



Department of Defense National Public Lands Day 2010

Project # 10-086

Background:

National Public Lands Day began in 1994 with three sites and 700 volunteers. Coordinated by the National Environmental Education Foundation, National Public Lands Day (NPLD) is the nation's largest hands-on volunteer effort to improve and enhance the public lands Americans enjoy.

In 2010, approximately 170,000 volunteers worked at over 2,080 locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia and U.S. territories. Along with the Department of Defense (DoD), eight federal agencies and many state and local lands participate in this annual day of caring for shared lands. Generally, NPLD takes place on the last Saturday of September. In 2010, National Public Lands Day took place on September 25. Next year, NPLD is planned for September 24, 2011.

The DoD Legacy Resource Management Program joined the NPLD partnership in 1999 to support volunteer habitat restoration projects on military installations open to the public for recreation throughout the United States and has provided financial support for NPLD events over the past 12 years.

Volunteers planted oak trees along a river at Marine Corps Air Station Cherry Point in Havelock, North Carolina.



Objective:

The primary objective of NPLD is to enlist those who use public lands for recreation to help care for the natural places they enjoy. NPLD educates Americans about critical environmental and natural resources issues and the need for shared stewardship of these valued, irreplaceable lands.

Summary of Approach:

NPLD projects that take place on military installations open to the public for recreation are eligible for DoD Legacy funding. This is a competitive funding application process. Projects generally emphasize habitat and cultural restoration - the forests, mountains, prairies, plains, rivers, wetlands and urban streams that are home to a rich diversity of animals and plants as well as historic buildings, bridges and other cultural structures. The maximum amount awarded to each site was \$6,500 in 2010. Funds may be used for equipment, materials and enhancements to land used by the public, but not for t-shirts, food or labor. The application is posted on the NPLD website (www.publiclandsday.org). Applications are due in May or June each year.



Volunteers at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach in Seal Beach, California added native vegetation to restore an upper salt marsh and adjacent upland habitat.

Benefit:

The military benefits from enhancing and restoring lands for recreation with much of this work directed to improving natural habitat for wildlife or cultural resources. Participating in NPLD provides the natural and cultural resources managers the means and labor to complete small installation-specific projects that while beneficial to the installations, may not otherwise get done due to budget or manpower limitations. These projects improve habitat and biodiversity for common and rare species alike, which may help reduce the need for intense management and constraints to installation operations. Improvements and conservation of the natural and cultural resources on installations also provide more opportunities for installation personnel to enjoy and appreciate their installation natural and cultural assets. Additionally, NPLD provides an opportunity for the military to invite the community to learn about these lands and understand the unique challenges surrounding natural resource management on DoD installations.

Accomplishments:

In 2010, 48 out of 52 applications were selected to receive Legacy funds. Many sites focused on improving habitat for pollinator species such as bees, birds, bats and insects. The following are just a few examples of work done at the selected military installations:

- at Cape Canaveral Air Force Station in Florida, volunteers restored a mangrove habitat;
- on Malmstrom Air Force Base in Montana, volunteers prepared the site for a butterfly garden;
- and at Fort Bliss in Texas, volunteers restored a Buffalo Soldier Monument.

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