



## U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service



### PARTNERS FOR FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM FY 2002 HIGHLIGHTS

The **Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program**, through pro-active, voluntary agreements with private landowners and tribes, worked to restore wetlands, native grasslands, riparian areas, in-stream habitats, and other habitats important to Federal trust species.

**Federal trust species include migratory birds, threatened or endangered species, anadromous and inter-jurisdictional fish, and some marine mammals.**

The following are examples of Partners projects from around the country.

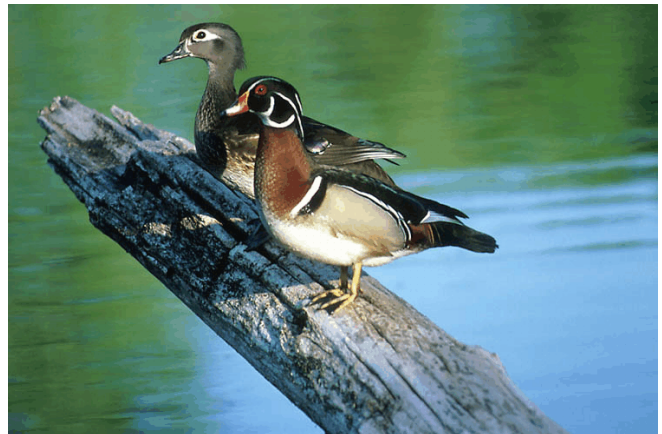
#### REGION 1

##### **Duck Slough Restoration in California**

In FY 2002, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in California worked with Ducks Unlimited, the U. S. Bureau of Reclamation, the Wildlife Conservation Board, the Packard Foundation, and the Natural Resource Conservation Service to restore high priority habitat (riparian wetlands) within the Central Valley Joint Venture focus area.

About 1000 acres (more than 1.5 miles on both sides of the river) of seasonal riparian floodplain were restored along the Duck Slough corridor. This restoration included replacing 8 antiquated water control structures and installing 4 new structures. These structures make it possible to manage the lower basins of the floodplain as seasonal wetlands and also provide relief points for floodwaters that inundate this area each year.

Existing channels were cleaned of sediment. This sediment was then used to build up eroded sections of the Duck Slough containment levee and to create more topographic diversity. Native cottonwood and willow trees were planted throughout the project area. Restoring the Duck Slough corridor benefits a wide range of species including waterfowl, colonial waterbirds, migratory songbirds, birds of prey, reptiles and amphibians. Nesting opportunities for targeted bird species were enhanced by providing nesting boxes for wood duck, American kestrel and barn owl.



Wood ducks benefit from the restoration . (USFWS)



Neotropical migrants like these tri-colored blackbirds are using the restored habitat. (USFWS)

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## REGION 2

### Outdoor Classrooms Benefit Wildlife and Communities in the Southwest

During FY 2002, the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program in the Southwest Region worked with local communities to develop 12 new outdoor classrooms; 9 were added in Oklahoma, 2 in Arizona, and 1 in Texas. Since the Partners Program's establishment in Region 2, Partners staff has provided technical assistance to develop more than 120 outdoor classrooms in Oklahoma, Texas, Arizona and New Mexico.

In addition to providing on-site wildlife habitat, outdoor classrooms present a positive and productive approach to environmental education, benefitting school children, their parents and the communities they serve. In support of the outdoor classrooms, the Service also participates in partnership efforts to train educators in their use.

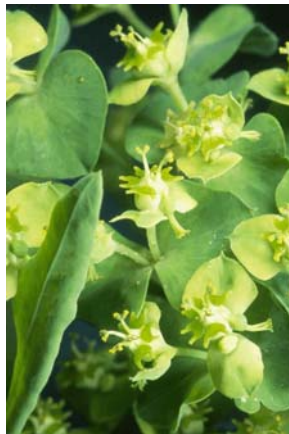


Students at an outdoor classroom in Oklahoma. (USFWS)

## REGION 3

### Controlling Leafy Spurge in Minnesota

In Minnesota the Partners Program worked with the county weed control agencies in five counties to control leafy spurge. Leafy spurge (*Euphorbia esula L.*) is a non-native, invasive plant species that can out compete native prairie vegetation both by shading and production of plant toxins that prevent other plants from growing underneath it.



Leafy spurge in bloom (USDA).

In FY 2002, 114 landowners participated in the program and treated 285 sites. More than two million leafy spurge beetles (which help control the pest) were released on these sites.

The combined effort of the landowners, the county weed control agencies and the Partners Program has resulted in a dramatic decline of leafy spurge in the treated areas.

## REGION 4

### The Longleaf Pine Restoration Initiative in the Southeast

In the Southeast, the longleaf pine ecosystem is an endangered ecosystem type. The Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program is an active participant in a major initiative involving a number of partners (The Longleaf Alliance, The Nature Conservancy, State fish and wildlife agencies, NRCS, and others) to restore longleaf pine forests.

For FY 2002, the Partners Program was instrumental in the development of 39 projects that planted more than 2,500 acres of longleaf pine.

The longleaf pine ecosystem provides habitat for a number of protected species and species of concern, including the red-cockaded woodpecker, the eastern indigo snake, the gopher tortoise, Bachman's sparrow, the pine warbler and the Venus flytrap.



The threatened gopher tortoise benefits from reestablishment of the longleaf pine ecosystem. (USFWS)

This habitat is also used by game species like the Northern bobwhite and wild turkey.

## REGION 5

### Restoring Wetlands in Maine

In FY 2002, the Partners Program, working with Native American Tribes, the Bates-Morse Mountain Corporation, the Maine Department of Inland Fisheries and Wildlife and other partners, helped restore and enhance 1,690 acres of wetlands at 71 sites. Restoring hydrology to degraded wetlands included plugging drainage ditches, removing obstructions in tidal creeks and installing beaver exclosures.



A beaver exclosure (USFWS)

These efforts will benefit a variety of wetland-dependent bird species, including black ducks, wood ducks, herons, American bitterns and swamp sparrows.



This Maine resident is using a restored wetland habitat (USFWS)

## REGION 6



Platte River restoration (USFWS)

### Restoring Habitat Along the Platte River in Nebraska

The Partners Program in Nebraska has worked cooperatively with a number of organizations and many private landowners to restore and maintain habitat along the Central Platte River. A total of 22 projects were completed in this area in FY 2002. These projects contributed to the quality and quantity of habitat available to several endangered and threatened species, including the whooping crane, least tern and piping plover. Riverine sandbars and islands (prime roosting habitat) and wet meadow and native grasslands (foraging habitat) were targeted for conservation efforts.

## REGION 7

### Protecting and Restoring Fisheries Habitat in Alaska

The Deshka River, a tributary of the Susitna River, is located in the heart of the Matanuska-Susitna Valley, Alaska's fastest growing area. The Deshka is a recreational destination for Mat-Su Valley and nearby Anchorage residents, who comprise more than half of the State's population.



Planting willow along the Deshka River (USFWS)

The watershed is 140 miles long and drains more than 73,000 acres of State, borough, and private lands. The Matanuska-Susitna Borough owns more than 10,000 acres along 11 miles of the lower river.

Five species of Pacific salmon, rainbow trout, Dolly Varden, burbot, grayling, and whitefish occur in the Deshka. Recreational use of the lower Deshka River has skyrocketed in recent years. With a tenfold increase in angler-days counts; human-caused impacts to in-stream and riparian habitat can be severe.

The Partners Program, with support from the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, is working with the Matanuska-Susitna Borough and other partners on a comprehensive, multi-year effort to complete site-specific fish habitat restoration projects, develop outreach programs, and craft a watershed-wide river management plan.

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Initial restoration projects were conducted in FY 2002; a Youth Conservation Corps crew, working under Service supervision, restored more than 800 feet of highly eroded streambank during the summer of 2002.

Outreach and education materials and signs were also developed, and no-wake zones were delineated in high-use portions of the river.



Deshka River work crew by project sign. (USFWS)

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**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
800/344 WILD <http://www.fws.gov>

**For more information about the Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, contact our Branch of Habitat Restoration at: 703/358 2201, or visit us on the Internet at: <http://partners.fws.gov>**

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