



Department of Defense National Public Lands Day 2012

Project # 12-086

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 single-day effort for public lands.

In 2012, approximately 175,000 volunteers worked at 2,206 locations in all 50 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico and U.S. territories. Along with the Department of Defense (DoD), seven federal agencies, nonprofits and many state and local governments participate in this annual day of caring for shared lands. NPLD takes place on the last Saturday of September. In 2012, National Public Lands Day took place on September 29. In 2013, NPLD will occur on September 28.

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. Legacy has provided financial support for NPLD events over the past 14 years to benefit natural and cultural resources on military bases.

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.

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 2012, 36 out of 41 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 examples of work done at the selected military installations:

- Joint Regions Marianas Naval Base in Guam—volunteers planted flowering trees to help restore a native forest.
- Marine Corps Air Ground Combat Center in California—volunteers landscaped the area and created stone pathways to connect two native plant gardens and one tortoise garden.
- Fort Bragg in North Carolina—volunteers enhanced a memorial space that is dedicated to the families of Fallen Warriors.

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Volunteers at Naval Weapons Station Seal Beach in California restored native vegetation to provide habitat and shelter for endangered birds and many pollinators.



Objective:

A 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 with some lands open to the public for recreation are eligible for DoD Legacy funding. This is a competitive funding application process. Projects emphasize conservation and habitat and cultural restoration. In 2012, the maximum amount awarded to each site was \$6,500. 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 at: publiclandsday.org. A call for applications is issued each summer.

