

“Committed to Photography of Our Environment”

Currents

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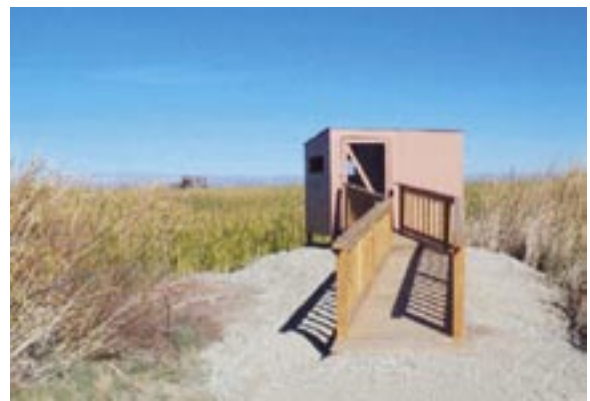
www.nanpa.org

NANPA Helps Photography Soar to New Heights The Blinds Project

by Jane S. Kinne

“Committed to Photography of the Environment” was the mantra adopted by NANPA when it was founded in 1994. Three years later, the fledgling organization signed a Memorandum of Understanding with the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Both parties enthusiastically agreed that constructing photographic blinds on suitable refuges was the most appropriate way to fulfill the partnership.

Now, nearly eight years later, the non-profit NANPA Foundation has helped raise and supply funding for construction of 25 blinds on 23 refuges; 6 blinds are currently under construction and another nine are pending for 2006. Many of the blinds have been built with the assistance of volunteer friends of each participating refuge organization and other service groups that physically construct the photo blinds. Additionally, NANPA has helped refuge managers to develop better facilities and services for nature photographers.



Sonny Bono Blind at Salton Sea, CA

struction. For more information about guidelines and a sampling of completed projects, go to www.nanpafoundation.org/blinds.php.

This is a NANPA project that encourages your participation on many levels. For instance, contributing NANPA members can make donations for specific blinds (see list below) or to the general fund. By design, NANPA members are the priority users of the refuge blinds. Anyone willing to share their photos of wildlife shot from these blinds are encouraged to contact NANPA or Foundation Headquarters at 303-422-8527.

Those interested in participating in the partnership should contact Deborah Moore, Refuge System Branch of Visitor Services, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, at 703-358-2386 or Deborah_Moore@fws.gov. To learn more about NANPA's refuge blind program, visit www.nanpa.org or write to info@nanpafoundation.org.

Jane S. Kinne, co-chair of the Refuge Blinds Committee, is a past president of both NANPA and the NANPA Foundation. She currently serves as the Foundation's development director.



Cibola, AZ

Ensuring that each refuge has a suitable location for a blind that is away from heavy visitor traffic is one of the guidelines for obtaining funding. NANPA members help identify areas that maximize morning and evening light as well as assist with a design plan. Grant proposals must include the cost of all materials, show that donations of goods have been solicited from local vendors, and demonstrate that a labor force, such as the friends group or other volunteers, have been recruited for con-

Completed Blinds	Under Construction	Pending
Buenos Aires, AZ	Humboldt Bay, CA	Modoc, CA
Cibola, AZ	Modoc, CA	Sacramento, CA
Salton Sea, CA (2)	Agassiz, MN	Stewart B. McKinney, CT
Prime Hook, DE	Stillwater, NV	Montezuma, NY
St. Marks, FL	John Heinz at Tincum, PA	Tewaukon, ND
DeSoto, IA	Turnbull, WA	Oxbow, MA
Quivira, KS		Upper MS
Black Bayou Lake, LA		Eastern Virginia Rivers, VA
Cameron Prairie, LA		Misisquoi, VT
Moosehorn, ME		
Blackwater, MD		
Seney, MI		
Shiwassee, MI		
Minnesota Valley, MN		
Morris WMD, MN		
St. Catherine Creek, MS		
Ft. Niobrara, NE (2)		
Ruby Lake, NV		
Montezuma, NY		
Tishomingo, OK		
Bear River, UT (2)		
Willapa, WA		



NANPA's Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge Blind

Bear River Refuge Leads by Example

Bear River Migratory Bird Refuge in Utah was the first to benefit from photographic blind support under the Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with NANPA.

“We were impressed by a photo blind on stilts we’d heard about at a refuge in Sacramento, and we knew we just had to have one,” said refuge manager Al Trout. “Bear River is a great place to photograph a wide variety of birds, but like so many areas, it helps to have some cover if you want to get really good shots.”

With help from the NANPA Foundation, the blind became a reality. The Foundation provided funding to support the construction of two blinds and helped refine the design, according to Trout. It also assisted the refuge in connecting with local photography clubs to consult on the best site and other details for construction. “NANPA has definitely made it easier for us. It also assisted the refuge to offer visitors a better outdoor experience,” said Trout. “It’s a fantastic partnership for the Refuge System.”