

# 2018 USFWS Heritage Committee Annual Report

## Protecting History—For the Future

This phrase, which frames an exhibit at Ding Darling National Wildlife Refuge, speaks to the values of the Service’s Heritage Committee. We serve to help us all preserve and protect our agency’s rich history and heritage so that we can pass our heritage, our passion, on to the next generation.



## 2018-In-Review

Your Heritage Committee had a highly productive year—planning, implementing, and producing resources for the Service. Chartered in 1998, the Service’s Heritage Committee members are active and retired employees from each region in addition to the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC), other Service-wide programs, and an Association of Retired Fish and Wildlife Service Employees (Retirees Association) liaison. The Committee meets in person annually and by phone monthly. Three subcommittees also meet monthly: The Oral History, Artifacts, and 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary subcommittees.

We met in Lincoln City, Oregon in May, coinciding with a Retirees Reunion where we honored Randi Smith, retired Curator, National Fish and Aquatic Conservation Archives, and Steve Chase, Acting Director, NCTC, and with the 2017 and 2018 Heritage Award, respectively. Other Committee-level accomplishments included compiling the first issue of the **Conservation History** journal since 2010, with the theme outdoor sportsmen and women. Digital and print copies are available in April 2019. On November 28, we honored Fallen Comrade Darrell Peterson who died tragically in an accident at Attwater Prairie Chicken National Wildlife Refuge in Texas. See more about our Fallen Comrades at <https://www.fws.gov/policy/029fw5.html>.

## Oral History Project Accomplishments

### *Preserving Our Heritage through the Voices of Our People*

The goal of the Oral History Project is to preserve the heritage and culture of the Service through the eyes of its employees. We want to talk to everyone who helped create our history. This includes employees in every job classification at all levels. It also includes conservation partners who work closely with the Service to conserve natural resources. Anyone can nominate interviewee candidates. Active and retired employees conduct audio or video interviews. The NCTC transcribes interviews and uploads them to the FWS Conservation Library <https://nctc.fws.gov/resources/knowledge-resources/#>.

Since the Oral History Project began in 1999, we completed more than 1,500 interviews and more than 600 written transcripts. A number of conservation historians are aware of the availability and value of the interviews and use them as a resource as they write about conservation history.

Active duty and retirees partner to support and manage the Oral History Project—Retirees Association’s Oral History Committee and the Heritage Committee’s Oral History Subcommittee work together to collect and share our voices. We:

- Completed more than 45 oral history interviews, including a group discussion about the National Wetlands Inventory and one celebrating the 75<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Santa Ana National Wildlife Refuge.

Photo (front to back, left to right): Maria Parisi, Elisa Dahlberg, Vicki Finn, Nate Hawley, Matt Perry, Judy Grover (guest), Libby Herland, Peggy Hobbs, John Cornely, Mark Madison, Charlie Wooley, April Gregory, Amber Zimmerman, Jerry Grover. Not pictured: Cindy Uptegraft Barry, Deborah Holle, Greg Dehmer, Paul Tritaik, Sandy Tucker, Debbie Steen, Debbie Corbett, Jim McKeivitt, Mamie Parker, Steve Chase, Carlos Martinez, Eugene Marino, Richard Coon, Linda Friar, Bennie Williams. Credit: M. Gonzalez/USFWS

- Refined and updated guidelines for interviewers and interviewees (see <https://nctc.fws.gov/history/oralhistories.html>).
- Initiated plans to update online oral history interview training.
- Initiated an Office of Management and Budget (OMB) collection clearance package.
- Piloted a Regional Oral History Team in Region 5 to expand the geographic coverage and capacity to identify potential candidates and interview those who agree to participate. The experience of this Team offers lessons learned to expand the concept to other FWS regions.

## Artifacts Subcommittee Accomplishments

### *Every field station has its story, its heritage*

This subcommittee conducts education and inreach to create awareness for, and support the field in, preserving their artifacts. We:

- Designed and produced a handout to aid field stations, ***Natural and Cultural Heritage—Curating Artifacts at Field Stations***, available at <https://nctc.fws.gov/history/Articles/PreservationGuidelines.html>.
- Designed a poster to engage employees in saving our agency’s rich heritage, including contact information for the FWS’ three archival facilities—the FWS Museum/Archives at NCTC, the Fish and Aquatic Conservation Archives at D.C. Booth Historic National Hatchery, and the National Wildlife Repository at Rocky Mountain Arsenal. Posters available in April 2019.

## 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Subcommittee Accomplishments

### *Celebrating our Sesquicentennial—150 Years as the Oldest Federal Conservation Agency*

This relatively new subcommittee supports regional and station-level celebrations of our 150<sup>th</sup> anniversary (February 9, 2021). We:

- Initiated planning for an historic symposium in October 2020.
- Began collaborating with Fish and Aquatic Conservation (FAC) on a celebratory book and film.
- Launched the collection of FWS “fun facts” to inform a social media campaign. Active employees can add content on this Google Drive: <https://docs.google.com/document/d/14vo205UL882DLIKQLyXPMGY6GfqUAKA66vagIP7vP4/edit>. Retirees can email content to [amber\\_zimmerman@fws.gov](mailto:amber_zimmerman@fws.gov).

## On the Horizon for 2019

The Heritage Committee will focus on outreach and inreach and continue to plan, implement, and produce resources to help us all preserve our history and heritage for the future. We will prepare a peer-reviewed 2020 *Conservation History* journal, with the theme of women in the history of conservation. And, we’ll plan the Service’s first heritage training short course.

## Questions?

To contact your regional Heritage Committee member, see <https://nctc.fws.gov/history/HeritageCommittee.html>. For more information, see also, <https://nctc.fws.gov/history/> and follow the “U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service” and “National Conservation Training Center” Facebook pages and @USFWSHistory on Twitter. Additional questions? Email [history@fws.gov](mailto:history@fws.gov) or call the Historian at 304.876.7276.