



2025 Annual Report

The Friends of Deer Flat Refuge Friends assists the Deer Flat National Wildlife in its mission “*To promote, protect and provide resources to preserve and enhance Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge for the enjoyment of present and future generations.*”



Inaugural Lake Lowell Paddle Cleanup, June 2025

Dear members,

Thank you for your support throughout 2025. With your membership, we strengthened community connections, expanded access to nature, and supported Refuge programs that welcome and serve our diverse region. The highlights below reflect what we accomplished together.

With gratitude,

Friends of Deer Flat NWR Board

Mission & Priorities

- Foster a safe, welcoming refuge for all visitors
 - Support conservation education and hands-on learning
 - Build partnerships that deepen our community's connection to nature
 - Strengthen the Friends' capacity to serve the refuge
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Year in Review:

Breaking Chains Academy Partnership

- Helped launch a youth partnership providing a pathway into conservation and public land careers.
- Students will serve on a Youth Advisory Group to share feedback on Refuge initiatives.
- Partnership offers field trips and job shadowing with Refuge staff for hands-on experience.
- Recognition for student leadership supports future job and education opportunities.

Latino Conservation Week

- Joined the Hispanic Access Foundation's initiative to celebrate cultural connections to the outdoors.
- Partnered with other organizations to host free events across the Treasure Valley to expand access and awareness.

Refuge Event Support

- Supported community events at the Refuge, including an art show collaboration with a local school.
- Livestreamed beginner birdwalk and shared information for community events

Community Connections

- Built partnerships and increased visibility for the Refuge's mission.
- Funded community resources through the Urban Wildlife Conservation Program

Higher Environmental Education Support

- Funded a student field trip and provided facilities to enable field learning.

Fire Safety Outreach

- Helped fund the Nampa Fire District's fire-safety house for public education.
- Strengthened regional safety partnerships and community preparedness.

Cleanup Initiatives

- Supported two lakeside cleanups
- Helped launch a Lake Lowell paddle cleanup program

Winter Bird Feeding Program

- Purchased birdseed for the volunteer-led bird feeding program
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Looking Ahead: 2026 Priorities

- Deepen youth engagement and pathways into conservation
 - Improve visitor amenities and interpretive experiences at the Refuge
 - Grow volunteer capacity and training
 - Strengthen organizational systems and sustainable funding
 - Engage in new community partnerships
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Acknowledgments

Thank you to our members, volunteers, partners, and donors for making this work possible.

Special thanks to:

- Refuge staff and volunteers
- National Wildlife Refuge Association and the Coalition of Refuge Friends and Advocates
- Breaking Chains Academy
- Hispanic Access Foundation and Latino Conservation Week partners
- Nampa Fire District

How to Get Involved

- Become a member or renew your membership
- Join our board as a member at large
- Join a Friends working committee (events, fundraising, advocacy, etc)
- Volunteer for programs and events
- Follow Friends of Deer Flat NWR on social channels and share events
- Consider a gift to support youth programs, visitor amenities, and access initiatives

Thank you for being part of our community and for supporting the Refuge.

Follow us on Facebook and Instagram: [friendsofdeerflat](#)

Donate on our website: [friendsordeerflat.org](#)

2025 Board of Directors

President: Rebecca Flock (October '24 - May '25) JD Henry (May '25 - present)

Vice President: Sophie Hackett (November '24 - present)

Treasurer: McKenna Hawkins (October '24 - April '25) Matt Ward (May '25 - present)

Secretary: Kira Law (November '24 - present)

Board Members at Large: Becky Hanson, Mary Jo Schumacher

Executive Director: Diana Shafer

About Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge

Established in 1909, Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge is one of the oldest refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System. It is a significant resting and wintering area for migrating birds and protects a wide range of wildlife habitats. DFNWR is located in the greater Boise, ID area known as the Treasure Valley, Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge sits along an urban-rural interface in one of the fastest growing areas in the United States. It is uniquely situated to navigate the challenges and opportunities that come with urbanization.

In 2023, DFNWR applied and was selected to become a Flagship Urban Refuge. They prioritize equitable opportunities to engage with nature through community engagement and welcoming access to public lands. We share their vision to work with their neighbors as co-designers, empowering community members and fostering collaborative conservation solutions that cultivate ecological and economic benefits for fish, wildlife, and people.

The Refuge is managed by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS). These public lands and waters are set aside to conserve America's wild animals, insects and plants. With a nearly 9,000-acre lake and more than 10 miles of trails, refuge visitors can easily find an adventure for their experience level. Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge serves as an urban oasis for residents across the Treasure Valley, Idaho, and beyond.

About Friends of Deer Flat NWR

The Friends of Deer Flat NWR is an independent volunteer membership-based nonprofit organization that supports the Refuge by managing the Nature Store at the Visitor Center; soliciting donations and resources to support environmental education, and advocating for local environmental issues. The friends also supports, promotes, and enhances Refuge Programs; such as wildlife and habitat conservation, community engagement, and other opportunities for the public to engage with nature.

The Friends of Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge was incorporated as a 501(c)3 nonprofit organization by a small group of residents in 2006. The National Wildlife Refuge system has been chronically understaffed and underfunded. As a result, the Friend's group has worn many hats over the years: event planning, advocating for the protection of refuge lands from threats, fundraising for wildlife conservation projects, supporting environmental education, habitat restoration, and much more. The Friends support the Deer Flat National Wildlife Refuge through conservation both on the Refuge and in the community. Our activities complement the work of the federal Fish and Wildlife program by focusing on the work that federal employees and volunteers Refuge *can't* do; Fund-raising, Friend-raising, and Advocacy.