



THE BRANT

AUTUMN 2023

FRIENDS OF DUNGENESS NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

WINTER 2024

Volunteers Chip In On Kiwanis Club Firewood Project

By Ellie Ausmus

In late November, Refuge Manager Lorenz Sollman asked me if I could round up three or four volunteers to help the Kiwanis Club with a project. The club planned to cut down more than a dozen trees to make room for the new pit toilets in the Refuge parking lot. They would then strip the branches, cut the logs into rounds and split the rounds into firewood for sale. The club offered to donate a portion of the proceeds to the Friends.

I emailed the volunteer trail team, and seven hardy workers joined me: Susan Baker, Tom McKinney, Ron Andris, Doug Dammarell, Kathy Anderson, and Terry and Judy Strackbein.

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FRIENDS EVENTS

March 12th

2024 Season Kickoff Meeting

Tuesday, March 12

3:00 p.m.–5:00 p.m.

Dungeness River Nature Ctr.
1943 W Hendrickson Rd,
Sequim, WA 98382

Learn about oyster farming
in Dungeness Bay with guest
speaker Jim Parsons, CEO
Jamestown Seafood Company

Email fodnwr@gmail.com
to register for this event



Photos: Ellie Ausmus

Volunteers Chip In

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Fortunately, Terry and Judy had experience operating a splitter, and Doug can handle anything mechanical, so he used the blower to corral the branches and needles. Lorenz and Refuge Maintenance Manager Glenn Shellmer manned the chipper, continuously feeding in ridiculously large branches. The rest of the team, who were happy to leave operating machinery to others, tackled the huge pile of cut branches and spent a couple of hours staging them for the chipper.

It was a fun project in decent weather, and our efforts yielded a \$200 donation to the Friends. We may have more opportunities in the future, once the parking lot renovation moves forward and more trees are taken down. Nothing like job security!



Kiwanis cutting logs into rounds.



Ron, Lorenz and Glenn with the chipper.



The team splitting the rounds into firewood.



Susan and Tom staging branches for the chipper.

CONTACTS

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National Wildlife Refuge**

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Newsletter
Jason West

Meeting between the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, the River Center, and Friends of DNWR

By Ellie Ausmus, President and Connie Barron, Chair, Education Committee, Friends of DNWR

On January 30, 2024, members of the Friends Board were honored to attend an initial “meet and greet” with representatives of the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe (“Jamestown”) and the Dungeness River Nature Center (the “River Center”). Hansi Hals, Natural Resources Director, and Alex Scagliotti, Environmental Planner for Jamestown, gave an update on current Tribal oyster farm activities on the Department of Natural Resources aquatic lease in Dungeness Bay. Powell Jones, the Director of the River Center, shared information on web-based volunteer management, used for signing up for shifts and tracking volunteer hours online. He also offered to work with the Friends in providing space for training and educational programs.



From left: Powell Jones, Alex Scagliotti, Hansi Hals, Connie Barron, Ellie Ausmus

While discussions continue between Jamestown and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service regarding any shared responsibilities for management of the Dungeness and Protection Island Refuges, this initial meeting ensures that the Friends of Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge and all the dedicated volunteers will be kept informed of any decisions or changes in responsibilities as they occur. We will also receive education and updates regarding the return of oyster harvesting in the Bay.

Meanwhile, we will prepare for another active season of welcoming visitors, with even more information to share about this wonderful natural resource. Stay tuned for information about the upcoming volunteer training session and educational presentations. Please email any questions to: fodnwr@gmail.com



Jennifer Brown-Scott Takes New Role at USFWS

In October, after serving ten years as Project Leader for the Washington Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Jennifer accepted a new position with US Fish & Wildlife Service. Friends and Refuge volunteers will certainly miss her smile and optimism. We wish you well on your new adventure!

Friends Seek Board Members

Friends are seeking individuals interested in becoming a board member, or volunteering with Friends. Our long time Treasurer, Bruce Brod is currently serving his final year. If you have relevant experience we would love to hear from you. Please email: at fodnwr@gmail.com



Planted by the sea. Photo: Jason West



Nature's decomposers get to work and target the sweet sapwood of this windthrown tree, cut after it fell across the Primitive Trail in fall 2022. Photo: Dow Lambert

Weed Warriors on Protection Island

Team members of Weed Warriors worked with the Refuge's Restoration Technician Adam Gilles to plant thousands of bulbs and many hundreds of plant starts on Protection Island this winter. Photos by Laura Davis



Bernie plants a diverse mix of bulbs in a newly started planting area on Protection Island on November 14.



Laura spreads a seed mix of grass and native-species forbs across the west bluff planting area before the protective jute landscape fabric is unrolled. The local native American dunegrass (*Elymus mollis*), shown here, has held up well in the prevailing west winds.

In the spring of 2022, we collected and planted dune grass divisions in sand-filled propagation beds at the Refuge headquarters. This autumn and winter, we harvested cuttings as needed for transplant on Protection Island. The dune grass will help stabilize the sandy soil from wind erosion near the bluff edge and create shelter for future plantings.



The team suits up for the late-afternoon return to John Wayne Marina from Protection Island: Lynn, Bernie, Jessie, and Janet.



Following seeding, laying and pinning of jute, Kathy pulls the existing dune grass through the open and flexible weave. Seedlings and new plants will grow up through the jute fabric, which will decay within a few years' time.



Laura plants balsamroot starts that the team had potted up the previous spring at Shore Road Nursery.



Lynn D. and Lynn C. plant perennials in the portion of the headquarters' prairie restoration project that experienced an accidental fire in July. The fire restarted the flowering process for some plants.



Here, the bracts (modified leaves) of the golden paintbrush (*Castilleja levisecta*) are colorful on the last day of November 2023.



Kathy, Lynn, and Jessie on Protection Island in November. Photos: Laura Davis

Winter Storms

Storms shifted logs, eroded cliffs, moved rocks and sand. Waves breached the spit in several locations.



Dungeness Spit as viewed from Marine Drive on the calm afternoon of January 10, one day after The New Dungeness Lighthouse weather station clocked a 58 mph gust. Water flowed across the spit in several locations between the pole at the half-mile mark and Graveyard Spit. Photo: Dow Lambert



Waves wash over the spit on January 10 the day after a big storm. Photo: Jason West



Beached kelp glows in the low light of early February. Wave action from winter storms are a destructive force on the offshore kelp forests. Photo: Laura Davis



Erosion at the bottom of the hill. Photo: Jason West

Above: Refuge staff will be working to stabilize the path and roadbed at the base of the spit. There, severe erosion has included undermining the trash can slab. Staff will build up the area and make a protective barrier out of some root wads. They are working in coordination with the Tribe and their archeologist. Photo: Laura Davis



Large crab pot washed out to the spit by the storm. Photo: Jason West



New restrooms coming soon. Photo: Jason West



Driftwood log rich in burls.
Photo: Laura Davis

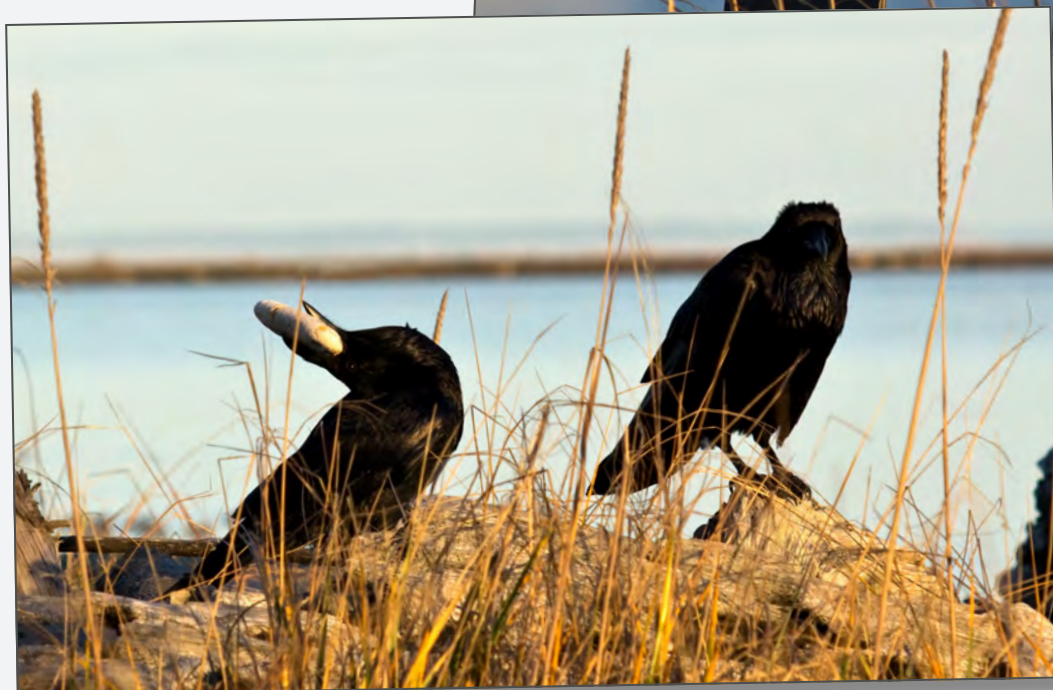
The log with burls.
Photo: Jason West

Sidebar: Pileated woodpecker
greet visitors on the main trail.
Photo: Jason West





This pair of ravens was snuggling on the driftwood, then one left and the other got all puffy. It found a cork float and flew up and landed briefly on the mile-post 2 post, then flew down to the other raven and seemed to offer it as a gift. Ravens nest in the trees near the headquarters building every year, and make their presence known vocally, especially to the early arrivals to walk the trails. Photos: Dow Lambert





Photos: Jason West



Photos: Jason West

