



WILDERNESS FELLOWS REMINDER LIST – JUNE 2012

This list was compiled on the final day of the Fort Collins training session and includes many things, but is not a final or even complete list.

Weekly Conference Call

Every XXXXX @ XXX EDT, beginning June XX
Phone number: 866.807.8254
Passcode: 9165556#

The purpose of these calls is to share what is happening and get input to help with any problems you may be encountering. We will start with weekly calls and will reassess this frequency after a few weeks. With so many people in so many places all on different schedules, everyone will not be able to make all the calls.

For Yourself

- Call your refuge contact (if there is no contact person, call the refuge manager and ask who you need to talk with) to ask if there are particular field or living items you need to bring with you. Also ask what personal things you don't need to bring with you. Example items you could ask about: linens, kitchen utensils, pots and pans, laundry facilities, cell phone service, web access, banking, microwave, groceries, camping gear, special boots. As a general rule, safety equipment should be provided but ask about this anyway.
- Your primary ACE contact is Melissa (801.946.5379) for all questions and issues, and Shane (801.946.2722) in case Melissa can't be reached or can't answer the question or solve the problem.
- Find out if you can be on your parents' health insurance plan (if you're under 26) or what other arrangements you can figure out to have health insurance.
- Consider taking the distance education courses in wilderness stewardship (there's a flyer on the bluegoose).
- Develop a Federal resume if you're considering a career with a Federal agency.
- Keep a journal about what you did, what you saw, your feelings, and whatever else.
- Enjoy yourself! Watch the sun set at least 3 times a week; feel thunder rumble through your body; watch a lightning storm flash and pulse; watch cumulonimbus clouds boil and build to 30,000 feet; sit still outside for an hour and see what happens.

At the Refuge

- Meet local staff and work to build a relationship with them. Ask what they do and explain what you're doing. Develop a simple 30-second "elevator" speech to explain what you're doing at the refuge.
- Find the office space and phone that you can use.
- Find out about vehicle use procedures.
- Find out who to talk with about your accessing the refuge computer system and how to verify that all the security procedures have been fulfilled.
- Find out what you need to do to get set up with a refuge computer.
- Ask your lead contact how you can help the refuge and staff; be nice, be helpful.
- Ask your lead contact and all other staff that you work with what you should look out for and be careful about while you're at the refuge.

- Be nice and respectful to the administrative staff; they can make your life easier and they know how everything works at the refuge.
- Ask your lead contact if there are particular issues, words, or phrases that are hot-button things that you need to be careful about.
- Find out how to contact local law enforcement in case you need to do so.
- Participate in staff meetings.
- Ask what training is needed for you to use a government vehicle and doing any field work, including defensive driving, first aid, cpr, using radio, being on a fire, computer-security, aviation, bear, use of fire-arms, ATV, and anything else.
- Find out how you can access refuge documents, such as the Comprehensive Conservation Plan, Annual Narrative, establishing legislation for the wilderness, and any other documents that will help you understand the context of the refuge you're working in. The FWS Wilderness Stewardship Policy is on your bluegoose. Find out what the refuge "establishing purposes" "additional purposes" are. Find out if there are "trust species" that the refuge is mandated by law to protect.
- Find out what field opportunities are available and who you need to talk with and what you need to do to participate.
- Ask the Refuge Manager/Project Leader and Deputy Refuge Manager if they would be interested in going on a hike with you to show you the refuge and talk about the refuge and what you are doing there.
- After about a month begin a conversation with the next refuge that you'll be working at to gauge how much time needs to be spent in each refuge to accomplish the baseline WCM in each place.
- Consider writing an article for a local refuge newsletter, if there is one.
- Consider participating at meetings of refuge "friends" or "partner" groups and giving a presentation on wilderness character monitoring. Be sure to check in with your lead contact and Refuge Manager to see if there are any "hot-button" issues you need to avoid or be careful about if you do participate at these meetings.

Wilderness and Wilderness Character Monitoring

- Familiarize yourself with the wilderness and wilderness character monitoring resources that are on the bluegoose and wilderness.net.
- Review the four sample wilderness character monitoring reports from last Wilderness Fellows last year that on the bluegoose
- When you talk with staff about WCM, use the single piece of paper with the 5 qualities, their associated indicators and potential measures to help them understand what you're trying to do.
- When you talk with staff about WCM, ask for their opinions about measures that could be used under each of the five qualities.
- Discuss with your lead contact how to find out what legacy/existing data are available.
- Discuss with your lead contact and maybe Refuge Manager what the best approach would be to identify measures at the refuge.
- Develop an approximate schedule/plan for your activities at the refuge to ensure adequate time to participate in field activities, build relationships with staff, figure out how to identify WCM measures, gather whatever data to feed into the database application, and write the final report. As a very rough guide, if you spend 3 months at a refuge consider spending about a month to get your feet on the ground and get a rough feel for what measures might and might not work; a month to formally identify measures, existing data, and start gathering data; and a

month to finish gathering data, entering everything into the WCM Database Application, and writing up the final report similar to the sample reports on the bluegoose.

- Play around with WCM Database so you'll be ready to jump in and enter data after you've identified measures and gathered the data.
- Take lots of photos. Look for photos that illustrate the value of and threats to the five qualities of wilderness character. Write a descriptive label (where, when, what, who) and add georeferencing information (or use the GPS on the camera if available) for each photo.
- Consult with Richard Easterbrook (see the Contact Information file) if there are any questions about the Database and, when you're ready, national data that can be used to populate the Database.
- Be sure that refuge staff are familiar with the Wilderness Character Monitoring Database and how to use it once you're gone.
- Send your Wilderness Character Monitoring Database file for your refuge to Richard both as a backup and to give him a chance to review what you are doing.
- Be sure to burn a DVD, CD, or put your Final Report and all other documents on the FWS shared drive so staff can access all of your files.
- WCM will never fully capture the "spirit of the land, its wilderness and naturalness" as the Waterman's say in their book on "Wilderness Ethics." So after you've completed identifying measures, gathering data, and entering these data into the WCM Database Application, take a walk and reflect on what WCM captured and what it didn't. Are there ways to describe and quantify change in these things that your current effort didn't? What would you do differently if you were to do this again? What notes would you leave for someone (or what would you tell this person) who follows your path about what to be aware of and do differently or the same? How would you make WCM better?