

[From Winter 1997-98]

## **Service Elderhostels**

Chincoteague Refuge's first Service Elderhostel Work Program occurred this year. From October 13 through 17, twenty-nine senior citizens came together from many parts of the country to lend their skills and efforts in performing multiple projects on the refuge.

The projects involved trail improvements for handicapped accessibility and habitat reclamation and enhancement. Specific tasks included: placing gravel and stone sand within landscaping timber borders in soft sand areas along Lighthouse and Marsh Trails; stabilizing dunes by installing dune fencing; trimming and removing overgrown brush; obliterating unwanted trails; preparing for National Wildlife Refuge Week activities; and removing deteriorating boardwalk and tripping hazards from the Lighthouse Trail, old barb wire fencing from the Woodland Trail area, and old lath fencing from the fee booth area.

Members of the refuge staff along with two of the refuge's established volunteers, Paul Smith and Howard Eckles, served as group leaders, program coordinators, and support staff. In all, 810 work hours were contributed by the Elderhostel group which did an excellent job. Due to its success, two subsequent programs are scheduled for 1998.

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