



National Museum of Forest Service History Newsletter

Volume 24, Number 2

May 2012

National Wild Turkey Federation & Our Forest Service Partnership

By James Earl Kennamer, Ph.D.

James Earl Kennamer is the chief conservation officer for conservation and outreach programs with the National Wild Turkey Federation (NWTf) in Edgefield, SC. He has headed the Conservation Programs department for 31 years and coordinates NWTf programs with state and federal agencies, private organizations and companies throughout the United States, Canada and Mexico.

He is a professional member of the Boone & Crockett Club and co-chairs the North American's Hunting Heritage Steering Committee representing the United States. He is a member of the National Council of the National Museum of Forest Service History.

In June of 2010, he was appointed to the Collaborative Forest Landscape Restoration Program Advisory Panel by Tom Vilsack, the 30th secretary of the U.S. Department of Agriculture.

Kennamer earned a bachelor's degree in game management from Auburn University and a master's and doctorate in wildlife management from Mississippi State University.

NWTf's partnership with the U.S. Forest Service is our organization's strongest alliance with the federal government.

From naturalists, who help educate youth about the outdoors at our JAKES (Juniors Acquiring Knowledge, Ethics and Sportsmanship) events, to NWTf state chapter presidents, and from local districts to Washington D.C., Forest Service employees are deeply ingrained in the fabric of the NWTf.

Thirty-plus years ago when I started working with the NWTf, wild turkey populations were beginning to recuperate from tremendous reductions during the previous



200,000th Wild Turkey Release

Peggy Anne Vallery, NWTf Board Member, on the
Coronado National Forest, Arizona
2011

two centuries due to loss of habitat and unregulated hunting.

In the '70s, around the time the NWTf and the Forest Service established our partnership, there were about 1.8 million wild turkeys, and hunters harvested approximately 222,000 birds annually. Wild turkey hunter numbers were also beginning to rise, with 1 million hunters registered.

Our partnership was forged nearly 30 years ago when, in the early '80s, the NWTf began providing grants to help manage wild turkey habitat on national forests.

Thanks to the joint restoration efforts of state wildlife agencies, hunters and the NWTf, wild turkeys are now 7 million strong. About 2.8 million hunters pursue the bird during fall or spring seasons and harvest 864,000 turkeys each year.

Much of the restoration of wild turkeys was achieved through trapping and transferring wild turkeys to suitable

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Forest Service History**

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The *Newsletter* is published quarterly for the members and supporters of the National Museum of Forest Service History, a non-profit corporation dedicated to preserving the history of the Forest Service and conservation.

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Partners Aid National Forests

By Gray Reynolds

The National Forest System lands belong to all Americans. Their management and protection is entrusted to the U.S. Forest Service. But the task of managing these lands is so monumental that the agency simply would not have the same strength without the myriad of partnerships it has built over the years. Partnerships come in many different forms to assist the agency in delivering goods and services to the public.

The story of the National Wild Turkey Federation partnership in this newsletter illustrates the importance and accomplishments of one partnership. This partnership has immeasurably benefited the public through habitat improvement, increasing wild turkey populations and other wildlife and providing recreational opportunities for hunters.

Partners bring energy, enthusiasm and resources to achieve social, economic, and ecological goals. Partnerships have existed since beginnings of the agency in 1905. Let's look at other examples of partnerships.

Today fire prevention is accomplished through State Foresters, local fire agencies, other Federal agencies and the National Ad Council. According to the Ad Council, Smokey Bear and his message are recognized by 95% of adults and 77% of children in the U.S. Cooperative efforts on fire began in 1911, with the authorization of \$200,000 through the Weeks Act to be used as matching funds for states with forest protective agencies. The value to the nation of these protection programs is incredible. In the early 1900s, 20 to 50 million acres of forests were burned each year. Today wildfire losses have been reduced to between two to five million acres annually.

Local fire departments are eligible to receive surplus federal equipment. The grants require a 50:50 match. Trucks and fire engines are the most popular equipment requested. Over 35,000 fire departments were created as a result of this program. Today the local volunteer fire departments play an important role in assisting federal and state agencies in responding to wildfires and other emergency incidents.

The Wildlife and Fish program is truly a partnership involving state and federal fish and wildlife agencies, as well as nonprofit organizations like the National Wild Turkey Federation, Rocky Mountain Elk Foundation, Trout Unlimited, The Wildlife Society and Pheasants Forever to name just a few.

National Forest recreation visitors often use facilities or services authorized by permit, including alpine ski areas, recreational residences, and outfitter and guide services. The agency relies on hosts and other volunteers to maintain Forest Service campgrounds. Back Country Horsemen have been a key partner in maintaining trails.

There are thousands of examples of small local groups providing assistance, for example: The Apple Valley Kiwanis Club provided interpretive signage for the Stevens Pass area on the Mt. Baker Snoqualmie National Forest in Washington State. Anglers United rehabilitated Boulder Creek Picnic Area on the Tonto National Forest in Arizona. And the Disabled Veterans contributed \$10,000 to construct a handicap trail in the Black Hills National Forest of South Dakota.

Multiple use management programs provide trees for harvest by private companies, operating under the guidelines of Forest Service contracts that turn the trees into lumber and paper products used by all of us. Mining removes minerals that are used in a broad array of products needed for everyday life. Grasslands provide opportunities for ranchers to raise livestock that are sold to feed the American people.

Lessons learned by agency personnel and private companies and new science over the years has improved management techniques and approaches. Companies recognize the need to be good stewards of the land. One corporate partner voluntarily enhanced water supplies to benefit the sage grouse population. Harvesting trees through stewardship contracts have unleashed the innovative talents of the contractors.

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habitat – an idea first developed in South Carolina by Herman L. “Duffy” Holbrook, a Forest Service biologist working on the Francis Marion National Forest.

What started on the Francis Marion National Forest in 1950 has moved across the country. Today, wild turkeys inhabit National Forests throughout the lower 48 states. The population is completely restored and secure. State wildlife agencies did the trapping, hunters paid for the effort and, in many instances, the National Forests provided the best and largest tracts of public land to establish populations.

From our humble beginnings, I had no idea that the next three decades would see such incredible improvements in wildlife populations, habitat and hunter numbers. And I couldn’t foresee how our partnership with the Forest Service would become an example for other non-governmental organizations to partner with government agencies to achieve common goals.

More Kids in the Woods

One goal that bonds the NWTF and the Forest Service is preserving our hunting heritage by helping more kids experience the outdoors.

Getting more kids in the woods is important because if today’s youth don’t grow up learning about and appreciating nature, they won’t value our natural resources when they reach adulthood.

The NWTF started the JAKES program in 1981 as to give youths opportunities to explore the outdoors through hundreds of fun, kids-only events.

Within a few years, local NWTF chapters and ranger districts were teaming up to get kids out on the forests through NWTF’s JAKES program.

Since we first forged our partnership, the Forest Service has provided facilities, areas and experts such as foresters and biologists, and the NWTF has brought volunteers to these cooperative events on the National Forests.

Making Tracks

The NWTF is dedicated to the conservation of the wild turkey and the preservation of our hunting heritage. Our partnership with the Forest Service supports wild turkey management on a land base where we can work.

As our partnership evolved, we cooperatively hired a Forest Service liaison in the early ‘90s and established the Making Tracks program. The program is the framework whereby the NWTF works cooperatively on our National Forests to help the Forest Service restore turkey populations, improve



NWTF Bob’s Fork Stewardship Project
Allegheny National Forest, Pennsylvania
Black Cherry Logs Harvested, 2010

habitat and encourage kids to get out in the woods.

Through this program, the NWTF worked on the Davy Crockett National Forest in eastern Texas to improve wildlife habitat and release Eastern wild turkeys. We also worked with Arizona Game and Fish Department to release Gould’s wild turkeys in Arizona’s Coronado National Forest.

In fact, the Arizona Game and Fish Department, working with the NWTF and the Forest Service, released the 200,000th wild turkey in the United States on the Coronado National Forest in early 2011.

For more than three decades, the NWTF helped manage red cockaded woodpeckers in southern regions, which helped enhance wild turkey brood-rearing habitat. We also worked closely on projects from Oregon’s Deschutes/Crooked River National Grasslands to the Oconee National Forest in Georgia, and continue to identify opportunities to collaborate.

Making Tracks allows the NWTF to expand partnerships, generate funds and utilize volunteers to assist in meeting NWTF and National Forest goals.

Creating Stewardship Contracts

In 2004, the NWTF became the first non-government organization to successfully implement a stewardship contract on National Forest land. Based on the success of this project in South Carolina, the NWTF made a commitment to become a leader in the use of stewardship contracts and agreements.

The goal of stewardship projects is not to remove timber from the land, but to restore healthy forest ecosystems by reducing the risks of catastrophic wildfires; improve wildlife habitat for targeted species; and improve overall forest health.

When timber is harvested and sold, the Forest Service

retains the receipts and uses the money to complete ecosystem restoration projects.

The NWTF has completed or is currently working on more than 60 projects in 23 states that impact more than 37,000 acres and are valued at \$11.7 million.

A \$1.3 million stewardship agreement on Pennsylvania’s Allegheny National Forest is one of the largest stewardship projects in progress in the nation.

Stewardship contracts and agreements help wildlife and create jobs in local communities. Loggers work on federal land, mills receive federal timber, and active forest management projects proceed with broad-based support from a variety of interest groups.

The growth of stewardship contracting is one of the greatest accomplishments NWTF and the Forest Service have achieved together.

Eight years ago, not one stick of timber removed from federal land was managed through stewardship contracting. Today one-fourth of all timber harvested from federal land is through stewardship contracting and much of that is through the Making Tracks program. This means one-fourth of the total timber receipts from these sales is being returned to the forest to improve forest health and support habitat management.

Together, we have trained 17 NWTF wildlife biologists and foresters to implement stewardship contracts and agreements, and are actively planning or conducting habitat restoration work on 30 National Forests in 23 states.

When managing land for turkeys, we manage for clean water, early successional habitat, savannahs, glades and stands of large mature timber. This diverse habitat can support hundreds of other game and non-game species including quail, deer, grouse, pheasant and songbirds.

Increasing Hunting Opportunities

Projects completed on public land to improve habitat for wild turkeys also provide additional hunting opportunities, which is important because one of the main challenges facing hunters and potential hunters is having land to hunt.

The Forest Service provides 193 million acres of National Forests and grasslands on which to hunt, camp and fish. Hunters can buy a state permit to hunt on public land without paying to join a hunt club. By providing places to hunt, recreate and camp, we can get more people outdoors and encourage them to develop their passion for hunting.

Setting an Example

Our partnership has served as a model for the NWTF to forge similar agreements with all state wildlife agencies



NWTF Bluewater Stewardship Project
Cibola National Forest, New Mexico
Hydro Ax Tree Harvester, 2010

and many state forestry departments. The NWTF also has partnered with the Bureau of Land Management, Natural Resources Conservation Service, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and several other federal agencies.

Through dynamic partnerships with state, federal and provincial agencies and other partners, the NWTF and its volunteers have helped restore wild turkey populations throughout North America, investing more than \$372 million to conserve more than 17 million acres of habitat that benefit all types of wildlife.

As with all partnerships, there have been bumps along the way, but the NWTF’s and the Forest Service’s respect for one another as organizations and individuals has helped us work through any challenges that have arisen.

The NWTF values our National Forests, and holds the Forest Service in the highest regard. We are proud to work with the organization, and take pride in informing politicians about the importance of our public lands and National Forest.

The future of the NWTF and the Forest Service’s partnership can be summed up in three words: Bigger. Better. More.

Together we plan to get more kids in the woods, improve forest health on more acres, expand stewardship projects, educate the public on the value of National Forests for clean water and air, raise money to complete additional projects on National Forests and provide additional hunting opportunities and preserve our hunting heritage.

This legacy will benefit our country and ensure that future generations can enjoy our land, water and wildlife resources.



These resources help support the social and economic life of the country. How these multiple use programs have supported the development of the United States over time and still do today is an important Forest Service story.

Do you have a story about partnerships to share with us? Send it to nationalforest@montana.com. Stories will become part of our archives and may be shared in future newsletters and on our website.

Site Planning Moves Forward

The Missoula Support Committee members, Beryl Johnston, Dick Bacon, John Drake and Dave Stack, have worked to update the site plan for the 36-acre special use permit area adjacent to the Missoula airport and the future location of the National Conservation Legacy and Education Center. Forest Service review will be the next step.

Planning for the center site has become more comprehensive and detailed as committee members received training in interpretive design. This has allowed the site plan to respond to needs for the exhibits inside and outside of the building as well as the development of traveling exhibits and a virtual internet museum. The plan is in two phases – what can be implemented with the current fundraising effort and future development.

The plan is designed to provide educational and exciting visitor experiences for visitors of all ages. David Guiney, Interpretive and Education Planner, said "The story of the Forest Service is expansive, and the Museum campus with its view sheds, relocated historic structures, and natural settings can be used to complement the exhibit experience in the 30,000 square-foot museum building."

The story of the Forest Service is primarily about the outdoor, natural environment. It makes sense to tell at least part of the story outside within view of the surrounding forests and grasslands. Outdoor exhibits are a logical

interpretive tool to provide identification and interpretation of features.

Visitor views of the Museum campus from the highway and entrance will be critical in attracting visitors and setting the tone for the entire campus. Entrance design and preserving site lines to the Center are important.

Outdoor exhibits are developed around three design themes: 1920s Ranger Station, 1940s Bungalow Residence and the 1950 - 1960 Ranger Station. Because indoor exhibit space is limited, outdoor exhibits are needed to tell additional stories and provide space for displays of large equipment.

Museum members are welcome to become involved in exhibit planning and development. For example we are looking for suggestions on design of the entrance gate.



**Covered Outdoor Displays
Needed for Equipment**

Museum to Hold 2012 Annual Meeting in Vail



The Museum will hold its 2012 Annual Meeting on September 20, 2012 during the Forest Service Reunion in Vail, Colorado. The noon annual meeting luncheon is open to all members and interested individuals. Interpretive planning for the National Conservation Legacy and Education Center will be a focus of the meeting, and board members and volunteers will be available to answer your questions. Visit www.fsreunion2012.com to register for the Reunion.

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Existing Outdoor Exhibit

The Cadastral Monument, shown here is part of the National Survey Reference Network, was installed by the Forest Service on the Missoula museum site, near the Bungalow residence, in 2005 to mark the Forest Service Centennial.

Visitors will learn of the evolution of land surveying from staff compasses to advanced GPS technology. This interpretive sign is part of the initial museum development phase.



Repository News

More than 25,000 items have been cataloged on a searchable database of an estimated 42,000 historical items in the Museum Collection and the Forest Service Harvey Mack Collection. Members and friends continue to donate important historical items. Historical materials donated include:

We have recently cataloged and scanned 66 slides of the World War II Emergency Rubber Project managed by the Forest Service in California. The project cultivated guayule plants to produce rubber for the war effort. The slides are part of the Northern Region Archives long term loan to the Museum.



The Coronado National Forest in Arizona, recently donated 33 paper signs used during the 1960s and 1970s and are no longer used by the agency. This fire prevention sign dates from 1968.



This eight-pound concrete Forest Service shield was donated by Carl W. Hickerson of Scottsdale, AZ. A corpsman made the shield for the Mission Creek Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) Camp, located near the Monterey County Hearst Ranch Headquarters, California. The CCC Camp closed on 31 July 1942. Soon after, Carl found the shield hanging in the abandoned CCC office.





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Contributing	\$150 or more		

Michael Dax Joins NMFSH Staff

Michael joined us during the semester break at Christmas. He is a master degree student at the University of Montana studying American history and environmental history. Michael has written research papers and articles on the 1900 Appalachian Forest Reserve proposal, the 1906 Homestead Entry Law and Gifford Pinchot's 1907 meeting with cattlemen in Denver. The August newsletter will feature Michael's article on Pinchot's Denver meeting.