



# 2007 Annual Report



Photo by Ron LeValley

**T**he Pacific Coast Joint Venture is one of 18 habitat joint ventures in North America working to protect and restore ecosystems to benefit birds and other wildlife. The joint venture model is based on building partnerships and leveraging the financial and technical contributions of each partner.

Pacific Coast Joint Venture is an international effort that brings together organizations, agencies, corporations, and

institutions from the U.S. and Canada to fund and implement on-the-ground conservation projects. Our activities are guided by state and provincial coordinators and steering committees working at the local level, and a management board representing a regional cross-section of natural resource agencies and organizations.

Joint venture projects are based on conservation priori-

ties identified in four major bird conservation initiatives: North American Waterfowl Management Plan, North American Waterbird Conservation Plan, U.S. Shorebird Conservation Plan and Partners in Flight (landbirds).

In 2007 our partners accomplished over 200 conservation projects. The following pages offer highlights from this work.

## *Pacific Coast Joint Venture Partner Habitat Accomplishments (In Acres)*

Year	Protection	Restoration	Enhancement	Projects Completed	Expenditures
2007	17,102	3,491	4,395	205	\$160,958,000
1991-2007	444,181	73,758	115,847	1,741	\$1,169,772,000

# The Science Behind Our Work



Photo by Ron LeValley

**Hooded Mergansers**

Science coordinators help develop the biological basis for joint venture projects. All habitat joint ventures are currently updating their plans to incorporate a wider range of bird species and strengthen the scientific foundations of the biological objectives. In 2007, Pacific Coast Joint Venture science coordinators continued their work on developing bird habitat and bird population objectives for wetlands and uplands in the Puget Lowland Ecoregion. In 2008, we will begin this process for the Willamette Valley focus area with a riparian habitat survey in cooperation with The Nature Conservancy to determine habitat protection goals.

Planning began for a 2008 goose energetics study cost-shared with the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife that will provide information on the amount of private land habitat that must be maintained to meet our bird population goals. We will also initiate a study of sea level rise, concentrating on Pacific brant habitat and habitat protection strategies, in order to minimize its effects on this focal bird species.



Photo by Bruce Taylor



Photo by Donna Dewhurst/USFWS

**Yellow Warbler**

# The Pacific Coast Joint Venture: Alaska



**Sandhill Cranes**

Opportunities are limited for far-flung Alaskans to share information on bird and wetland habitats. In 2007 the Pacific Coast Joint Venture convened conservation partners from across the state in two major meetings. In March, a group of nearly 60 met in Anchorage to share resources, discuss habitat conservation trends and gaps, and showcase projects. A number of new partners were added to the joint venture partnership at this meeting. Federal, state and non-profit partners identified priorities for conservation work, including expanding statewide communications, identifying important habitats for protection and increasing knowledge about Alaska's wetlands.

Based on the success of this meeting, the joint

venture organized a full-day meeting in November that focused on habitat mapping. The Nature Conservancy, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Kachemak Heritage Land Trust, Alaska GAP Program and Kenai Watershed Forum presented projects related to bird populations or habitat mapping.

Planning began for 2008, when the Pacific Coast Joint Venture will continue to play an active role in fostering statewide communications about habitat projects, conservation planning, grants and outreach.

## **2007 on-the-ground highlights**

Nearly 2,000 acres of small acquisition and easement projects were completed by the Kachemak Heritage Trust, the Interior Alaska Land Trust, The Conservation Fund and The Great Land Trust, with the assistance of many partners. The Conservation Fund worked with partners to protect wetlands and associated uplands throughout Alaska, including acres critical to fish, nesting birds and other wildlife. The Kachemak Heritage Land Trust's largest acquisition in 2007, the Diamond Creek Project, secured forested wetlands and uplands that contain valuable nesting habitat for sandhill cranes, swans and ducks. The Great Land Trust, working in SouthCentral Alaska, closed on 80 acres donated to the Trust as a sandhill crane sanctuary.

The Chena Flats Greenbelt Project, working under the auspices of the Interior Alaska Land Trust, completed a 92-acre acquisition partially funded with a North American Wetlands Conservation Act small grant. This adds additional high value wetlands and critical uplands to the greenbelt, a corridor comprising some of the last natural open water and wetland-meadow wetlands remaining near Fairbanks.

*Photo by Ron LeValley*



# The Pacific Coast Joint Venture: British Columbia



Photo courtesy Ducks Unlimited Canada

## **Wetlands and farmlands in Boundary Bay protected by the Pacific Coast Joint Venture**

**B**ritish Columbia's Fraser River Delta is the largest and most important coastal estuary for wintering and migratory waterfowl along Canada's west coast. The delta's extensive agricultural habitat is a primary food source for many species of migratory birds. Pacific Coast Joint Venture partners, with the support of the North American Wetland Conservation Act (NAWCA) and other funding sources, are working with farmers to secure and enhance agricultural land within the Delta.

Scientific studies by joint venture partners show that traditional agricultural crops (vegetables, grains and grasses) provide significant sources of food energy for migrating and wintering waterfowl. However, traditional

crops in the Fraser River Delta continue to be lost to other more intensive agricultural crops such as berries, nurseries and greenhouses as well as urban sprawl.

### **2007 on-the-ground highlights**

Farmland acquisition costs in the delta now exceed \$125,000 per hectare (\$50,000 per acre). The joint venture is working to acquire only the most critical farmlands while expanding other conservation tools. In 2007, joint venture partners developed model conservation covenants (easements) that are acceptable by the Agriculture Land Commission, which approves or rejects covenants on agricultural land.

Historically, short-term stewardship agreements were the main mechanism to improve farmland for both farmers and waterfowl. This included planting winter cover crops and leveling fields to improve drainage and reduce the impact of winter flooding. New strategies include tile drainage and adding lime to the soil. The fields are now more productive for the farmer and better withstand waterfowl grazing during heavy fall and winter rains. The Delta Farmland and Wildlife Trust administers and delivers these Pacific Coast Joint Venture stewardship agreements in the Fraser River Delta.

Building on the stewardship agreements, joint venture partners have developed On-Farm Plans and other long-term agreements. These 20-year sustainable agriculture plans help farmers improve agricultural productivity while benefiting waterfowl populations by reducing environmental risks, such as water contamination and damage to riparian areas.

# The Pacific Coast Joint Venture: California



Photo by Ron LeValley

**The former Stamps House was acquired as an education center for the new Humboldt Coastal Nature Reserve**

**O**utreach plays a critical role in the work of the Pacific Coast Joint Venture. In California in 2007, the joint venture contributed expertise in bird conservation with presentations at ten conferences, meetings, and birding festivals. Joint venture partners worked to re-invigorate offshore rock seabird surveys in Northern California and met with local communities to address the impacts of fireworks displays on seabird colonies.

The joint venture also helped guide the review process for restoration projects funded by the settlement awarded for the September 6, 1999 M/V Stuyvesant oil spill near Humboldt Bay. The spill contaminated 60 miles of coastline and killed 2,400 seabirds, including 135

marbled murrelets, and impacted the threatened snowy plover and its habitat.

Working with the California Coastal Commission, the joint venture prepared "Enhancing Seasonal Wetlands in the Coastal Zone: A Regulatory Constraint Analysis of the California Coastal Act." The document helps partners with the permitting process for enhancement and restoration projects.

## **2007 on-the-ground highlights**

Bottomlands around Humboldt Bay are critically important to a wide variety of wildlife and fish. These bottomlands are mostly diked tidelands functioning as seasonal agricultural wetlands. In No-

vember 2007, the City of Arcata dedicated the 550-acre Jacoby Creek/Gannon Slough Wildlife Area, acquired and restored in partnership with the California Coastal Conservancy through the U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant program. Goals for the reserve include continued protection and restoration of the riparian habitat; long term management to benefit water fowl, shorebirds, wading birds, raptors and anadromous fish; and scientific and educational use. A prior North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) grant also contributed to the Jacoby Creek project.

Humboldt County's Friends of the Dunes completed the purchase of 38 acres of coastal dunes in July 2007. The property, located in Manila, includes a distinctive house that will be converted into a coastal dune education center. The center and surrounding habitat and walking trails will be known as the Humboldt Coastal Nature Reserve. The project was made possible with a NAWCA small grant and contributions from many partners. The coastal dune system includes ocean beaches, unique native plants, wetland hollows, open sand dunes and beach pine forests. The threatened western snowy plover is one of the many bird species that depend on this extraordinary ecosystem.

# The Pacific Coast Joint Venture: Hawaii



Photo courtesy of USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service

***The Hawaiian Moorhen will benefit from PCJV efforts to protect wetlands in the Hawaiian Islands***

**2**007 could be called “The Year of the Wetland” in Hawaii. Pacific Coast Joint Venture partners were able to leverage over \$4 million in funding to purchase key wetland habitats on Kauai, restore wetlands on Maui and Oahu and create wetlands in the Northwestern Hawaiian Islands.

The Joint Venture also coordinated a workshop for partners to discuss key wetland management issues within the Hawaiian Islands. Dr. Leigh Fredrickson offered wetland ecology and biology insights to wetland managers. Partners gave presentations on current wetland restoration projects, including new techniques to control invasive species.

## **2007 on-the-ground highlights**

The Mana Plain on Kauai’s west side was the largest wetland in the Hawaiian Islands before it was drained for sugar cane production in 1923. Multiple partners are involved in efforts to restore 135 acres of wetland habitat at the Mana Plain State Wildlife Sanctuary. Restoration will support increased populations of migratory, wintering, and endemic waterbirds. The project received a \$1 million National Coastal Wetland Conservation grant and \$25,000 from the locally based Atherton Foundation. The National Park Service will provide technical assistance for community involvement.

The Huleia Unit of the Kauai National Wildlife Refuge is designated as a core wetland area essential for the recovery of Hawaii’s endangered waterbirds. A restoration project to remove vegetation from over-grown areas and improve water access and delivery received \$275,000 in North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) funding and broad partner support.

The Maui Coastal Land Trust and the state of Hawaii received \$1 million in National Coastal Wetland Conservation grant funds to purchase over 6 acres of coastal, spring-fed wetlands in the Nu’u Makai Wetland Reserve and protect approximately one mile of marine habitat. The Nu’u wetlands are an oasis in Maui’s dry, dusty southeastern plains and a haven for a number of endangered Hawaiian waterbirds. Nu’u is bordered by a large section of land being acquired by Haleakala National Park together with the Conservation Fund. Hawaii’s unique flora and fauna will thrive in this “patchwork quilt” of conservation lands.



**Mana Plain**

# The Pacific Coast Joint Venture: Oregon



Photo by Roy Lowe/JFSWS

**Little Nestucca River**

In 2007, Oregon joint venture partners purchased key coastal wetlands and some of the best remnants of the Willamette Valley's native oak savanna and woodlands. Wetland projects on the coast opened up dikes to expand tidal marshes in several estuaries, and restored a 600-acre block of seasonal wetlands in the southern Willamette Valley. Dozens of smaller-scale projects and continued investments in conservation planning and public education and outreach contributed to the joint venture's habitat conservation efforts across western Oregon.

Joint venture partners won passage of legislation providing property tax incentives for

lands protected under conservation easements and helped secure record funding levels for the state's major conservation funding program and start-up money for a new grassland bird conservation initiative in the Willamette Valley. The \$200,000 allocated to the grassland bird conservation initiative is the Legislature's first targeted investment in implementation of the Oregon Conservation Strategy, the state's wildlife action plan. In addition, the joint venture helped build partnerships and lay the groundwork for four new federal grant proposals totaling more than \$1.5 million to help conserve coastal wetlands in three central coast estuaries.

## **2007 on-the-ground highlights**

The Wetlands Conservancy purchased 420 acres of tidal marshes and forested buffers along the south side of Yaquina Bay between Newport and Toledo. Successful 2007 legislation sponsored by the conservancy removed the last barrier to the acquisition. The change allows conservation properties in forest zones to be split below minimum parcel sizes, clearing the way for purchase of a forested buffer along the tidelands.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Ducks Unlimited, and other partners completed work to restore 83 acres of tidal wetlands along the Little Nestucca River. The project removed dikes, restored channels and filled drainage ditches in the former pasturelands, which are part of Nestucca Bay National Wildlife Refuge.

The Nature Conservancy established a new 1,244-acre preserve just north of Springfield, protecting some of the best remaining examples of the native prairies and oak savanna and woodlands formerly found throughout the Willamette Valley. The Coburg Ridge Preserve is the largest private conservation area in the valley and one of only a handful where management focuses on protection and restoration of native upland habitats.

# The Pacific Coast Joint Venture: Washington



**Confluence of Black River and Mima Creek**

**L**ed by the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Coalition, Pacific Coast Joint Venture partners worked with the Washington Legislature in 2007 to double the amount of state funding available for acquisition of habitat and outdoor recreation lands through the Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program—from \$50 million to \$100 million per biennium in 2007-2009.

## **2007 on-the-ground highlights**

Joint venture partners secured two North American Wetlands Conservation Act (NAWCA) Standard Grants. The Black River Riparian and Wetland Conservation Initiative, south of Olympia, will protect 1,100 acres of riparian habitat

as well as rare oak woodlands and prairie. The Snohomish Wetlands Phase II project will permanently protect 143 acres through acquisition, plus almost 200 acres of conservation easements and habitat restoration.

Two NAWCA Small Grants will support the 436-acre Lummi Island Conservation Project and the Crow Marsh Project at the headwaters of Rock Creek in King County.

Six National Coastal Wetland Conservation Grants were approved and will play a major role in Washington's conservation efforts for wet-

land-dependent birds. The Lummi Island Coastal Conservation Project will permanently protect a 355-acre waterfront property in the San Juan Islands. The Nalley Farm Estuary Restoration will restore 108 acres of intertidal wetlands on tribal land near the mouth of the Skokomish River at the southern end of Hood Canal. Farther north in Hood Canal, the Quilcene Estuarine Wetlands Project will protect and restore 50 acres of tidal wetlands, while the second phase of the Tarboo Valley Wetlands Acquisition will permanently protect and restore wetlands and salmon runs on 124 acres of lower Tarboo Creek. The Smuggler's Slough Estuary Acquisition will protect 246 acres of Nooksack River estuarine wetlands and restore tidal hydrology and fish access to over seven miles of slough and 38 acres of wetland. The Wiley Slough Estuary Restoration will restore natural processes to 175 acres of estuarine wetlands in the Skagit River estuary and provide habitat for threatened salmonids and migratory birds.

Photo by Kyle Pijuv, The Nature Conservancy



**Surf Scoter**

Photo by Phil Fehrenbacher

# Pacific Coast Joint Venture 2007 Discretionary Funds

Each year the Pacific Coast Joint Venture conducts a competitive grant process to help partners with project development and implementation, research, communications and outreach, and coordination and planning. In 2007, the joint venture supported the following projects.

## Project Development and Implementation

### Humboldt Bay Coastal Education Center and Reserve - Friends of the Dunes, California

Appraisals for property acquisition surrounding the Humboldt Bay Coastal Education Center and Reserve will contribute to habitat linkages along Humboldt Bay.

### Kilauea Estuary Acquisition Appraisal - Kauai Public Land Trust, Hawaii

An appraisal of a land parcel within the Kilauea River estuary on Kauai will help acquire key property for the Kilauea Point National Wildlife Refuge.

### Invasive Species Control and Habitat Restoration Plan for Kure Atoll - Hawaiian Chapter of the Wildlife Society, Hawaii

The Wildlife Society will develop a plan to eradicate existing invasive weeds and prevent new species introductions in Hawaii's most significant seabird sanctuary.

### Wetland Habitat Restoration on the Island of Kauai - Kauai National Wildlife Refuge Complex, Hawaii

This project will help restore wetland habitat at Hanalei and Huleia National Wildlife Refuges and will benefit five endangered Hawaiian waterbirds.

### Little Nestucca Estuarine Wetland Restoration Project - U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Oregon

As part of a larger restoration project, Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex will decommission a 36" culvert to protect pastures supporting up to 10% of the world's dusky Canada goose population.

### Round Lake Restoration - Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Oregon

Ducks Unlimited will purchase a conservation easement and restore 100 acres of wetlands near the Sauvie Island Wildlife Area to benefit waterfowl and shorebirds.

### Cedar River Estuary Restoration - Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Washington

Removal of a tidegate in north Willapa Bay will restore over 200 acres of wetlands to estuarine habitat and return a mile of the Cedar River to daily tidal inundation.

## Communications and Outreach

### Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge Community Stewardship/Outreach Assistance - Alaskans for Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge, Alaska

This non-profit protects bird habitat in the Palmer Hay Flats State Game Refuge. They will use funds to build organizational capacity and increase membership and outreach.

### Migration Science and Mystery: A Distance Learning Adventure - National Audubon Society and U.S.D.A. Forest Service, Alaska

This project will teach 500,000 students in grades 5-8 about shorebird migration through on-the-ground activities, satellite broadcasts and an interactive website.

### Hawaiian Wetland Brochures and Business District Outreach - Hawaiian Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Hawaii

Outreach materials will target customers and businesses neighboring the Hamakua Marsh State Wildlife Sanctuary to improve wetland awareness and reduce wildlife feeding and illegal dumping.

### Hawaiian Wetland Information Network (WIN) - Hawaii Division of Forestry and Wildlife, Hawaii

WIN will integrate information on Hawaii's wetlands and make it available to the public, resource professionals and educators through an interactive web interface.

### Farming for Wildlife - The Nature Conservancy, Washington

A research study will examine farming practices with the potential to create shorebird habitat and improve ecological linkages between agricultural and natural habitats.

## Coordination and Planning

### Kenai Peninsula Conservation by Design - Kachemak Heritage Trust, Alaska

The trust will complete seven on-the-ground projects and prepare for the Land Trust Alliance's land trust accreditation process.

### Eel River Wildlife Area Restoration Project - Humboldt Bay Harbor District, California

The grant recipient is coordinating with California Department of Fish and Game on a restoration strategy for the Eel River Wildlife Area. Baseline information and analysis activities funded by the grant include monitoring tidal regimes and surveying saltmarsh tide channels, plant elevations, and soils.

### Restoration of Mana Plain - Ducks Unlimited, Inc., Hawaii

Engineering and construction management designs and continued monitoring for the restoration of 36 acres in the Mana Plain on Kauai will benefit endangered waterbirds.

### Middle Calapooia Riparian Corridor Wildlife Habitat Assessment - Calapooia Watershed Council, Oregon

A riparian corridor habitat assessment between two dams scheduled for removal will identify habitats with high restoration and conservation potential.

### Central Coast Conservation and Restoration Plan - The Wetlands Conservancy, Oregon

A landscape-scale conservation and restoration plan for 10,000 acres of habitat along Oregon's central coast will be integrated into state planning and acquisition priorities.

### Washington Association of Land Trusts Strategic Planning and Program Development - Washington Association of Land Trusts, Washington

The newly-formed Washington Association of Land Trusts will conduct a strategic planning process and work to help local land trusts achieve accreditation.

## More about the Pacific Coast Joint Venture

The Pacific Coast Joint Venture works in high-priority geographic focus areas in Hawaii, coastal Alaska, northwestern California, and western British Columbia, Washington, and Oregon.

The joint venture supports the following bird conservation activities:

- biological planning, conservation design, and project prioritization
- development and implementation of habitat protection, restoration and enhancement projects
- monitoring, evaluation, and applied research
- communications and outreach

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