. We also received the video on Glacial Lake Missoula and Its Humungous Floods and have it for sale now. If you like Chuck Kerkering’s photos on our website, he has now produced a beautiful screen saver featuring the Birds of Turnbull, which we are offering for free for \$10.00.

- **Board Changes** - Although we now have a full board, if any of you are interested in serving as a board member, don’t hesitate to call one of us. Board members leave our board from time to time and if we have a list of interested persons, it is easier to fill a vacancy.

If you have questions, concerns, or ideas, please feel free to call me or any one of the board members listed in this newsletter.

*Marian Frobe*

### COMMEMORATIVE MEDAL SERIES

In honor of the National Wildlife Refuge System’s centennial, the U. S. Mint, in partnership with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the National Fish & Wildlife Foundation, is producing and selling a commemorative medal series to celebrate this historic occasion. President Theodore Roosevelt is on one side of the medal and the reverse features either a bald eagle, an elk, salmon or canvasback ducks. A bronze medal is also offered. The silver is \$29.50 and the bronze is \$4.50. A portion of the proceeds is authorized to benefit the National Wildlife Refuge System and its conservation efforts.

If you are a collector or are interested, these are minted in limited quantities. Contact is at [www.usmint.gov](http://www.usmint.gov). Click on “Buy Online” Subscriptions. Or call 1-800-USA MINT (872-6468).

### Friends of Turnbull N.W.R. Board of Directors

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Vice President: Chuck Kerkering ..... jkk2@cdc.gov  
Treasurer: Robert Liepold ..... rliepold@aol.com  
Secretary: Pam Dixon ..... pdixon@comcast.net

Directors:  
Eugene Kiver ..... froghollow@sisna.com  
Vonice Parker ..... depotsprings@centurytel.net  
John Phillips  
Joanne Powell ..... powell@snapwa.org  
Steve Siegfried  
Kevin Young ..... spokanekevin@hotmail.com

## Special Thanks

We wish to thank the following people who either renewed this quarter at the patron level or who donated more than their membership fee. We truly appreciate your generous donations:

**Virgil & Priscilla Bowen**

**Dr. Stephen & Ruth Jordan**

**Robert Strong**

Thanks are also due to **Chuck Kerkering** for giving his popular Nature Photography Workshop again this year and to **Sandy Rancourt** for her wonderful presentation on the Bats of the World. Chuck had a manageable group that stayed with him all day, and Sandy's presentation brought 67 people out on a very hot evening to learn more about the bats! We are grateful to Chuck and Sandy for doing these presentations for us. We also thank **Dr. Eugene Kiver** for his presentation on the Great Missoula Floods at our Annual Meeting.

Special thanks are also due to **Chuck Kerkering** for donating the screensaver, Birds of Turnbull, for sale at the store. And to **Vonice Parker** for donating the cake for our annual meeting.

We greatly appreciate all of you who donate or contribute their time toward our programs. I know we have missed some people who should be acknowledged. Please accept our apologies. If you have renewed or donated recently, we hope to list you in the next newsletter



## FOT Activities

**September 23, 2003. Monitoring Programs at Turnbull.** Mike Rule, a wildlife biologist at Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, will describe many of the important monitoring programs currently underway on the Refuge. Presentation will be at 7:00 p.m. at Spokane Community College in the Sasquatch Room in the Lair Student Building.

**October 4, 2003. Railroad History on Bicycles**  
Dr. Charles Mutschler will recount the fascinating history of the SP&S and other local railroads while traveling by bike along the Columbia Plateau Trail State Park (a rails-to-trails park). The trip will begin at the Fish Lake Trailhead and travel a few miles into the Refuge. Total round-trip mileage is about 16 miles. The roadbed is paved for four miles and has a finely crushed gravel surface on the remainder. For safety reasons, the number of participants is limited to 15. Call 235-6448 for more details and to sign up for the trip.

**October 11, 2003. Fall Riparian Restoration**  
The work parties and individual volunteers start arriving about 9:00. Trees will be planted, maintenance work done on previous plantings, and the area prepared for winter. Everyone is invited - there are "light" jobs and "heavy" jobs - so there's plenty of work for everyone. See the News Release from the Refuge on page 6 for details.

### **December 6-7. Big Game Tour and Winter Festival**

December 6th and 7th will be our Winter Festival this year. This always coincides with the Big Game Tour of the Refuge directed by Mike Rule, Refuge Biologist. This tour is very popular and is limited to 25 persons each day, so if you wish to reserve a spot to see elk (maybe moose), call 235-4723 to sign up with Mike. Our Winter Festival will be in the Refuge's Environmental Education Classroom and will feature live music, refreshments, etc., and the opportunity to purchase Centennial T-shirts, sweatshirts, hats, books, stocking stuffers, etc. for Christmas.

Mike Rule will be giving a presentation on the goals and objectives of the refuge biological program, the type of research and monitoring taking place, and how this information is used to improve the refuge for wildlife.

*For any activities held at Turnbull NWR: if you have special needs, please contact Turnbull NWR at (509) 235-4723.*

*Brian Walker, an EE AmeriCorps member, has been with us for the past 11 months and wrote this article about his experience at the Refuge. He will continue to work for the Refuge for a second term of service. Brian possesses a wonderful personality and a natural teaching ability. We are very fortunate to have him for another 11 months.*

*Sandy Rancourt*

## **Brian's Turnbull Experiences**

It's been a wonderful experience working out here at Turnbull for the last 11 months. I have had many opportunities to work with wildlife, habitat, and kids. I would like to take a minute or two to tell you about two somewhat related experiences that I have had during my time out here. I think that they will be able to relate just a little bit about what I have experienced and learned while I have been out here.

One day this winter I was taking a break behind the Environmental Education Classroom. In the lower branches of the ponderosa pine behind the classroom I noticed a small porcupine. He seemed to be quite content just to stare down at me and munch on a branch. I continued watching him for a while then started looking at some of the pine cones on the ground. I was no longer paying attention to the porcupine when I learned an amazing thing about them.....they don't come down from trees to go to the bathroom. The next thing I knew, a small yellow stream had hit me on the arm. I got quite a laugh about that little experience and I'm sure that the porcupine did too.

In the environmental education center I have had many wonderful experiences watching kids learn about the wonders of nature and wildlife. One particularly memorable experience happened early this spring with a group of third graders who were out here for a field trip. I distinctly remember a youngster (Alex) getting off the bus with a pretty big scowl on his face. I remember thinking that I didn't want him to be in my group, but somehow I ended up with him. The first stop on our field trip was in the environmental education center where I told the class a little about the history of Turnbull, why it was here, and a little about habitat and wild animals. Then they got to look around the classroom at the different animal amounts. I remember Alex not really wanting to look around, but he did take some time to look at things on the touch table. We then headed out of the classroom and went on to the pond activity. At the start of the activity, Alex was standing above his collecting bucket just looking down at what was in the bucket. After a little coaxing, I got him to kneel down and actually poke around a little at some of the water bugs. I headed off to help another group but did keep an eye on how Alex was doing. The next time I looked at him, he

was trying to catch everything that moved in the bucket. After the pond activity we headed on to lunch and when I sat down, Alex was right beside me and was asking all kinds of questions. At one point I told the class about my experience with the porcupine and my discovery that they didn't come down out of trees to go to the bathroom. They all laughed at the story and thought that it was really funny. After lunch we headed out for our hike and once again Alex was right beside me asking all kinds of questions. After the hike, it was finally time for the kids to leave. As they were getting on the bus, Alex stopped by and said "This has been the funnest day I have ever had, I learned so much! When can I come back?" In that instant I knew that I had changed his views and perception about the environment, probably for the rest of his life. A few weeks after their trip I received a bundle of thank you cards from the class. Alex's card was in there and he drew a picture of the porcupine peeing on my arm. The card is still on my desk to remind me that even those kids that don't want to learn can be sparked into taking some information away from their trip out to Turnbull.

These are just two experiences that have, in part, led me to volunteer for a second year at Turnbull. In my second year at Turnbull I hope I will be able to continue to help kids make connections with the natural world at Turnbull.



For Newsletter information or news contributions, please contact Joanne Powell at 456-7111 x 204 or email [powell@snapwa.org](mailto:powell@snapwa.org)

# NEWS FROM THE REFUGE

by Nancy Curry

The long awaited Refuge Roads project will begin at Turnbull on August 18. This construction project will recondition the entrance road and auto tour route and enhance the public parking facilities along the route. Refuge Roads dollars come out of Congressional appropriated TEA 21 funds and are administered by the Federal Highway Department. Tommer Construction of Ephrata, Washington won the bid for the job. The nearly \$650K job will take six weeks to complete so we hope to have the contract wind up by October 2. Some of you may have already noticed the three new vault toilets located at environmental education (EE) sites along the auto tour route. Each of the EE sites will have a paved parking facility and accessible sidewalk. We hope to eventually have an EE shelter built at each of the three sites as well. We're looking into getting volunteer assistance in their construction. We expect the road construction to be quite disruptive to visitors during the next several weeks. It would be a good idea to call before coming out to visit to make sure the Refuge is open. Tommer Construction plans to work Monday-Thursday, 7:00 a.m.- 5:00 pm. There may be several weekdays during construction when the Refuge is closed to all public use. On those construction days when the Refuge is open to public access, we will be waiving the entrance fee.

Very dry conditions, low humidities and very little precipitation have created high to extreme fire conditions on the Refuge and throughout Eastern Washington. However, Turnbull's fire program is geared up and ready to go should we get any ignitions in our area. Already, the fire staff have assisted Spokane County Fire District 3 and Washington DNR on several local fires ignited both by lightning and man caused. The 1000-acre Watt Road fire in Cheney was a rude awakening to the community of just how dry things are in our neck of the woods. Turnbull NWR responded to the Watt Road Fire - an initial attack with all three of its fire engines. Turnbull's three brush engines are set up for initial and extended attack. Turnbull Brush Engine 1 has a 500 gallon capacity water tank, Turnbull Brush Engine 2 has 900

gallon tank and Turnbull Brush Engine 3 has a 250 gallon capacity. Each engine responds with an engine boss and crew of two firefighters. Our crews have also taken fire assignments on the Farewell Complex of fires near Winthrop, and have assisted with wildfires on the Colville Reservation, Colville National Forest and the Little Pend Oreille NWR. Twenty of Turnbull's twenty-six staff this summer are trained and red-carded for firefighting duties.

Turnbull's draft Comprehensive Conservation Plan has gone through internal review at a regional level and is now in Washington D.C. for review before we can put a draft plan out to the public for comment. If all goes well we're hoping to get a public draft out before Christmas. The draft document and environmental assessment will outline the four alternatives we considered for management of the Refuge over the next 15 year period. Since the plan adopts the already approved Habitat Management Plan, we were mostly looking at public uses and resource protection through land acquisition, conservation easements and partnerships. The plan explores expansion to the public use area and facilities of the refuge, a possible opening of an elk hunt, and an expansion of the approved refuge boundary. We'll keep you posted when the plan is out as we encourage your review and comments.



# U. S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Department of the Interior  
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service  
Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge  
26010 S. Smith Road  
Cheney, WA 99004

Phone: 509/235-4723  
Fax: 509/235-4703

## News Release



### **HELP US CELEBRATE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE WEEK**

#### Turnbull NWR Community Work Party

Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge and Spokane Audubon Society will host a community work party on Saturday, October 11, 2003. This is part of an ongoing community effort to restore native riparian habitat to benefit birds and other wildlife species. Over the past seven years, Audubon Society members, Scouts and other youth groups, community volunteers, and Refuge staff have joined together to plant and maintain native saplings. Many trees are now thriving due to the efforts of the volunteers who have helped us with this project. This year, we will plant 45 saplings and remove exotic weeds and grasses from around the existing trees to increase their chance for survival. This fall we will also be erecting 2 exclosures on the site to protect saplings from deer, elk, and moose browsing.

**Attention Groups:** Please call in advance to register. It helps us in our planning if we know how many are coming. Ask for Sandy.

**When:** October 11, 2003.

**Planting Time:** 9 am to 12 p.m.

**Where:** Turnbull NWR Headquarters, 5 miles south of Cheney on Cheney-Plaza Road: turn left on Smith Road and drive 2 miles on gravel road to headquarters.

**Clothing:** Long-sleeved shirt, work pants, sturdy boots or shoes, gloves.

**Equipment:** (If you can) shovels, hoes, trowels, rakes, needle-nose pliers, hammers.

#### ***Friends of Turnbull Online***

**Please visit our new website at:**

<http://www.tincan.org/ftnwr/>

Check the site periodically for activities updates and announcements. If you have any questions or comments regarding the website, please contact Andy Buddington ([abuddington@scc.spokane.cc.wa.us](mailto:abuddington@scc.spokane.cc.wa.us)).



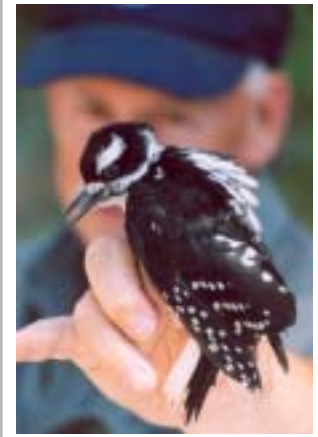
# Fall Wildlife Observations at Turnbull NWR

by Mike Rule



Several moose have been seen over the past few months. Based on age, sex and the relationships of individuals observed there are at least 9 moose on the refuge. They can be observed most mornings and evenings in the public use area near refuge headquarters and along the auto tour route. They have been spending a good deal of time browsing in the Pine Creek Riparian Restoration Project. We are planning on doing some additional fencing to protect the plantings everyone has worked so hard on over the years.

The fall songbird migration is just beginning, warbling vireos and Wilson's warblers have been captured at the banding station. We just recently wrapped up the 11th year of songbird banding at the refuge. A total of 129 birds were captured representing 25 species. Capture rates were near average with over 50% of the adult birds captured representing birds banded in previous years. Sixty-eight of the captures were young of the year signifying a good production year despite the dry conditions. The only new species banded this year was the house finch, a common nesting bird on the refuge, but apparently good at avoiding capture.



**A captured Hairy Woodpecker (non-migratory) held by Russ Frobe**



If anyone has been out to the refuge lately its is hard not to notice this year's bumper crop of California quail. Coveys line the highways feeding on spilled wheat and a trip around the tour route flushes up a score or more



A group of 25 or so white pelicans have been regularly using the Pine Creek Lakes and Philleo Lake east of the refuge

Refuge wetlands are dropping quickly during this very hot, dry summer. Although a dry winter could result in considerably less wetland habitat next year, these periodic droughts rejuvenate wetlands. Long-term stable high water results in declining beds of bulrush and cattails and decreased productivity of submerged wetland plants.

*Conditions are extremely dry with fire danger at the highest we have seen for quite awhile. So, be careful out there*

## Membership Application

**YES!** I want to support the Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge and its programs with my membership.

Name \_\_\_\_\_

Address \_\_\_\_\_

City, State, and Zip \_\_\_\_\_

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

e-mail \_\_\_\_\_

Annual Membership: (Circle one)

Individual \$15

Family \$25

Business/Group \$35

Patron \$100

Benefactor \$500

Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Endowment Fund Donation \$ \_\_\_\_\_

Amount Enclosed \_\_\_\_\_

New \_\_\_\_\_ Renewal \_\_\_\_\_

I would like to volunteer \_\_\_\_\_

My check is enclosed payable to:

Friends of Turnbull N.W.R.  
P.O. Box 294  
Cheney WA 99004

Got email? Add it to your membership form for quick activity updates!



Friends of Turnbull  
Friends of Turnbull NWR  
P.O. Box 294  
Cheney, WA 99004

*“The Friends of Turnbull National Wildlife Refuge, a nonprofit organization, supports the mandate of the refuge to protect and enhance wildlife and their habitats through education, research, habitat preservation and restoration.”*