

**2008**  
**CHAMPIONS OF ENVIRONMENTAL LEADERSHIP**  
**AND GREEN GOVERNMENT AWARD WINNERS**

**U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Western Washington Fish and Wildlife Office (WWFWO)**  
**&**  
**WWFWO Recycling Team**

Living up to our mission as the leading Federal fish and wildlife conservation agency, our staff stepped up efforts this fiscal year (FY 2008) to recycle, re-use, and reduce materials entering the waste stream. Everyone has embraced these efforts and has been a contributor to our success!

In January 2008, the Western Washington Fish and Wildlife Office (WWFWO) initiated an expanded recycling program. Through coordination with our current recycling vendor, LeMay, Inc., we were able to increase the type and amount of our recyclable items. Previously, our recycling program was limited to items such as office paper, cardboard, aluminum cans, and glass and plastic bottles. The new program allows for the recycling of additional items including plastic film (plastic bags, bubble wrap), and compostable material such as food scraps, food soiled paper, paper cups, wax paper, paper towels, and other organic items. This material is composted at our vendor's facility and then resold to landscapers. The FWS/WWFWO is the first Federal agency to participate in our vendor's comprehensive "Food Recycling Plus" program and is recognized in Thurston County's "Talking Trash" publication.

Our vendor informed us that most of our waste was generated from paper towels used in the restrooms. By adding paper towels to our compost collection, our total non-recyclable waste was reduced by about 60%. Overall, we have reduced our landfill waste by 900 pounds/month, saving over \$1,700/year.

The expanded recycling program required training FWS employees and custodial staff. The biggest concern with any recycling effort is "contamination" of bins with non-acceptable materials and cross contamination between bins. Even small amounts of contamination can jeopardize a collection program because it lowers or eliminates the market value, making it unprofitable for the vendor to collect.

A WWFWO Recycling Team formed to brainstorm training and compliance strategies, and produce a Standard Operating Procedure for employees and custodial staff. The new program was rolled-out at an All-Staff meeting with our vendor present for a question and answer period. Our expanded recycling program is very successful, with a high level of interest and compliance since its inception. The Recycling Team provides regular updates at All-Staff meetings, checks bins for compliance, and communicates any program changes with custodial staff. Achieving office-wide participation required a well orchestrated roll-out, clear labeling on recycling bins, readily available recycling information, and consistent follow-up and monitoring.

This year our office also increased recycling of other materials: batteries are collected and delivered to a local hazardous material/recycling facility; and, Tyvek envelopes, collected in bundles of 25, are shipped back to the manufacturer. Information is provided on special collection drives for materials outside of our office recycling program such as styrofoam and excess toiletries. In addition, we have not taken any excess computer equipment to a landfill in over 4 years. This year we donated over 50 computers, 20 monitors and 6 printers to 6 Washington school districts, and 28 cell phones to Olympia Police Department Victim Assistance Program. Finally, we were successful in replacing 3 of our 13 leased fleet vehicles with hybrids.

**Waste Reduction Measurement:** The WWFWO went from a 6 cubic yard waste container/month to a 2 cubic yard waste container/month. A 6 cubic yard container holds 1,350 pounds of waste; the 2 cubic yard waste container holds 450 pounds of waste. This results in a waste reduction of 900 pounds/month or 10,800 pounds/year [= 5.4 tons] entering our local landfill. Our costs decreased from \$258.34/month to \$111.96/month, or \$1,756.65/year. With the success of our expanded recycling program, we aren't filling the 2 cubic yard waste container and expect to downsize to a 1 cubic yard container in October 2008.

**WWFWO Recycling Team Members:** Mark Hodgkins (chair), Sally Butts, Nancy Brennan-Dubbs, Deanna Lynch, Jim Michaels, Karen Myers, Tim Romanski, John Stadler (NMFS), Joanne Stellini, Bernice Todd