



Audubon Minnesota News

December 21, 2006

Happy Holidays!

Audubon Minnesota Announces Chapter Collaborative Grant Funding Recipients – Congratulations!

The Grants Committee of our Board of Directors met and reviewed proposals for chapter collaborative grant funding. There were 10 proposals submitted by 9 chapters. The total amount of all grants requests was over twice the \$5,450 we have to award. The committee thought highly of each proposal, each having significant benefits for bird conservation. They also weighed prioritizing projects to chapters which had not received funding last year. The Grants Committee was very pleased to see the number of worthwhile projects coming from the chapters. The four funded projects will definitely help bird conservation in some very different and positive ways. As a result of considerable thought and discussion, the following four projects will receive funding.

Minneapolis	Red-headed Woodpecker Recovery Program	\$400	Project patterned after the Blue Bird Recovery Program. Works to increase woodpecker numbers by implementing a nest box program and monitoring results.
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Mississippi Headwaters	Improve Educational Opportunities at the Neilson Spearhead Center	\$1,300	Purchase needed equipment for trail maintenance and educational equipment to enhance school groups educational experience at Neilson Spearhead Center.
St. Paul	MN Bird Collision Taskforce	\$1,950	Establishes monitoring protocol to determine bird mortality from tall buildings during migration. Plan and implement a lights out program in the Twin Cities and use in other MN cities as well to reduce bird fatalities.
Wild River	Natural History of Minnesota's Threatened Birds	\$1,800	Identify threatened birds in each IBA. Produce descriptions of species, range, habitat needs, population trends and other facts. To be used on website and possible booklet form.

Sign-Up, Folks – Minnesota Environmental Partnership’s 11th Annual Legislative Environment Reception & Forum – 5-8 pm, Monday, January 08, 2007

The Minnesota Environmental Partnership (MEP) will host its 11th Annual Legislative Forum and Reception on Monday, January 8 from 5 - 8 p.m. at the Science Museum of Minnesota in St. Paul. Audubon members will have the chance to listen to a panel of legislative leadership discuss the 2007 legislative session and the environmental issues that will be hot.

This event will be the kick-off for MEP's 2007 collaborative legislative initiative activities. The 2007 collaborative initiative includes Clean Energy legislation, Clean Water Legacy and Sustainable Funding for Minnesota's Great Outdoors. Attendees will learn more about these and other important environmental issues that will be facing Minnesota's legislature this year. This is a great chance to meet and talk to the people that are working on these issues as well as the legislative leadership to find out where they stand.

This fun-filled evening will feature locally and sustainably raised foods as well as a cash bar - come hungry! Tickets to this event are \$20 with advance registration and \$25 at the door. Funds raised will be used to offset the cost of hosting the event. Register at www.mepartnership.org or call 651-290-0154.

Second Annual Wetlands Summit, Normandale Community College, Bloomington, Minnesota – 8 am to 5:30 pm, Saturday, February 3, 2007

This second annual Wetlands Summit, as was its predecessor, is an outgrowth of the Rally for Ducks, Wetlands and Clean Water held on two occasions on the State Capitol grounds in April of 2005 and 2006. The Rally called for holding a Wetlands Summit to review current programs and problems, identify corrective measures needed, and to help establish a common ground between the wetland conservation and agricultural communities.

In keeping with this directive, the Summit Organizational Committee advances this revised Mission Statement:

Minnesota's second Wetlands Summit recognizes the importance of a sustainable land ethic in achieving a sound balance between agricultural programs and the vitality of wetlands, clean water and suitable habitat for fish and wildlife. It also recognizes the probability that profound climate change may irreversibly alter the lands and waters that sustain us all. The 2007 Summit will review accomplishments of the past year, identify common ground for the agricultural and conservation communities, review the scope of the 2007 Farm Bill and provide recommendations, present an overview on climate change and its potential impacts, and encourage individuals and organizations to work collectively to achieve changes desired.

The 2007 Wetlands Summit theme is: Cultivating a Minnesota Land Ethic. The morning session will provide a summary of accomplishments since the 2006 Summit, ponder whether a conservation based land ethic is achievable, review key issues in the 2007 Farm Bill and provide for open discussion. The luncheon speaker will address climate change and its potential effect on agriculture, fish and wildlife habitat and water quality/quantity. The afternoon session will be devoted to an interactive Farm Bill Forum, and culminate in recommendations for collective and individual action, recognizing that a united front by agricultural and conservation interests is an absolute requirement for success.

The Summit is a cooperative effort sponsored by the Izaak Walton League of America, National Wildlife Federation, The Nature Conservancy, Audubon Minnesota, Minnesota Waterfowl Association, Ducks Unlimited, Minnesota, Outdoor Heritage Alliance, Fish and Wildlife Legislative Alliance, Minnesota Center for Environmental Advocacy, Sierra Club, Land Stewardship Project, Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

There will be a registration fee of \$25.00 per person, with a reduced fee of \$15.00 for certified students. The fee will include a continental breakfast, morning and afternoon refreshments and a noon lunch in the College cafeteria. Free parking is available. Please return the attached Registration Form with payment to the Minnesota Division IWLA. Please note the new address on the form. Call 651-221-0215 or ikes@minnesotaiakes.org for further assistance. Pre-registration is advised.

Co-chairs for the Wetlands Summit II: Bill Henke, IWLA: 218-847-4004 or wchenke@djam.com and Harvey Nelson, MWA, MOHA, 952-831-8333 or harvnel@msn.com

Get Ready to “Count Birds for the Record!” Great Backyard Bird Count - Friday to Monday, February 16-19

Press Release, New York, NY & Ithaca, NY, November 2006—What mid-winter activity is fun, easy, free, and helps bird conservation? What can parents and teachers do with children that connects them to a whole new world of natural wonders? This February, the tenth annual Great Backyard Bird Count (GBBC), sponsored by the Cornell Lab of Ornithology and National Audubon Society, will give everyone a chance to discover the birds in their neighborhood and “Count for the Record.”

“Before the count, I never bothered to tell one sparrow from the next,” said Lori Bailey, a GBBC participant from La Crosse, Wisconsin. “But I took a picture of something taking shelter in a tree, enlarged it in Photoshop, and was actually able to tell what kind of sparrow it was. It was kind of fun playing detective. In short, the bird count had adventure, mystery, and the unexpected.”

During February 16–19, 2007, people of all ages, from beginners to experts, are invited to join this event which spans all of the United States and Canada. Participants can take part wherever they are – at home, in schoolyards, at local parks or wildlife refuges. Observers simply count the highest number of each species they see during an outing or a sitting, and enter their tally on the Great Backyard Bird Count web site at www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

Visitors to the web site can also compare their sightings with results from other participants, as checklists pour in from throughout the U.S. and Canada. Together, these counts offer a real-time snapshot of the numbers and kinds of birds that people are finding, from Boreal Chickadees in Alaska to Anhingas in Florida.

“The Great Backyard Bird Count is a community celebration of birds, birding, and nature,” said Janis Dickinson, director of Citizen Science at the Cornell Lab of Ornithology. “We often fail to notice how rich our surroundings are, but counting birds, even for just 15 minutes, is not only educational—it can provide a lasting source of enjoyment, turning a daily walk into a treasure hunt.”

“We are encouraging people to go outside and count birds for the first time this year,” said Paul Green, Audubon’s director of Citizen Science. “By submitting their counts online, birdwatchers can quickly see how the dots they put on the map form new patterns that tell new stories about the birds that share the world in which we live, including our own backyards and parks.”

This year marks the tenth anniversary of the GBBC, and Audubon and the Cornell Lab of Ornithology are challenging people everywhere to “Count for the Record,” by participating in greater numbers than ever before. Greater participation, with more checklists submitted, provides more information about bird population trends – and helps to better inform conservation efforts.

Last year, participants submitted more than 60,000 checklists – and reported 7.5 million birds overall and 623 different species. The count helped chronicle the early spring migratory routes of Sandhill Cranes, documented lingering migrants such as Orange-crowned Warblers and Tree Swallows, revealed the ongoing range expansion of introduced Eurasian Collared-Doves, and recorded declining numbers of American Crows.

Participants who want to hone their bird watching skills can learn more from the Great Backyard Bird Count web site, which offers identification tips and access to photos, sounds, maps, and natural history information on more than 500 bird species. People can also submit photos to an online gallery showcasing the dazzling array of winter birds found during the GBBC. Competitions add another element of fun, including a photo contest, rankings for most

numerous birds, and the coveted "checklist champ" title for towns, states, and provinces with the highest participation.

The Great Backyard Bird Count is a free event, sponsored in part by Wild Birds Unlimited.

For more information, visit www.birdsource.org/gbbc.

LOBBY DAY: Mark Your Calendar: Wednesday, February 21, 2007

Folks, this next session is going to be a doozy. You will not want to miss the show. PLEASE, make sure you have the Audubon/Minnesota Environmental Partnership's Lobby Day marked on your calendar.

We'll meet at the Lakes and Plains Regional Council of Carpenters and Joiners Union Hall, 700 Olive Street, St. Paul. From there, shuttle buses will bring participants to the State Capitol for a rally in the rotunda, followed by meetings with your legislators.

This year, I'll have a room set-aside for Audubon folks to meet and be well-versed on our legislative priorities, which are protecting Minnesota's natural resources and bird habitat from off-highway vehicle damage and dedicating funding for the environment. To learn more about our issues, please [click here to learn more about Audubon Minnesota's 2007 legislative agenda](#). Minnesota Environmental Partnership's legislative priorities include: clean water, clean energy and investments to protect the great outdoors. [Click here to learn more about MEP's legislative agenda](#).

Policy Program Update

- Welcome to Gary Botzek! - Our lobbying and legislative activities at the Capitol will be lead by Gary Botzek, an independent contract lobbyist with Capitol Connections. Gary is an Audubon member and has lobbied on behalf of conservation issues for many years. He is well-liked and respected by many legislators and conservation community members. Susan will work with Gary on priority issues as needed.
- Audubon Volunteers! – We need a few people with some free time during the weekday hours to monitor two or three key committees and their activity. Starting in early to mid-January, committees will begin to meet weekly for about two hours at a time. If you can make a two-hour commitment during the each week, your listening skills are needed. The subject matter will be interesting and the politics will be fascinating. This is easy and entertaining volunteer work. Sign-up soon! Contact me at ssolterman@audubon.org or call me at 651-26-7040.
- Environmental Issues Committee – Still Kicking. Next Meeting 9:30 am, Friday, January 12 at Café Amore (corner of Grand and Milton, St. Paul). Free coffee and tea!

What Are You Doing Next Summer? Upper Pennisula Resort Needs a Caretaker Couple or Individual. Check-it Out.

COUPLE OR INDIVIDUAL needed to assist in management of a six-cabin lakeside resort from mid-May to mid-October. Work 20 hours per week in exchange for a private cabin located next to a wilderness area famous for its pristine lakes, old-growth forest and great canoeing, kayaking, fishing and hiking. Duties include registration and care of guests and cleaning and preparing cabins in-between guests. The resort is located in the Sylvania Wilderness Reserve and is located on a non-motorized lake. It is picturesque and quiet. The cabins are clean and modern.

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Audubon Mission: Working with others to conserve and restore natural ecosystems, focusing on birds, other wildlife and their habitats,

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