



# GREAT BIRDING PROJECTS



An approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing

2 July 2012

## ***Another Stamp Altogether*** *A Recent "Forever" Postage Stamp*

Yes, she's carrying binoculars!

In early June, a new "Forever" stamp was released by the U.S. Postal Service. It features a large silhouette of a girl with binoculars looking into the distance; the scene within the silhouette also shows a scout in mid-stride with a walking stick, shorts, and backpack. The scout appears to be on a serious summer hike.

This postage stamp stresses the role of scouting for over a century, helping young girls and boys experience the outdoors. For many of us, this stamp has extra meaning, since the quintessential and representative scout is carrying binoculars. Clearly she's watching birds!

You can pick up a sheet or two of these postage stamps at your local post office.



And while we are on the subject of stamps, don't forget to buy your vital *non-postage* stamps, the Migratory Bird Hunting and Conservation [Duck] Stamp and the Junior Duck Stamp. These 2012-13 Stamps just became [available](#). Also check out the new website for the [friends group](#) for the cause.

## ***LWCF chances must start anew*** *House/Senate Conference fails to support a robust fund*

On the evening of 27 June, a Congressional conference committee finished a compromise package on the Transportation Bill, and dropped the inclusion of a two-year LWCF guarantee for \$700 million for each of the next two years. Despite support from over 1,000 organizations, the LWCF was cut from the Transportation package. Stiff resistance from a few key House members prevented an agreement on the LWCF portion of the Transportation Bill. Its inclusion would have been a real success story for birds, other wild animals, wild places, and accommodation for parks, refuges, and forests on the national and local level.



Those impressive 1,000+ supporting organizations - a virtual "honor roll" - can be found listed [here](#).

Unfortunately, the final compromise also cut funding for greenways, trails, and historic preservation, and made it easier for states to shift some Transportation Enhancement (TE) funds to road projects.

The final Transportation Bill, passed by Congress before the 4th of July recess, did contain the RESTORE Act, to direct substantial penalties from the Deepwater Horizon blowout to long-term ecological restoration and economic development.

The LWCF issue now moves to the normal Congressional appropriations process, with the arguments and advocates aligning anew.

## ***Is a "mini-LWCF" possible?***

### ***The North Dakota petition***

The Land and Water Conservation Fund (LWCF) is based on the premise that a portion of offshore oil and revenue going into the U.S Treasury should be directed to Federal and stateside conservation.

Some concerned citizens in the state of North Dakota are attempting to create what some have called a "mini-LWCF" for their own state.

North Dakota has the distinction of being the fastest-growing state oil-producer over the past few years. It has seen oil production increase from less than 100,000 barrels per day in 2005 to about 418,000 barrels per day last year. The state is now the second-largest oil producer in the nation, after Texas but just ahead of Alaska, with California, Oklahoma, and New Mexico following.

In North Dakota, the booming oil and gas industries are putting roads, tanks, warehouses, and related development in many previously untouched areas, including native prairie.

To mitigate some of this trend, North Dakotans are working to pass a constitutional amendment that would take a small portion of revenues collected from oil and gas and invest the funds for water, land, and wildlife conservation. No new taxes would be imposed; current taxes would simply be shifted. A mere five percent of the collected taxes would be redirected to conservation. A number of organizations in the state have unified to promote this possible item to be placed on the state's ballot in November, including The Nature Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited, National Audubon, and Pheasants Forever.

You can find out more on this creative endeavor [here](#).

## ***Killer Pipes - a Landscape Problem***

### *The problem in the West*



Mountain Bluebirds are often victims of killer pipes.  
Photo: Elaine R. Wilson

There is a growing awareness of the danger to birds from open vertical pipes in the ground. This concern has come to the attention of the public from PVC pipes used as mining-claim markers in the American West. The problem also goes beyond claim markers and beyond the West; it's a problem found on all sorts of landscapes with open vertical pipes. For a short article on the subject - with emphasis on the situation in the West - see a piece by Paul Baicich from the July/August issue of *Bird Watcher's Digest*. You can read the piece for free in the digital edition of the magazine [here](#).

### **Words to Consider:**

"You cannot expect to protect wilderness or endangered species unless you think about how to make the places where most people live sustainable."

- Jennifer Price, *Flight Maps - Adventures with Nature in Modern America* (1999)

### **GBP Bulletin Archives**

Great Birding Projects is a vehicle to promote a creative approach to bird-related editing, education, tourism, and marketing. It is not "strictly birding," and it is not "strictly conservation." Instead, GBP functions as a bridge to an innovative engagement between people and birds. You can access all previous issues of this GBP Bulletin on the GBP website [here](#).



### **Happy Fourth of July**



As Americans celebrate independence and the values and experiences that define this country, it would be good to consider the heritage of preserving and appreciating our wildlife and natural places. This includes working landscapes - farms, forests, and ranchlands - maintained in sustainable ways.

This love for our resources is actually ingrained in our culture, and it enriches us as a people, providing us with vast opportunities to enjoy the outdoors and participate in health-affirming recreation. There is no reason why this shouldn't be a 4th of July theme, capable of being embraced by all Americans, a profound vision to pass on to future generations.