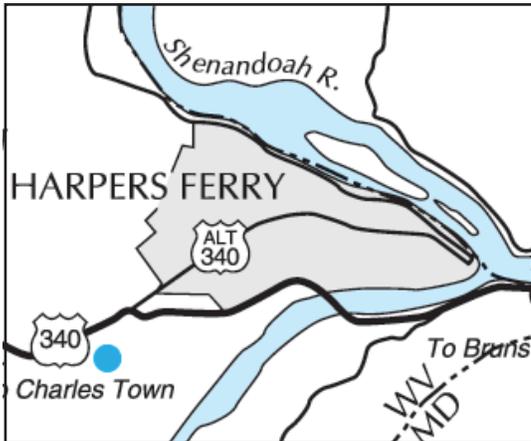




# The PLLA Tracker

February 2012  
Volume 4, Issue 1

## Next Round of Training for PLLAs Scheduled for March



Specialized training for new PLLAs has become a cornerstone

of the PLLA program. Typically, PLLAs spend several years in their role

as their sector's primary point of contact for area public lands managers. Then they move on to new positions, taking their expertise along with them and thus increasing the overall pool of Border Patrol agents nationwide with environmental stewardship expertise.

New PLLAs often have a learning curve so several mechanisms have been put into place to make them proficient in their duties. First, whenever possible, the current PLLA introduces them to area public lands managers so that they can maintain

the continuity of solid working relationships that already have been established. Also, they are directed to key documents such as the 2006 MOU which outlines interagency collaboration on public lands, as well as the records of former Borderlands Management Taskforce meetings in their sector.

Equally important, new PLLAs receive specialized classroom training. The next round of training will take place the first week of March at the U.S. Customs and Border Protection facility in Harper's Ferry,

West Virginia. Topics will include the National Environmental Policy Act; the Endangered Species Act, Section 7; and the National Historic Preservation Act, Section 106. One of the goals for this internal training is to complement the annual national PLLA training session that typically takes place during the summer and includes presentations from public lands officials. All in all, the intent is to help ensure that all PLLAs have a knowledge base they can draw upon as they work with their local public land managers to create mission win-win scenarios. ■

## Southwest Border PLLAs Provide Border Safety Training to USDA Employees



Interagency collaboration in the form of training remains alive and well: Six PLLAs provided border safety and situational awareness training in the spring of 2011 to more than 350 U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) employees working along the southwest border. A total of 8 sessions were

held at various Forest Service and Natural Resources Conservation Service offices, where topics included issues such as what to pack for work in the field, what to watch out for, and who to call. Participating Border Patrol sectors included Tucson (coordinator), San Diego, El Centro, El Paso, Laredo,

and Rio Grande Valley. Sector PLLAs gave the lectures, with assistance from the Forest Service. Post-training surveys indicated that the training was extremely helpful, especially information on who to contact from Customs and Border Protection if encountering suspicious activity or people, lessons learned, and increased situational awareness.

The request for PLLA assistance with the training came from USDA's Office of Homeland Security and Emergency Coordination (OHSEC) as a result of holding USDA employee listening sessions along the southwest border during 2010. The training was one component of a multi-pronged approach

USDA is implementing that also includes assessing the security of facilities. ■

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## Three Departments Recognize Training Product Success



*U.S. Border Patrol Chief Michael Fisher, U.S. Department of Agriculture Forest Service Chief Thomas Tidwell, and U.S. Department of the Interior Interagency Borderlands Coordinator Jonathan Andrew sign certificates recognizing successful completion of the jointly developed training module.*

Sometimes interagency cooperation on a particular project can be a lengthy process, but it is usually well worth the effort. Here's one recent case in point:

Nearly two years after initial discussions about jointly developing an environmental stewardship on-line training module for Border Patrol agents, the completed module was uploaded and launched on the U.S. Customs and Border Protection's internal Virtual Learning Center. Launch date was September 19, 2011. The finished product, called the

Environmental and Cultural Stewardship Training (ECST) module, is a two-hour course that provides broad, basic training on how to comply with natural and cultural resources laws while patrolling public lands anywhere along our nation's borders.

Development of the module was a joint effort that was led and funded by the U.S. Border Patrol in close cooperation with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), Forest Service. Early on in the process, participating headquarters officials from all three departments reached out to the field to ensure local expertise and perspectives were incorporated into the contents.

The goal of the course is to provide agents with knowledge about the natural environment in

which they operate and awareness of how they interact with that environment. A key message underlying the training is that agent safety and achievement of the Border Patrol mission remains the top priority; at the same time, respect for environmental and cultural resources should also remain a priority.

To reinforce the learning the contents also include specific scenarios that call for the learner to choose the appropriate action among several options. It supplements and complements existing training on these topics already being developed and offered by individual Border Patrol Sectors in collaboration with their land management agency partners in that region.

As of January 24, 2012, 15,557 users had completed the training. It has become an annual mandatory training requirement for all Border Patrol agents in the field. ■

## PLLAs Assist U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service With Endangered Antelope Capture and Release



Tucson Sector Public Lands Liaisons FOS Jeff Snavelly and SBPA Robert Gumtow recently assisted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in the 2011 Sonoran Pronghorn Capture and Release event. The event

took place the week of December 14, 2011, at the pronghorn captive breeding pen, a fenced area of one square mile that has been installed on the Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge (CPNWR).

The Sonoran Pronghorn Antelope (*Antilocapra americana sonoriensis*) was first listed as an endangered species in 1966. There is only one population in the U.S. There are two populations in Mexico. Due largely to extreme drought, the U.S. population dwindled to 21 animals as of December 2002, but has risen in recent years to approximately 170 animals, with about 70 in the captive

breeding program at CPNWR prior to the event and approximately 100 in the wild on other parts of the Refuge as well as on the Barry M. Goldwater Range and Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument.

Participants accomplished a number of key activities during the December event. First, they moved two bucks and 11 does to a new captive breeding pen at the Kofa National Wildlife Refuge near Yuma, Arizona, via helicopter. In addition, they released five more bucks into the wild in Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument. They also vaccinated all captive pronghorn for EHD/Bluetongue disease

and replaced or added tracking devices.

CPNWR is located at the extreme west end of the Border Patrol Tucson Sector, west of the town of Ajo, Arizona. At 860,010 acres, it is the third largest wildlife refuge in the lower 48 states (1000 square miles, the size of Rhode Island). The CPNWR shares 56 miles of its southern boundary with Mexico, of which 15 miles are within the Tucson Sector and the balance within Yuma Sector to the west. Ninety percent of the refuge was designated as wilderness by Congress in the 1990 Arizona Wilderness Act. ■





## Border Patrol to Release 2012-2016 Strategic Plan – Partnerships A Key Component

Partnerships, including those with public lands managers, will play a pivotal role in accomplishing the goals of the Border Patrol's soon-to-be released 2012-2016 Strategic Plan. The Plan includes three pillars. Those pillars--a) information; b) integration; and c) rapid response will facilitate the Border Patrol's ability to identify and to manage risk. To do so, they will draw upon strong interagency partnerships with federal, state, local, and tribal officials.

Border Patrol Chief Michael Fisher describes the Strategic Plan in these

terms: "Building on the resource-based success of the 2004 Strategy, our new, risk-based approach to securing the border uses a foundation of gathering and analyzing Information, ensuring Integration through operational planning, and deploying the appropriate Rapid Response to threats as they emerge and evolve. It includes a commitment to an investment in U.S. Border Patrol personnel and organizational capabilities with the goal of increasing the security of our borders while reinforcing the public's trust and confidence."

The new Strategic Plan represents a natural evolution from former strategies. It harnesses the historic deployment of resources, infrastructure, and technology and, using a risk management approach, puts them to their most effective use. Collaboration with other organizations is a critical component of this approach because resources are finite and can be most effectively used if they are targeted to the areas of greatest risk. And determining where the greatest risk lies involves gathering timely, accurate information from a number of reliable sources.

By working in collaboration, intelligence about high-risk areas becomes stronger, and agencies have the opportunity to integrate their resources and conduct joint planning toward specific objectives that are of benefit to all.

Under the new Strategic Plan, the Public Lands Liaison Agent (PLLA) Program and Borderland Management Taskforces (BMTFs) become even greater force-multipliers and tools for integration. Through building and sustaining working relationships with public land managers and governmental officials at all levels,

a foundation is put into place for strategic planning on all types of issues, both law enforcement and natural resources management. This foundation provides the basis, for example, for addressing environmental compliance issues in advance of carrying out a rapid response to an emerging threat on public land.

Upcoming BMTF meetings will provide a useful opportunity to discuss the Border Patrol 2012-2016 strategy. For more information, please contact your sector PLLA or the headquarters PLLA Program. ■

## BMTF at Close Range: San Diego Sector



Photo of San Diego meeting site

Maybe you can call it sector pride, but the San Diego Sector feels that the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding and the Borderlands Management Taskforce (BMTF) concept were heavily influenced by the existing coordination in their area. With large plots of public land right on the border and even more within its patrol area, San Diego was already used to dealing with the U.S. Department of the Interior (DOI) and the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA) Forest Service on a regular basis. Abutting the border in San Diego, one can find the Tijuana River Valley and Estuary, Otay Mountain Wilderness, Tecate Mountain, and Jacumba Mountain Wilderness areas. Set a little ways north of the border, but

still heavily patrolled, are the San Diego National Wildlife Refuge, State of California Ecological Reserves, Cleveland National Forest, and Anza-Borrego Desert and Cuyamaca Rancho State Parks.

The members of the San Diego BMTF pride themselves with their participant diversity. Present at almost every one of its bi-monthly meetings are representatives from resource management, law enforcement, and public safety. Resource managers are present from Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS), Bureau of Land Management (BLM), California Department of Fish and Game (CDFG), and City of San Diego Public Utilities. Law Enforcement personnel include U.S. Border Patrol, National Forest Rangers and special agents, FWS Officers, BLM Rangers, and California State Park Rangers. Cal-Fire fills the role of both law enforcement and public safety. To add to the blend, both of the local Congressional

districts and a U.S. Senator have been known to occasionally send out a representative or two.

The BMTF in San Diego was initiated in August 2005 and reaffirmed by the 2006 MOU between DOI, the U.S. Department of Homeland Security, and USDA. Although there was already a good relationship with law enforcement partners in the area, the newly-created BMTF allowed for a forum to communicate directly with those allies as well as bringing land management partners and public safety partners into the fold. The first few meetings were public-safety heavy. Large concentrations of illegal traffic through the Otay Mountain Wilderness led to many issues, from search and rescues to serious wildfire threats. Subsequent meetings would bring about road issues and more resource management issues. Mission conflicts arose but true to the 2006 MOU, the San Diego BMTF became a very good setting for making all the participants realize that each of their missions can be complementary rather

than conflicting.

Issues discussed by the group these days include subjects such as route access, training, radio communications and interoperability, gate closures, public access to sensitive areas, National Guard deployments, status updates to San Diego Gas and Electric's Sunrise Powerlink and renewable energy projects, status on the Tactical Infrastructure Maintenance and Repair project, and other maintenance issues, emergency services, and agency coordination.

One example of a recent issue requiring productive discussion was the importance of closing off access to an area locally known as Little Cedar Canyon. The area had been abused by public off-road vehicles for many years. Access points off a major highway led to land managed by CDGF, FWS, City of Chula Vista, City of San Diego, and BLM. Of particular concern was the access into the BLM wilderness and vernal pools on San Diego's land. The State of California was the land manager at the entry point that was most commonly used. However, due to their budget, they did

not have the manpower to close it off properly. With manpower supplied by the Border Patrol maintenance personnel and materials supplied by FWS and CDFG gates and barriers were put in place to keep out the public. The area continues to be a hotspot as new entry points are created; but working together, this team continues to protect natural resources while making the area safer for agents to work.

The BMTF is co-chaired by Border Patrol and BLM. Minutes are kept dutifully by FWS, and a spreadsheet is passed around at each meeting to document who is attending that meeting and each participant's past attendance record. The meetings take place at the scenic venue of CDFG's Rancho Jamul Ecological Reserve, which is a shared facility for CDFG, BLM, and FWS staff. The old ranch house is set in the middle of the reserve and offers panoramic views of San Diego's amazing east county landscape, the perfect backdrop for such coordination and discussion. ■



## Forest Service Liaison to Border Patrol Sets Goal for 2012 Collaboration

Jeffrey Vail, Assistant Director for Lands & Realty Management with the U.S. Forest Service, was designated Forest Service liaison to Border Patrol in August 2011, succeeding Nora Rasure, who is now Deputy Regional Forester in Portland, Oregon.

Jeffrey brings a variety of professional experience to his current responsibilities. Significantly, as a staff attorney in the Office of the General Counsel in the U.S. Department of Agriculture (USDA), he provided legal review of the 2006 Memorandum of Understanding signed

by the Secretaries of the Department of Homeland Security, the Department of Agriculture, and the Department of the Interior (DOI) regarding interagency collaboration on federal lands. The MOU has become a key point of reference for interagency discussions on resolving any public lands issues that arise.

Other previous positions include Acting Director for Wilderness and Wild and Scenic Rivers; Acting Forest Supervisor, Eldorado National Forest; and USDA representative to the Council on

Environmental Quality's review of environmental conflict resolution programs. He also served as the Forest Service's counsel to the Chief's Task Force on Tribal Relations.

Jeffrey views his liaison position as "an opportunity to help ensure effective coordination among the Forest Service, Border Patrol, and DOI on all issues associated with border management, including natural resources, border security, and public safety."

He points to a new planning rule scheduled for release in April as

indicative of the Forest Service's continued commitment to working productively with other organizations. The rule sets forth the process for revising Forest Management Plans in all 155 national forests and 20 grasslands in the National Forest System; these Plans typically are updated every 10-15 years.

"There is a strong focus in the new rule on being responsive to stakeholder interests and on early involvement, which includes other federal agencies such as Border Patrol," he says.

His goal for 2012 is straightforward: "... to work with colleagues at Border Patrol and DOI, both at headquarters and



Photo of Jeffrey Vail

in the field, so that both public land management and border security objectives are achieved in a way that maximizes benefits to the American people." ■

## Collaboration Round-Up: A Sector-by-Sector Snapshot



Following are recent examples of how the Border Patrol continues to work in collaboration with other agencies on public lands.

### NORTHERN BORDER

Blaine (Wash.) - To assist the National Park Service (NPS) with its Lower Elwha River Restoration Project, Sector agents developed a cross-agency radio interoperability plan and implemented it during removal of two dams on the Elwha River. Sector also loaned

NPS extra cameras for wildlife sitings. And on the state level, agents from Port Angeles Station assisted Washington State Wildlife Services during the release of a black bear back into the wild near the Mt. Zion area, and the Washington Department of Natural Resources provided the Station with keys to gates on its land to carry out patrol work.

Spokane (Wash./Idaho/Mont.) - Agencies continue to discuss funding of grizzly bear population studies for the purpose of bringing additional information to bear on

discussions regarding access.

Havre (Mont.) - Havre Sector agents completed Operation Goat Haunt, which runs each summer and is a joint law enforcement operation in Glacier National Park. In addition to the Border Patrol, participants include the Customs and Border Protection Office of Field Operations, National Park Service Rangers, and the Royal Canadian Mounted Police. In order to reach the area of patrol -- there is no road access and it's a 26 mile hike in from the nearest access on the US side.--- participants cross into Canada and take the ferry back into the U.S. across Lake Waterton, which straddles the international border. They leave the area by walking approximately nine miles back to the city of Waterton.

Grands Forks (N. Dak./Minn.) - Grand Forks Sector agents, together with the U.S. Forest Service, the Minnesota Department of Natural Resources, and the Gunflint Trail Volunteer Fire Department, are planning

a tabletop exercise on responding to a plane crash with injuries and casualties that could occur in the northern Minnesota wilderness; one of the main goals is to ensure good interagency communication is in place. Also, at a recent Borderlands Management Taskforce meeting, the Forest Service and the Border Patrol agreed that until a unified communication system has been established, the best method during a large scale incident would be for the lead agency to loan out radios to the other agency; both agencies confirmed they had a cache of radios available. At the same meeting, Border Patrol and Forest Service officials offered the use of their agency's assets such as boats, cabins, dog sleds, aircraft, and training on wilderness survival.

Detroit (Mich./Ohio) - Sector participated in multiple ride-alongs on joint patrol with the Forest Service in the Hia-watha National Forest.

Buffalo (N.Y./Pa.) - Niagara Falls Station Agents responded to a call for assistance from New York

State Parks Police to locate a victim in the Niagara Gorge.

Swanton (N.Y./Vt.) - Sector officials continue to work closely with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) regarding use of Eagle Point, former privately-owned land that recently was added to the Missisquoi National Wildlife Refuge. The focus is ensuring that both border security and environmental compliance requirements are met. For example, FWS and Vermont Wildlife officials will notify the Border Patrol when entering the Unit near the border. In addition, FWS staff will prepare a training program for Border Patrol Agents that shows sensitive habitats and nesting areas to be avoided if possible. In other sector activities, the sector agreed to let FWS know if they saw people in an archeologically-significant area of the Refuge that is off limits to the public, and agents assisted Akwesasne Tribal Police with an apprehension.

Houlton (Maine) - National Park Service St. Croix Island officials contacted the sector for assistance concerning illegal





excavation on St. Croix Island, located on the U.S. side of the St. Croix River in Calais, Maine. The Border Patrol, in conjunction with U.S. Coast Guard assets, provided nighttime surveillance of the island area from both land and water.

## SOUTHWEST BORDER

San Diego (Calif.) - Agents informed Bureau of Land Management (BLM) of a brush fire burning in the Otay Wilderness. Also, the Sector PLLA continued to provide input on environmental stewardship training course about the Tijuana River Valley being developed for Border Patrol agents by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration and California State Parks. In addition, the Sector finalized plans for BLM to occupy an office space in the new BLV Station. Other recent activities: arranged training for Cleveland National Forest personnel using Border Patrol radios; continued to participate with Fish and Wildlife Service in joint marine enforcement patrols in the South Bay and along the Imperial Beach coast; spoke with endangered species experts at FWS about road usage and conditions on Otay Mountain in relation to a study on the rare shrub, the *Monardella stoneana*; and discussed providing security for a visit to see one of the rare occurrences of this species.

El Centro (Calif.) - Border Patrol agents continue to assist Bureau of Land Management officials with rescues on the Imperial Sand Dunes Recreation Area. The dunes are home to rare plants and animals and also are a favored location for thousands of off-road vehicle enthusiasts. The annual dunes season lasts from approximately Halloween until Easter.

Yuma (Calif./Ariz.) - Agents detailed to Camp Grip to work within the Cabeza Prieta National

Wildlife Refuge continued to be given weekly training on environmental stewardship, endangered species awareness and best practices procedures when operating in wilderness. Also, the quarterly Borderlands Management Taskforce meeting was held in Yuma, where topics included Colorado River cleanup efforts.

Tucson (Ariz.) - Joint operations and resource sharing continued on several fronts: early preparation for Operation Trident II, which will continue joint patrols by the Border Patrol Department of the Interior, and Department of Agriculture Forest Service; Operation ROAMing Patrol II, which is providing Border Patrol Agents as a force-multiplier for the Bureau of Land Management's (BLM) Operation ROAM; and Operation Nimbus II, which will use Army radar platforms to detect ultra-light aircraft incursions. Recent meetings and community service events include the following: assisted U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service by providing security for their semi-annual "Frog Slog" survey to determine the presence of the endangered Chiricuhua Leopard Frog; met with San Bernadino National Wildlife Refuge officials to discuss local endangered species and Border Patrol access; attended a meeting of the Sonoran Pronghorn Recovery Team and participated in the Sonoran Pronghorn capture and release at Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge (see separate article); and met with Luke Air Force Base officials to discuss strengthening communication. In addition, Cabeza Prieta National Wildlife Refuge placed numbered DHS logo decals on road signs within the refuge to assist new Border Patrol agents with orientation. Finally, Forest Service officials presented plaques to the Douglas, Naco, Sonoita, and Nogales stations within the Tucson Sector

for their evacuation and traffic control assistance during the unusually bad wildfire season (see photo).

El Paso (N. Mex./Tex.) - Progress continues on establishing two new Border Patrol forward operating bases (FOBs) within the Sector; these FOBs will enable agents to be based close to the border for operational purposes and thus reduce the amount of traffic to and from the area. The first is the Antelope Wells (Camp Bounds) Forward Operating Base, located in a remote area in the boot heel of New Mexico; it is located on the same land as a new Port of Entry and is scheduled for completion in spring 2012. The second is the Animas Valley FOB, also in the New Mexico boot heel. Prior to commencing construction, the Sector is doing environmental documentation and is in discussions with the Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico Game and Fish, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the State Historic Preservation Office, and Hidalgo County, as well as private land owners in the area to hear any concerns. Finally, the Sector continues to work with Joint Task Force-North, the Bureau of Land Management, New Mexico Department of Transportation, and Tucson Sector regarding the positioning of assets for Operation Nimbus II (see Tucson item above).

Big Bend (Tex.) - Sector agents participated in the annual overnight paddle down the Wild & Scenic section of the Rio Grande adjacent to the Black Gap Wildlife Management Area within Big Bend National Park. Besides the Border Patrol, participants included Park Service Rangers and local civilian outfitters. The event provided the opportunity to discuss river safety, access, and civilian use. Also, the Sector radio communications program acquired new interagency repeaters, enabling law

enforcement communication with Texas Department of Public Safety officers and Texas State Parks & Wildlife Police.

Del Rio (Tex.) - Sector PLLA continued to build communication with area organizations: met with Texas Parks and Wildlife Department to discuss patrol coverage in the Devils River State Natural Area Complex; attended an IBWC community outreach meeting about the Rio Grande River where attendees discussed Amistdad Dam safety, flooding concerns, and water quality; met with the local Nature Conservancy Director; and contacted Seminole Canyon State Police to discuss upcoming public hunts scheduled in the park and any effects on access and operations.

Laredo (Tex.) - The Sector PLLA continues to coordinate outreach activities with the Sector Border Community Liaison office as well as the Ranch Liaison Program. One example of this cross-discipline outreach: the Sector hosted a round table meeting on border security issues and concerns within ranch/agricultural lands in response to a Congressional request. Invitees included Congressional representatives, neighboring Rio Grande Valley Sector officials; Immigration and Customs Enforcement; county sheriffs and other county officials; the Texas Department of Public Safety; and ranch owners.

RGV (Tex.) Marc Guerrier The Sector PLLA participated in a briefing for U.S. Department of Agriculture "Tick Riders" on personal safety conditions along the border. Tick Riders are mounted patrol officers who monitor the border for any stray Mexican cattle with cattle fever, a disease transmitted by ticks. Cattle fever has been eradicated in the U.S. but not in Mexico, and so a permanent quarantine buffer zone remains in south Texas. Also, agents

provided security to an International Boundary and Water Commission (IBWC) river surveyor; for its part, the IBWC has been working with licensees to open drain structures enough to allow normal flow of water but not so wide as to enable the drains to be used for smuggling contraband or humans. In addition, agents contacted the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) to say they had noticed vegetation removal activity on FWS lands. And the boat crew assisted the National Park Service at the Padre Island National Seashore.

## COASTAL

Miami (Fla.) - At a recent Borderlands Management Taskforce meeting, sector officials provided a brief on Operation Vigilant Sentry, the Department of Homeland Security plan for a Mass Migration; discussion followed on what each agency would due in case of a mass migration. Also, several sector officials provided briefings at an in-service training session for Everglades National Park rangers.

New Orleans (La.) Contacted Wildlife & Fisheries to report several dead dolphins and sea turtles found on the beach during patrol.

Ramey (Puerto Rico) - Agents involved in Operation Island Hopper III in Vieques, Puerto Rico received orientation from Fish and Wildlife personnel who work at the Vieques Park. Also, a meeting about access to public lands was held at the Nature Preserve Hacienda La Esperanza, a former sugar plantation located on the northern coast and now managed by the Conservation Trust of Puerto Rico. ■



## Land Manager Guest Article: *Two-Way Assistance Brings Multiple Benefits*



Photo of child releasing wildlife

By Bill Kolodnicki, Project Leader, Moosehorn National Wildlife Refuge, Baring, Maine.

The Moosehorn NWR established in 1937 by Franklin D. Roosevelt and spans the Canadian Maritime Border along the St. Croix River in Baring, Maine. It has been a leader in woodcock and waterfowl conservation for many years and provides a place for over 50,000 visitors each year to hunt, fish, ski, pick blueberries, cut Christmas trees, and hike and pursue many other outdoor activities. Current projects on the Refuge monitor disease in waterfowl, woodcock biology to include the study of the bird's movements down the East Coast using telemetry and aerial surveys, migratory bird use and the movements of Spruce Grouse. The Refuge is finishing the development of its fifteen-year management plan called the Comprehensive Conservation Plan, which will include the development of demonstration areas to teach the enhancement of habitat for birds.

What kind of assistance, you might ask, can CBP/Border Patrol be to these thirty thousand acres set aside

for bird habitat? The Border Patrol has actually helped protect our nesting bald eagles by assisting in the policing of visitors who want to get a little too close to them. (The Refuge has a limited staff, with only one law enforcement officer.) Agents also have helped educate the public and worked with our refuge law enforcement on details. Additionally, help has come with the physical security of Moosehorn and Aroostook Refuge (see below) by checking out unusual activities on the refuges and even reporting low-flying aircraft over nesting birds. All these activities assist in preserving an undisturbed habitat for wildlife and visitor safety. (From time to time, we do permit some worthwhile disturbance from Refuge Officers and Border Patrol agents).

The assistance, actually, goes two ways. For our part, Moosehorn NWR has made available its small arms range to assist the Border Patrol with firearms qualifications. The Refuge itself uses the range, and it is also available to other Homeland Security Officers/Agents who have a need. In fact, it was recently used to assist with the orientation of the public to U.S. Border Patrol's activities through their Citizens Academy.

Aroostook NWR in Limestone, Maine, is also part of the mutual assistance equation. Moosehorn NWR administers the five thousand acre Refuge, which is part of the former Loring Air Force base. The Aroostook NWR has a Memorandum of Understanding with the Border Patrol for the storage of equipment in

some of the old bunkers and buildings that are being preserved in the former historic Weapons Storage Area of this old nuclear base. This agreement, in turn, helps the small refuge with many extra sets of eyes and a worthwhile use of the buildings.

Other mutual activities consist of enhancing shared communications, planning for possible search and rescue to include Law Enforcement incidents, meeting on an annual basis to understand agency projects (sharing of some fine jelly donuts) and the ability to enjoy the friendship of a group of dedicated professional men and woman. The Refuge and the communities are very fortunate to enjoy this friendship with the Border Patrol and it has been an outstanding example of interagency cooperation in my thirty four-year career. It is all working out great for wildlife and for people. ■

### **Tucson, Az. Agents discover artifact while on patrol**

*While on patrol in the vicinity of Ali-Wua pass of the Ajo Mountain Range, Border Patrol Agents Patricio Garcia and Benjamin Anderson discovered what is believed to be a historic artifact. Timely and proper communication through the Border Patrol chain of command and the Organ Pipe Cactus National Monument's Superintendent, Mr. Lee Baiza, will prove vital in the proper recovery of this significant discovery. The diligence of these agents to not disturb this archeological site, but rather immediately preserve the site and document current conditions*

*via photography reflects a fine balance between conducting law enforcement activities and preserving our nation's historical and natural resources. ■*



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#### **What is the PLLA Program?**

*A significant portion of the land along U.S. borders is public land. The Border Patrol created the Public Lands Liaison Agent (PLLA) Program in 2005 to foster collaboration between Border Patrol agents who patrol these public lands and those who manage them. In each of the Border Patrol's 20 sectors, PLLAs take the lead in building partnerships with land managers, leveraging resources, and solving any issues on a local level.*

The PLLA Tracker is available on-line at:  
[www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/about/sr/es/sustain/tracker](http://www.cbp.gov/xp/cgov/about/sr/es/sustain/tracker).

