

August 2020



For Refuge updates, please visit the [FWS.gov](https://www.fws.gov) website.



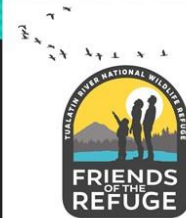
If you do visit the Refuge please know that all facility buildings are closed. Port-a-johns are available and the parking lot is partially open. Pets are not permitted on the Refuge, and please use social distancing when walking the trail. See these helpful graphic from our partners at Metro.

Donations to help us continue our work to support the TRNWRC are more important than ever as our Natures Overlook Store is closed.

www.FriendsofTualatinRefuge.org

The Friends are working towards becoming a truly inclusive organization that rejects racism in all its forms and embraces cultural and economic diversity. The Board of Directors for the Friends of Tualatin River National Wildlife Refuge is keenly aware that despite undergoing Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) training, we have much progress to make for our organization to reflect the diversity of our urban area. We further seek to give equal value to all voices in helping to articulate our mission, vision, policies and best practices. Although we are directing our outreach to better reflect diversity, equity and inclusion, we understand we need to continue to improve and commit to examining all activities through a DEI perspective. We invite your ideas. We want all to feel welcome and safe to visit the Refuge. We need the quiet, the beauty and the peace that nature and wildlife bring to our souls. It is imperative people of all colors and ethnicities are aware of this sanctuary and comfortable in searching solace.

Friends of Tualatin River NWR Statement on Racism



PRESIDENT'S PERCH

By Alan Christensen, President of the Board



When my two children were about 9 and 7 my wife and I planned a trip to Disneyland, which seemed like a parental requirement at the time. Both kids were excited by the idea. The trip involved driving from NW Montana to Anaheim, California in our 1964 Volvo wagon, which had over 250,000 miles on it. We spent most of three days on the road, with a layover at my brothers in California. What we all remember, about 40 years later, is waiting in long lines, being totally exhausted at the end of the day, and my daughter throwing up because she was so excited that morning. It wasn't the rides, the costumed workers or the "magic" of the kingdom that has lasted. It was our shared human element of what constituted entertainment and what was worth remembering.

JOIN

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RENEW

UPCOMING EVENTS

Friends Board Meeting

Virtual Meeting Planned

August 26, 2020 6:30 PM

Contact by 8/25/2020
Info@FriendsOfTualatinRefuge.org if you would like to receive an invitation to attend our ZOOM meeting.



SOCIAL MEDIA

My kids grew up in rural places. My daughter started school in a one room school house at a remote ranger station in Idaho. My son spent hours outdoors with his friends building forts in the woods behind our house in Montana. Both remember riding their bikes to the swimming hole in a creek about a half mile from our house on hot summer days. When they grew up and graduated from college they both sought out bigger cities on the west coast, got married, and began to lead busy lives. I have been captivated by nature and natural things all my life and sometimes questioned whether those values got translated to my kids as they grew up. Now, watching them raise their children I see the affinity for nature and natural things as a part of what they enjoy and where they choose to spend their time. Times have changed and Portland is not Montana or Idaho, but being outside and seeking outdoor activities is important to their health and mental state of mind. Camping, biking, walking, fishing, floating rivers and gardening are all activities my wife and I have enjoyed and now we see those acted out in our children. Now, during this Covid infection period, we see the attraction to nature and the outdoors even more pronounced in them as well as the general public. When the Tualatin NWR closed facilities to the public early this spring, it did not stop people from seeking the escape that the refuge offered, as the trails remained open. Visitors filled the turnaround off Highway 99 to overflowing on most days. Many of those visitors had never been to the refuge before but were seeking open spaces and a chance to find relief and respite from the overwhelming events. Nature provides a balm, especially at troubling times, and seems to resonate within us at the deepest levels. Quietly sitting and watching birds go about their business frees out minds. Walking the trails at the refuge causes us look at what we see, soften our conversations and take note of the river, the trees and the quiet. Places like the Tualatin Refuge are critical to the wellbeing of people and communities and groups like Friends are critical to the wellbeing of the refuge. During times of stress, like our current Covid pandemic, nature and natural places come into focus as extremely important elements of our human existence; like touchstones for reality and a healing power for our minds and hearts. Protecting and nurturing



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natural places is something that benefits us all and brings us together as a community with shared human values. So go out, get in touch with nature and join in supporting the care and nurturing of all natural areas, especially those in public ownership.

Friends of the Tualatin River NWR Annual Meeting

Save the Date

September 26, 2020

We will be holding a virtual meeting this year

Watch your email for your invitation with more details and to RSVP

Friends Contribute \$30,000 to Wapato Lake NWR Trail



Mike Skinner, Friends Member and Volunteer- helps with the trail construction

This year the Friends of the Refuge applied for and received a \$30,000 grant from Washington County Visitors Association. The grant proposal was to help provide funding to create an almost 2 miles stretch of accessible trail. The Friends were able to purchase the geo-textile fabric and the gravel for the trail with the grant.



Alan Fitzpatrick, Friends Member and Volunteer – Helps with trail construction

Planting Update!

We have received some questions about how the plants are doing from our community planting events held in the fall and early spring, so I wanted to give a quick update:

Fall Plantings

1P:

These plantings took place in early November, in front of the Visitor Center; the plants consisted of various wetland species, including wapato. At the end of winter (January), most of the plants seemed to have survived the winter. Though some have succumbed to grazing by waterfowl, Curt (refuge Wildlife Biologist) just checked up on them, and we are happy to report that the wapato has begun to pop up.



Wapato planted at 1P; photo from Curt Mykut

Chicken Creek:

This planting took place in early December, and we were joined by Institute for Applied Ecology to plant out Nelson's Checkermallow, a listed threatened species in Oregon. We planted the checkermallow plugs in 2 different spots, and additionally seeded those areas as well. Once I was able to resume fieldwork, I was just able to catch one of the last to bloom. There seemed to be good growth in that area, and Sarah (refuge BioTech) reported seeing healthy growth earlier in the season as well.



Checkermallow at Chicken Creek

Spring Plantings

Chicken Creek:

We held 2 separate planting events at Chicken Creek in late February, including one hosted by Friends of Trees. We planted spirea, as well as twinberry. I just recently went out there and the plants seem to be doing fairly well. There was definitely healthy growth from the spirea that I saw.



Spirea at Chicken Creek

Wapato Lake National Wildlife Refuge:

This planting was held in early March, and took place at the edge of the lakebed. We planted a few different species here, including elderberry and ninebark. Contractors from Ash Creek Forest Management came out after to finish planting out the site with a few additional species. For the most part, the plants seem to be doing very well, especially the ninebark, and the Oregon ash (planted by Ash Creek). Some of the Elderberry seem to be struggling a little bit, and we have a few ideas as to why that might be. Overall, that site look very good!



Ninebark at Wapato Lake NWR

We would like to continue bringing you the Ask the Expert segments. If you or your child would like to ask an expert a question about the Refuge, wildlife or the Friends, please contact Carly at

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CONTACT US

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