

**Friends and Volunteer NCTC Training Waiver Program  
Participant Instructions Job Aid FY 2019  
October 2018 - September 2019**

We are pleased to announce the FY 2019 Friends and Volunteer Training Waiver Program through the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC). The program is open to all Friends and volunteers throughout all US Fish and Wildlife Service programs. The waiver program enables official Friends members and USFWS volunteers the opportunity to take either in-class or online training courses offered through the National Conservation Training Center (NCTC).

Based on evaluation of the FY 2018 Friends and Volunteer Training Waiver Program several changes have been made.

- 1) Minimum of 100 volunteer hours has been waived for Friends employees.
- 2) Cap of \$1,000 reimbursement for travel has been eliminated.
- 3) The limit of one course per volunteer or Friend has been removed.

If enrolled in the waiver program, the following expenses are covered for the participant:

- 1) Waived - Course tuition for both online and in-class courses (limited to 150 online and 50 in-class slots total for the year);
- 2) Waived - Lodging and meals package for in-class courses at NCTC (limited to the first 50 participants total for the year); and
- 3) Reimbursed - for travel expenses for in-class courses at NCTC or off- site NCTC courses (limited to the first 50 participants total for the year and must be reviewed for consistency with established travel guidelines).

Note 1: Travel expenses for approved in-class training will need to be paid up front by the participant and will be fully reimbursed 30 days after receipt of their travel reimbursement request. Official travel guidelines will be provided once approved for enrollment into the waiver program.

**Participant Step 1: Meet participant eligibility requirements**

- Must be a current USFWS volunteer, Friends member or a Friends paid employee.
- Training must be deemed as needed by your Project Leader to directly support the USFWS site and/or Friends organization partnership with the USFWS site.

## **Participant Step 2: Obtain approval from your USFWS site manager**

To apply to take the course through the waiver program you must obtain approval from your USFWS site or program Project Leader or Refuge Manager. Once you have the approval, please request the manager to send an informal email to the respective regional Friends/Volunteer coordinator (see list at end of document).

**Project Leader Role:** The Project Leader/Manager email must include brief statements of 1) their support for the individual's enrollment into the waiver program and 2) the benefit to the Service- Friends-Volunteer partnership for this individual to receive this training.

For online courses, only those courses with a tuition fee should be submitted for approval into this waiver program. Free online courses and webinars do not require approval. Friends Academy and other Academies which are by competitive application are not included in this program.

## **Participant Step 3: Browse for and Select a NCTC Course**

Discover NCTC Training and Courses in the Course Guide:

<https://training.fws.gov/https://training.fws.gov/courses/descriptions/NCTC-Course-Guide-linked.pdf>

Look for upcoming and scheduled courses: <https://training.fws.gov/>

There are dozens of relevant courses from which to choose, but below are some courses which have been approved in the past through the waiver program:

- Volunteer Recruitment and Management (online)
- Youth Program Planning and Evaluation (online)
- Education Programs for Youth – School's Out (in-class)
- Designing a Long Term Phenology Program for Management and Outreach (in-class)
- Connecting People to Nature Through Birds (in-class)
- Intro to Communicating Climate Change (online)
- Pesticides and Fish and Wildlife Resources (in-class)
- Field Techniques for Invasive Plant Management (in-class)
- Statistical Modeling for Conservation (in-class)
- Visitor Services and Management (off-site)
- Introduction to Team Leadership (in-class)
- Leading at the Speed of Trust (in-class)
- Emotional Intelligence (in-class)
- River Morphology and Applications (in class)

## **Participant Step 4: Contact your regional Friends or volunteer coordinator**

Set up a time to meet by phone with your regional Friends and/or volunteer coordinator and apply for enrollment into the waiver program and for formal approval BEFORE registering for a specific course. The coordinator will need to assess enrollment approval into the program and obtain basic information over the phone to formally validate your participation in the program.

*See the last section in this document for the current list of Friends and Volunteer coordinators.*

**NOTE of CAUTION:** You may call the NCTC training technicians and/or course instructor listed as the contact on the course for more information about the course, but they cannot offer enrollment into or approve requests into the waiver program. Approvals must first come from your Project Leader and then your regional Friends coordinator.

**Regional Friends/Volunteer Coordinator Role:** Collect the following participant information, by phone, and transcribe into the Google drive spreadsheet named *Participant Enrollment Spreadsheet*:

- USFWS Region, State, Service site name
- Volunteer or Friend, Total volunteer hours (hours requirement waived for Friends paid employees)
- Participant name, email
- Training type, Course #, Course name, Course dates, tuition amount, training instructor
- Project Leader name, approval of manager
- Short statement of training need/justification
- Short statement of post training commitment (how participant plans to apply the training)
- Planned mode of travel, travel from and to

Once complete, this will formally enroll and approve a participant into the waiver program for a specific course.

Next, email the enrolled participant the *Registration and Travel Job Aid* and cc the course instructor, notifying them they have been approved/enrolled into the waiver program for the specific course.

**Below is a list of all the job aids and forms associated with this program:**

- 1) Participant Instructions Job Aid
- 2) NCTC Course Guide: <https://training.fws.gov/courses/descriptions/NCTC-Course-Guide-linked.pdf>

- 3) NCTC Upcoming Courses: <https://training.fws.gov/>
- 4) Participant Enrollment Spreadsheet (internal document)
- 5) Registration and Travel Job Aid
- 6) How to Request an External DOI Talent Account Job Aid
- 7) How to Register for a DOI Talent Course Job Aid
- 8) Travel Reimbursement Form (available in Excel and pdf formats)

### **Participant Step 5: Request a DOI Talent account and register for your course**

Once you have been formally approved and enrolled in the waiver program by the regional coordinator and have been sent the job aids, you will need to request a DOI Talent account if you are not a DOI employee. Please see the job aid for *How to Request an External DOI Talent Account*. You will request a new account by clicking here:

<https://doitalent.ibc.doi.gov/login/signup.php>

Approval of a new account can take up to 3 business days.

Once you have a DOI Talent account, you can proceed with registering for a course in DOI Talent. For instructions to do that, please see the job aid for *How to Register for a DOI Talent Course*. Otherwise, just log in to your new DOI Talent account and click on the *Find Learning* tab to search for courses.

### **Participant Step 6: Make your travel arrangements**

See *Registration and Travel Job Aid* before making your travel arrangements

### **Participant Step 7: Save and submit required travel receipts on Travel Reimbursement Form**

See *Registration and Travel Job Aid* for instructions on submitting your travel reimbursement. You will need to request and complete a *Travel Reimbursement Form*.

## USFWS Friends and Volunteer Coordinators

### **Region 1** – Pacific Northwest (WA, OR, ID, Pacific Islands)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator, Chelsea McKinney, Portland OR Phone: 503.231.2231

Email: [Chelsea\\_McKinney@fws.gov](mailto:Chelsea_McKinney@fws.gov)

### **Region 2** – Southwest (AZ, NM, TX, OK)

Volunteer Coordinator, Juli Niemann, Albuquerque NM Phone: 505.248.6635 Email:

[juli\\_niemann@fws.gov](mailto:juli_niemann@fws.gov)

Acting Friends Coordinator, Ken Garrahan, Albuquerque NM Phone: 505.248.6632 Email:

[Ken\\_Garrahan@fws.gov](mailto:Ken_Garrahan@fws.gov)

### **Region 3** – Midwest (IL, IN, IA, MI, MN, MO, OH, WI)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator, Megan Wandag, Minneapolis MN Phone: 612.713.5463

Email: [Megan\\_Wandag@fws.gov](mailto:Megan_Wandag@fws.gov)

### **Region 4** – Southeast (AL, AR, FL, GA, KY, LA, MS, NC, SC, TN, PR, Virgin Islands)

Acting Volunteer and Friends Coordinator David Gonzales, Atlanta GA Phone: 404.679.7374

Email: [David\\_Gonzales@fws.gov](mailto:David_Gonzales@fws.gov)

### **Region 5** – Northeast (CT, DE, ME, MD, MA, NH, NJ, NY, PA, RI, VT, VA, WV)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator, Susan Wojtowicz, Hadley MA Phone: 413.253.8236 Email:

[Susan\\_Wojtowicz@fws.gov](mailto:Susan_Wojtowicz@fws.gov)

### **Region 6** – Mountain-Prairie (MT, WY, CO, UT, ND, SD, NE, KS)

Volunteer Coordinator, Jackie Jacobson, Coleharbor ND Phone: 701.442.5474, ext 127 Email:

[Jackie\\_Jacobson@fws.gov](mailto:Jackie_Jacobson@fws.gov)

Friends Coordinator, Melvie Uhland, Denver CO Phone: 303.236.4395 Email:

[Melvie\\_Uhland@fws.gov](mailto:Melvie_Uhland@fws.gov)

### **Region 7** - Alaska

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator, Helen Strackeljahn, Anchorage AK Phone: 907.786.3391

Email: [Helen\\_Strackeljahn@fws.gov](mailto:Helen_Strackeljahn@fws.gov)

### **Region 8** – Pacific Southwest (CA, NV)

Volunteer and Friends Coordinator, Derek Carr, Sacramento CA Phone: 916.414.6681 Email:

[Derek\\_Carr@fws.gov](mailto:Derek_Carr@fws.gov)

**Headquarters** - National NWRS Volunteer Coordinator, Deborah Moore, Falls Church VA Phone:

703.358.2386 Email: [Deborah\\_Moore@fws.gov](mailto:Deborah_Moore@fws.gov)

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