

[From Spring 2008]

## **Manager's Corner**

By Lou Hinds

It has now been a full year since I arrived here at Chincoteague National Wildlife Refuge to begin my duties as Refuge Manager. I can not believe how fast time has gone by. Many of my colleagues have asked me, "What is it like to be back out in the field?" Their question is somewhat rhetorical but based partially on their knowledge of administrative (paperwork) workloads that now confront Refuge Managers. My answer to them is simple, "I love it!"

Over the year, I have had the opportunity to meet many wonderful people and work on some terrific projects. I have to admit that my first year has been a dream come true. I know I am stating the obvious, but Assateague Island is a beautiful, rewarding place to work. Every morning I look forward to meeting and working with staff and volunteers. Together, we have taken on several issues that have given us all opportunities to excel! What has impressed me the most is how everyone pitches in and gets the job done. From setting up for International Migratory Bird Day to caring for the Assateague Lighthouse, from picking up trash to caring for the critters, if a job needs to be accomplished, people are there ready to help. As I look into the near future, I see several exciting challenges in front of us. Wildlife and habitat management, lighthouse and cemetery restoration, transportation study, and pony fence maintenance just to name a few. There will be plenty to keep us busy.

I want to take this opportunity to thank each and everyone one of you (volunteers and staff) that have taken the time to give me council and words of wisdom. You have truly helped me through this first year. I look forward to working with all of you as we move the Refuge forward towards our wildlife, habitat, and visitor services objectives. And, as I have said before, "if my door is open please stop in and say hi." I look forward to your visits.