

[From Winter 2006 - 2007]

CNHA Awards Nearly \$100,000 in Grants

In early November, at the beginning of each new fiscal year, the CNHA reviews and evaluates its prior year's operations and establishes the amount of funding available for grants to the Chincoteague and Eastern Shore refuges. Each refuge submits a "wish list" of items and projects related to their interpretive and educational mission, for which appropriated funds are insufficient or unavailable. Refuge management reviews each item on their "wish list" with the CNHA Board of Directors, who determines its merit and if the item is within CNHA's charter to support.

At its recent meeting on November 4, the CNHA Board approved an FY'07 allocation for "wish list" grants totaling \$97,700. Included in the items for which funding was approved were the following:

- Volunteer Program Support - Volunteers (which includes the entire CNHA Board) are essential to the functioning of both refuges. This item included funding for uniforms, awards and recognition events for volunteers, interns, eco interns and "workampers".

- Outreach & Environmental Education - The two counties on the Eastern Shore are among the poorest in the state of Virginia. Funds in this category support field trips to the refuges by county school children.

- "Children in the Woods" initiative - In an effort to meet the challenge presented in the book "Last Child in the Woods", CNWR will host pilot 5-day camps in 2007 to allow children to experience the recreational opportunities found on refuges. CNHA will provide the seed money, funding the materials and supplies for this educational initiative.

- "Sense of Wonder" Play - In celebration of the 100th anniversary of her birth, presentation of the inspirational play about the life of Rachel Carson will be funded by the CNHA.

- Hunting and Fishing Kiosks - CNHA will provide funding to construct several kiosks that will display interpretive and regulatory information for visitors regarding harvesting of a renewable resource in an ecologically responsible manner.

- Intern Housing - Reduced budgets and staffing have increased the need for interns and temporary, seasonal employees. However, refuge housing is very limited. CNHA is providing funding for temporary housing until a more permanent solution is implemented.

- Beach Road Bike Trail - Funding has been carried over from FY'06 to continue work on the CNWR bike trail, pending recommendations on resolution of erosion issues.

- Special Events - CNHA annually provides funding for special events such as Earth Day, International Migratory Bird Celebration, National Wildlife Refuge Week, National Fishing and Boating Celebration, etc.

- Fish & Crab Guide - A summer law enforcement intern developed a guide to help visitors with game fish identification and state regulation compliance. CNHA will fund production of a laminated guide.

CNHA funding also has a multiplier effect, since many of these items are eligible for Challenge Cost Share grants from other organizations that support wildlife refuges and programs.

Frank V. Moore, CNHA Treasurer

