

2004 National Award Recipients



Presented annually, national awards recognize specific volunteer projects and efforts in 12 categories. These awards, given for outstanding stewardship of public lands, honor those who best protect and/or enhance our public parks, forests, grasslands, reservoirs, wildlife refuges, cultural and historic sites, local playgrounds, and other recreation areas.

Charter Partner

The outstanding charter partner award is presented to the organization or company that far exceeds what is expected of a program supporter. Since Take Pride's rebirth in April 2003, **The Walt Disney Company's** contribution to the program has been exceptional. Two of its many contributions this year include arranging for ABC television talent to twice record public service announcements on Take Pride in America and including a Take Pride in America promotional flyer in *Brother Bear* DVDs and video packaging. For more information, contact Maria Gladowski at (818) 560-6360.

Corporate

Since 1999, **Toyota Motor Sales USA** has been the national corporate sponsor for National Public Lands Day. Last year, nearly 2,200 Toyota personnel volunteered 7,644 hours of their time under the banner of "Helping Hands for America's Lands" at 26 locations in 14 states, Puerto Rico and the District of Columbia. Toyota volunteers removed illegal fire rings; created habitats for an endangered California shorebird, the least tern; built boardwalks; constructed bridges; erected fences and removed exotic plants to make way for native ones. In addition, the Toyota Corp. donated supplies and funds; and in one case, an entire truck. For more information, Contact Kathy Mota at (310) 468-6919.

Faith Based

Four times a year for the past eight years, the **Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-day Saints** has gathered volunteers, many of them youths, and brought them to Wahiawa Freshwater State Recreation Area in Hawaii. The volunteers join together to do cleanup and park maintenance work. In some years the 150-plus youth who participate have gathered as much as 67 bags of trash. Their efforts to partner with and aid the State of Hawaii, the Department of Land and Natural Resources, and Division of State Parks to improve this community resource allow the park to remain open all week long. For more information, contact Leroy Lehano at (808) 626-2147.

Federal Volunteer Program

Since 1989, the **Trash Tracker Program of Glen Canyon National Recreation Area** has devoted itself to keeping the shores of Lake Powell, located near Page, Arizona, debris-free. The park has no trouble finding volunteers and most years has more volunteers than necessary. In 2003 the volunteers spent four to seven days picking up trash and cleaning 461 miles of shoreline on Lake Powell, making the area safer and more beautiful for the nearly 2 million boaters who come each year. In 2,876 hours, 81 volunteers gathered 58,724 pounds of trash. Closely partnered with Trash Tracker are the National Park Service and Lake Powell Resorts and Marinas (ARAMARK). ARAMARK has donated a houseboat, another small boat, a paid captain, and a barge for cleanup activities. Trash Tracker has also inspired the creation of another similar program called Graffiti Removal and Intervention Team. For more information, contact Max King at (435) 684-7420.

The **Tumacacori National Historical Park's Volunteers in the Park** program, in southern Arizona, includes local community

members and retirees, each donating an average of 200 hours of service. These VIPs made an effort to aid park staff in every aspect of park work and management. They staff visitor centers, walk the grounds, educate visitors, hold interpretive programs, translate old Spanish mission documents into English and perform upkeep work on the Spanish-colonial garden. For more information, contact Ann Rasor at (520) 398-2341.

The **BLM Roseburg District Volunteer Program** exemplifies what partnerships can do to improve public lands. With 62 partner groups and organizations – including the Boy Scouts of America – donating labor, equipment, supplies and food, it was awarded the SOLV Cup for “Best Partnership Development” by Oregon Gov. John Kitzhaber. This year, 1,268 volunteers donated 57,709 hours of their time toward projects such as the Island Creek Weed Control Project and the Lone Pine Campground Enhancement Project. The volunteers cleaned 318 miles of stream bank, repaired small landslides, planted vegetation, performed erosion control, maintained trails, and installed signs and benches. For more information, contact Joe Ross at (541) 440-4930 or Mark Wilkening at (541) 464-3245.

Individual

Neil Stephen Flanagan, 18, a native of the District of Columbia, created an accessible trail guide for the blind and visually impaired. The work, completed for his Eagle Scout project, increased accessibility along the pre-existing 1,000-foot Edge of the Woods Trail at the Rock Creek Park Nature Center and D.C. Planetarium, providing 14 interpretive stops. Flanagan collaborated with advocacy groups for the visually impaired, Rock Creek Park personnel and other members of his scout troop to create the first National Capital Area Park with a trail for the blind. He also received the NPS’ George B. Hertzog Jr. Award for Outstanding Volunteer Service this summer. For more information, contact Flanagan at (202) 966-8453.

Irene DeLaby has contributed thousands of hours of her free time to the Florida State

Park system. While working with citizen support groups, DeLaby has secured funding for volunteer activities in the parks. Yet aside from her travel costs she is not reimbursed for her own expenses. In 2003, by writing to newspapers and magazines, giving speeches, publishing the *FPS Volunteer Viewpoint*, training other coordinators and serving on various committees, she helped encourage nearly 7,000 volunteers to give more than 900,000 hours of time to Florida’s national parks. DeLaby alone has given 25,000 hours of time. To recognize her contributions, the Florida Park Service named an award after her. For more information, contact Phillip Werndli at (352) 628-0542 or Linda Long at (850) 245-2112.

Local Government

The **Annual Presque Isle Spring Cleanup**, in Erie, Pa., is an event famous for bringing the surrounding community together. Some 850 volunteers participated in the 47th annual event, cleaning the beach and surrounding trails. In partnership with local businesses and several environmental groups – including the Pennsylvania Department of Conservation and Natural Resources, and the Erie County United Way Day of Caring – the event has helped general maintenance staff make the 3,200-acre Lake Erie beachfront ready for summer visitors. For more information, contact Randy Neyer at (814) 833-0351 or Ann DiTullio at (814) 833-5049.

The 200 volunteers of Bountiful City Pond, located in **Bountiful City, Utah**, dedicated 760 hours of their time to help turn an old pond, once known as “the pond out by the dump,” into a beautiful recreation area. The group partnered with local church youth groups to find volunteers to turn the eroded, muddy, polluted area into something beautiful. Also lending a hand was the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources, which supplied trees and grasses for the group to plant along the pond’s bank to prevent erosion. They also donated ramps and docks for boat access, tables for visitors and fish to stock the pond. For more information, contact Mark Franc at (801) 298-6125.

Nonprofit

The **Friends of Lake Louisa**, based in Clermont, Fla., have made it their mission to provide Lake Louisa State Park with top quality facilities and interpretive resources and to promote public awareness about the park. Fourteen volunteers spent 2,500 hours creating "interpretive focal points of the park." Some of those features include a native butterfly garden, nature trail and projects involved with Sandhill restoration. For more information, contact Christy Burch at (352) 394-3969 or Linda Long at (850) 245-2112.

The **Coastal Wildlife Club Inc.**, which focuses its efforts around Stump Beach State Park in Englewood, Fla., has donated 1,344 hours of time to the protection of endangered and threatened turtle nests during the months of May through October. This year the six volunteers worked hard enough to save the government the creation of two part-time park ranger jobs by monitoring turtle nests, netting them off from human and animal intrusion, relocating flood-threatened nests, and documenting turtle activities. They also lobbied for the adoption of a local ordinance that states beach lights much be shaded to prevent the light from confusing hatchlings. For more information, contact Wilma Katz at (253) 833-8747 or Linda Long at (850) 245-2112.

The **Illinois Natural Area Guardians** is a nonprofit organization that has donated 5,200 hours of time from 550 volunteers and professionals for the maintenance of Illinois natural heritage. Working in eight different sites throughout northwestern Illinois, the group is responsible for the protection of 1,027 acres and focuses on such conservation efforts as habitat restoration, species management, endangered and threatened species monitoring, trail maintenance, fencing, public education outreach, research station construction and recovery projects. The group has secured more than \$140,000 in grants and \$35,000 in donations to further their work. For more information, contact Deb Carey at (815) 857-3623.

For the past 32 years the **Pacific Northwest Four Wheel Drive Association** has been

active in removing trash from the Washington State coastline. This year, 940 volunteers donated 6,534 hours of time along a 28-mile stretch of coast near Auburn, Wash. Volunteers joined with Washington State Parks and Recreation and the Washington Department of Ecology, local merchants and county landfills to make the project successful. The trash and debris they collected was sent to the Ocean Conservancy for analysis. For more information, contact Arlene Brooks at (253) 833-8747.

Public/Private Partnership

For their 20th Anniversary Project Season, **Volunteers for Outdoor Colorado** planned and conducted its largest project season ever. Making use of 31,626 hours of volunteer time with 2,915 volunteers, the VOC provided for 4,518 volunteer days with projects valued at \$1.5 million. Some highlights from their 2003 celebration year include planting 5,000 trees and shrubs at the Coal Seam Fire burn area, creating and sustaining 10.2 miles of trail, removing invasive plant species and beautifying the grounds of Gilpin Elementary School. The sites they worked on throughout Colorado will remain popular recreation sites for years to come. Organizations assisting the VOC this year include Anschutz Family Foundation, Lockheed Martin, the National Forest Foundation, National Geographic, REI, Shell Oil, Starbucks and Trout Unlimited. For more information, contact Keith Desrosiers at (303) 715-1010.

In 1994, the **Slippery Rock Watershed Coalition**, a public-private partnership of agencies, small businesses, academic institutions, local industries and community members, formed and dedicated itself to the task of restoring the headwaters of Slippery Rock Creek, located in Slippery Rock, Pa. Their 15 treatment systems handled 750 million gallons of mine drainage in 2004. Several goals of the Coalition include turning the headwaters into a viable fishery, developing new land-reclamation and treatment systems, educating the public on abandoned mine restoration and validating the benefits public-private partnerships. The 500 volunteers who contributed 2,000 hours of time in 2003 are affiliated with more than

63 public and private partners. For more information, contact Margaret Dunn at (724) 776-0161.

School

The **Ainsworth Nebraska Community School** has, for the past six years, helped maintain a 153-acre tract of the Long Pine State Recreation Area. Begun as a way to create an interdisciplinary learning project for sixth through eighth grade students, this year the project had 110 volunteers give 675 hours of their time to clear paths, fill erosion ditches, move and convert fallen trees into woodchips for use on trails, and paint signs. Partnered with Nebraska Game and Parks Commission and drawing support from the Nature Conservancy, the school children have both learned stewardship and provided visitors with something beautiful in their community. For more information, contact Dale Mundorf at (402) 273-4281.

State

Take Pride in Utah has existed since the inception of the first Take Pride in America program in the late 1980s. In the past year some 8,880 volunteers gave 46,400 hours of their time in projects located throughout Utah. Volunteers conducted habitat restoration, interpretive initiatives and other volunteer activities at sites such as Cottonwood Creek, Lower Bear River, Pineview Reservoir, Millcreek, Virgin River, Deer Creek Reservoir, East Canyon Creek, Beaver River, Little Bear River, Upper Sevier River and Jordan River. Take Pride in Utah has also lent its hands to Utah Gov. Olene Walker's Watershed Initiative. The program works with a small budget and the help of federal agency personnel. For more information, contact Darin Bird at (801) 538-7200.

Youth

In 2003 the **Southeastern Natural Sciences Academy** founded its third youth science club. The club, dubbed "Creek Freaks," is a program that allows kindergarten through 12th graders to participate in public outreach, perform research in an actual setting, learn about ecology and help restore stream

ecosystems. Founded by nine students and three volunteers who gave 411 hours of their time in 2003, it has partnered with the Georgia Adopt-a-Stream Program. Some 8,000 students have now been able to participate in the club, and to perform water testing and watershed analysis, producing data that can then be given to the Georgia Adopt-a-Stream Program. In addition, the 1,150-acre Phinizy Swamp Nature Park was established, restored and maintained by the Academy as a launch pad for its programs. For more information, contact Jackie Maryak at (706) 828-2109.

For the past 12 years, **Boy Scout Troop 46** has maintained segments of trail throughout Douglas County, Ore. In 2003, 30 volunteers, most of them scouts, donated 640 hours to the cause of habitat restoration, and historic and cultural preservation. Activities undertaken, have included posting signs, installing benches, trail brushing, repairing landslides, planting, fencing, mulching and distributing fire rings. The troop's major partner is BLM, which provides materials and technical insight, along with the Forest Service and the County Parks Department. For more information, contact Machael Rice at (541) 679-4505 or Mark Wilkening at (541) 464-3245.

Federal Land Managers

Under the direction of **Brad Knudsen**, refuge manager, Patuxent Research Refuge, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the refuge hosts the most successful volunteer program in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's Northeast Region. Last year 357 volunteers donated more than 34,000 hours in almost every aspect of the refuge operation. These volunteer hours equate to more than 16 full-time staff positions. One of the most unique aspects of Patuxent's volunteer program is its agreement with the Meade Natural Heritage Association. MNHA helps the refuge manage one of the largest federal public-use hunting programs in the Service, both in season length and in number of hunters. Without Knudsen's leadership and the support of the MNHA, the Service could lose this successful recreational activity.

William Martin, outdoor recreation planner, Lower Colorado Regional Office, Bureau of Reclamation, works with numerous contacts throughout the Lower Colorado Region to share ideas and information on how to better involve the public in stewardship of public lands. He has formed robust partnerships with more than 35 entities, including federal, state and local government, and private-sector groups. Specific examples include his work with the Lake Havasu Fisheries Partnership to improve recreational fishing access at the lake; participation in the River Mountains Partnership on trail development; and collaboration with the cities of Henderson and Bullhead, Nev., and Clark County parks to improve recreational use and management of Reclamation lands.

Lou Ann Jacobson, manager, Canyon of the Ancients National Monument and Anasazi Heritage Center, Bureau of Land Management, consistently involves volunteers in all operations of the Canyon of the Ancients National Monument and the Anasazi Heritage Center. The teamwork of volunteers, interns and staff provides seven-day-a-week support to the federal site. For example, in fiscal year 2003, they collectively greeted 25,850 visitors, cataloged 68,750 artifacts, hosted 119 school groups and responded to more than 200 research requests. Specifically, in fiscal year 2003, volunteers donated 13,000 hours of service in areas such as education, interpretation, and outreach; research and monitoring studies; and cleanup, maintenance, and administration.

Brian O'Neill, volunteer coordinator, Golden Gate National Recreation Area, National Park Service, has built a nationally acclaimed volunteer program at GGNRA that has had a dramatic effect on the area's natural resource and visitor services program. The GGNRA volunteer program emphasizes identifying diverse volunteer tasks, some requiring very specialized talents; provides great flexibility in acceptance of volunteer efforts under its Volunteer Drop-in Program; and uses innovative communications channels, including a volunteer hotline.

Jack Blackwell, regional forester, Region Five, U.S. Department of Agriculture, Forest Service, has led efforts to expand volunteerism on national forests with personal outreach efforts to nontraditional partners and the creation of a regional volunteer program for four Southern California forests. His active support of the Take Pride in America Partners Council efforts to respond to the massive fires of fall 2003 included the establishment of a regional volunteer coordinator. This new position has dramatically eased the burden on organizations seeking to become involved in public lands volunteerism, like the Girl Scouts of America. He also has worked with forest supervisors in the region to increase the priority placed on volunteer programs in forest plans.

Spirit of Take Pride in America

A special Spirit of Take Pride in America award was presented to Derrick Crandall, president, American Recreation Coalition. The award is not an annual award but is presented by the executive director only in those years when someone's efforts on behalf of Take Pride in America merit special recognition. This award honors Crandall for his extraordinary efforts in promoting Take Pride in America across the country, which have included recruiting new partners, raising funds and finding new opportunities to spread the message of Take Pride. Crandall has been the inspiration behind several Take Pride events over the past year, including the very successful Southern California volunteer pledge drive.

For more information on the Federal Land Managers Award and Spirit of Take Pride in America Award recipients, contact Kathryn Harrington at (202) 208-6502.