

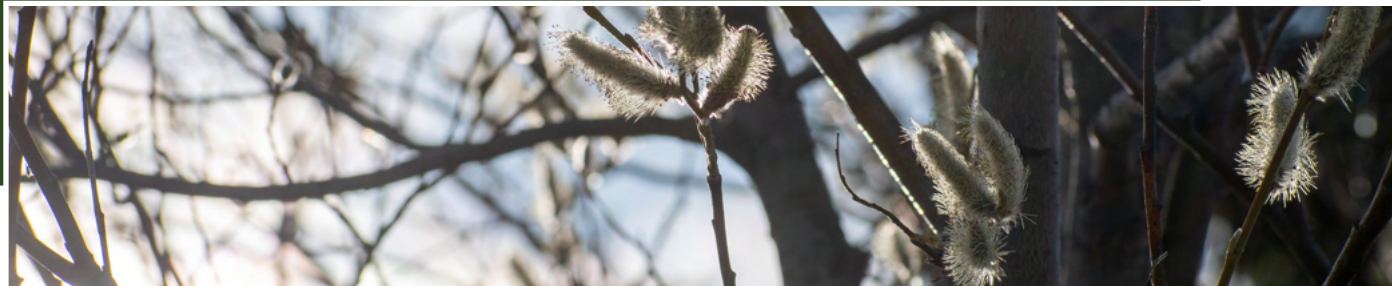
2024 ANNUAL REPORT



OUR MISSION

Inspiring environmental stewardship and lifelong learning through experience, awareness, appreciation, and conservation of the natural and historic resources of Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge.





L-R: Grace Nelson, Lauren Puleo, Melanie Graeff



2024 Camp Habitat Staff



2024 Creamer's Field Team

Friends of Creamer's Field is a community-based 501(c)(3) nonprofit organization (Tax ID# 92-0137107) founded in 1991 to provide educational opportunities and family programs at Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge. The refuge stretches across 2,500 acres of fields, woods, and wetlands in the Fairbanks North Star Borough. The original Creamer family farmhouse (circa 1908) sits on the property and serves as our headquarters and features interpretive exhibits on migratory birds and on the historic dairy complex.

Working collaboratively with Alaska Department of Fish & Game (ADF&G) and other community partners, Friends of Creamer's Field aims to "inspire environmental stewardship and lifelong learning through experience, awareness, appreciation, and conservation of the natural and historic resources of Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge." Without the dedication and commitment of our 100+ active volunteers, we could not begin to accomplish this mission. Volunteers assist with programs & events, are trained to lead guided nature walks on the Refuge, and work as Hosts in the Farmhouse Visitor Center.

OUR 2024 TEAM

STAFF

Grace Nelson, *Executive Director*
 Melanie Graeff, *Programs & Events Coordinator*
 Lauren Puleo, *Youth Education & Research Coordinator*
 Sadie Loveless, *Assistant Camp Habitat Director*
 Maggie Dullen, *Camp Habitat Instructor*
 Kaper Greenfield, *Camp Habitat Instructor*
 Bret Johnson, *Camp Habitat Instructor*
 Berlin Nelson, *Camp Habitat Instructor*
 Erin Sherrer, *Camp Habitat Instructor*
 Mia Harkleroad, *Camp Habitat Counselor*
 Gizmo Skaggs, *Camp Habitat Counselor*
 Madalynn Tucker, *Camp Habitat Counselor*
 Anna Belle Valentine, *Camp Habitat Counselor*
 Clifford Westphal, *Camp Habitat Counselor*
 Gretchen Wietgreffe, *Camp Habitat Counselor*
 Day Wohlford, *Camp Habitat Counselor*

BOARD OF DIRECTORS

Becky Hassebroek, *President*
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 Carol Davis, *Board Member*
 Riga Grubis, *Board Member*
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 Arthur Hussey, *Board Member*
 Jerry Lipka, *Board Member*
 Tom Schneider, *Board Member*
 Roxy Creamer, *Emeritus*
 George Happ, *Emeritus*
 Cathie Harms-Tordoff, *Emeritus*
 William Holman, *Emeritus*

ADF&G PARTNERS

Mark Ross, *Refuge Educator*
 Clint Cooper, *Refuge Manager*
 Nate LaShomb, *Refuge Technician*
 Jayce Bjelland, *Refuge Intern*
 Jason Caikoski, *Regional Management Supervisor*
 Lincoln Parrett, *Regional Supervisor*
 Kerry Savereide, *Administrative Lead*
 Dean Middleton, *Maintenance Lead*

OUR COLLABORATORS





A MESSAGE FROM THE DIRECTOR

Dear Friends,

Each year, as I sit down to reflect on the past twelve months, I am filled with immense gratitude for the incredible experiences and connections we have shared on the Refuge. This year is no different.

2024 has been a year of learning, discovery, and community as we welcomed over 20,000 visitors to the Refuge and our programs. These visitors came from all 50 states, including the District of Columbia, and 34 countries, each eager to explore the Refuge's diverse habitats and rich history while experiencing the wonders of our natural world.

Our community events and programs thrived in 2024. The Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival marked its 27th year, featuring expanded programming and the return of the beloved "Broadside Theatre," where we projected *Wings Over Water* onto the historic barn—a Northern Hawk Owl even swooped in for a guest appearance.

Camp Habitat continued its legacy of inspiring young minds in conservation, welcoming 230 campers for an unforgettable 33rd summer of exploration and discovery.

One of the year's most magical moments came during the Luminary Trail, which saw an overwhelming turnout. We estimate over 1,000 visitors walked the candle-lit trail over the three-hour event. It was an amazing way to close out the year.

This year also brought exciting growth to our team. Lauren Puleo accepted a full-time role as our Youth Education & Research Coordinator after an amazing summer as our Camp Habitat Director. She has jumped right into creating new programs and experiences for the Fairbanks community and its visitors and we can't wait to share more soon!

Looking ahead to 2025, we are excited for another year of stewardship, education, and adventure at the Refuge. Be sure to mark your calendars for our upcoming programs, and stay tuned for announcements about new programs like the Kid's Exploration Walk and Outdoor Day.

Thank you for being part of our journey. Your support, curiosity, and love for the Refuge make everything we do possible. We look forward to another year of discovery and adventure with you in 2025!

With gratitude,

Grace Nelson

Grace Nelson
Executive Director
Friends of Creamer's Field





FINANCIAL POSITION

Friends of Creamer's Field is proud to share that we are in a strong financial position, with a remarkable 15% increase in income over the past year. This growth is a testament to the unwavering generosity of our community—individual donors, businesses, and organizations whose steadfast support fuels our mission and expands our impact.

Thanks to this increase in funding, we have been able to enhance our contributions to the Refuge, enriching online resources and significantly growing our events and programs. These additional resources have allowed us to offer more immersive educational experiences and engaging community events, ensuring that visitors of all ages can connect with the natural and historic resources of Creamer's Field.

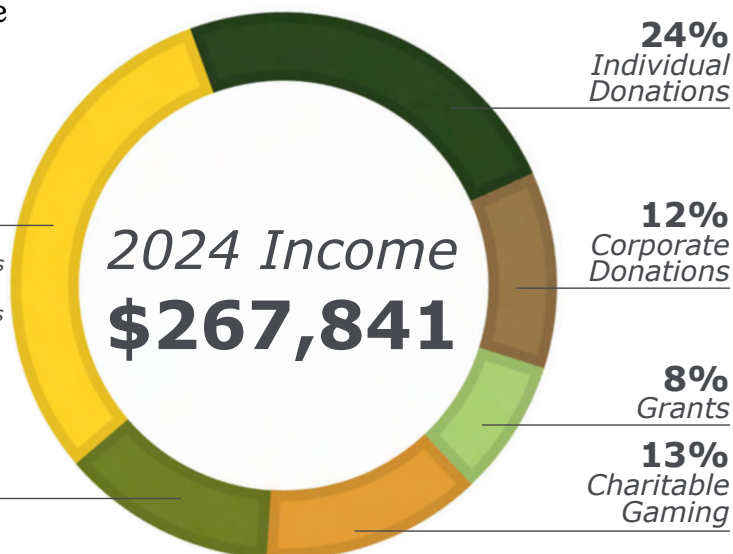
Looking ahead, we remain dedicated to responsible financial stewardship and mission-driven growth, ensuring that every dollar is maximized to benefit the Refuge and the Fairbanks community. We are grateful to everyone who has played a role in our success and look forward to building on this momentum in the year to come.



Photo: FOCF ED, Grace Nelson accepts check from Alaska Lottos' Dave Lambert

30%
Camp Habitat
24% Camp Tuition
4% Corporate Donations
1% Grants
1% Individual Donations

13%
Fundraising



11%
Refuge Improvement

3%
Fundraising

4%
RESTRICTED
2025 Education

18%
Admin



Photo: Camp Habitat Director Lauren Puleo accepts check from NAEC's Christin Swearingen in support of Camp Habitat.



OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our volunteers are the lifeblood of our programs, and we simply couldn't do it without them. Their dedication, enthusiasm, and tireless efforts are what make our programs and events possible.

Whether they are leading nature walks, welcoming and educating visitors at the Farmhouse, or helping to organize and implement programs, our volunteers are the driving force behind everything we do. Their commitment allows us to continue sharing the rich natural and historical resources of Creamer's Field with the community and beyond.

In addition, we want to extend our deepest gratitude to the organizations that have come out in support of our programs. Your generosity, expertise, and collaboration enrich our efforts and help us create meaningful experiences for all who visit. Thank you for sharing your time and talents with us—we are truly grateful for your partnership!

Creamer's Field Refuge Hosts

Jenny & Nathan Bolling
Kenneth Hooker & Mary Perkins
David & Stephanie Le

Farmhouse Visitor Center

Susie Crevensten
Mary Fenno
Leone Hatch
Kate LaSota
Sue LeFever
Gail Mayo
Sheila McCleary
Katrina Pawlaczy
Millie Peek
Mary Perkins
Brenda Sadler
Betsy Sturm
Janet Taylor
Maria Terch

Nature Walk Leaders

Andrea Chin
Charlie Collins
Jeff Creamer
Frank Keim
Nate Kibbey
Kate LaSota
Rachel LaSota
Bud Marschner
Ryan Marsh
Gail Mayo
Christin Swearingen

Event Volunteers

Randall Compton
Mary Fenno
Susan Grace Stolz
Beth Grassi
Joy Grubis
Ron Koczaja
Heather Krawiec
Laurie Leonard
Brianna McGrath
Kassandra Mirosh
Millie Peak
Tom Robinson
Betsy Ross Smith
Brenda Sadler
Betsy Sturm
Janet Taylor
Maria Terch
Jeff Walters
Bennett Wong



Serevende Marimba Ensemble

*Fairbanks
Vintage Power
Club*

Fairbanks
Garden Club



GEORGESON
BOTANICAL GARDEN





Camp Habitat



While this marks my fourth summer spent in Alaska, it was my first at Camp Habitat and in interior Alaska. Being able to learn about this area and the uniqueness of Creamer's Field alongside campers and staff has been incredibly rewarding and made approaching the challenges that come with this position less daunting. I greatly appreciate the opportunity to have served as Director for the 2024 season and have learned an immense amount. With that being said, I believe we have had a fabulous summer at Camp Habitat. The Camp Habitat team was full of friendly, familiar faces and new friends that brought new perspectives. Everyone was fueled by their excitement for ecology and the outdoors making their interactions with hundreds of campers come at ease. While the Camp Habitat staff was vital to our success this summer, we could not have done it without the unwavering support of the FOCF staff and board and our partnering agencies, the Northern Alaska Environmental Center and the Alaska Department of Fish and Game.

This summer we were extremely fortunate to have reached capacity as we welcomed 230 campers to explore Creamer's Field over a five week period. As a result of Camp Habitat predecessors, our 2024 staff had a plethora of activities and teaching ideas outlined in the Camp Habitat curriculum. Using these as a guide, our staff were also able to implement their own ideas, which provided campers with new experiences and learning opportunities that we hope will continue in the upcoming years. Taken together, we believe that campers walked away with a newfound appreciation for Interior Alaska's various flora and fauna and the history of Creamer's Field, which prompted many campers to enthusiastically exclaim their wishes to stay at camp for the rest of the summer!

Lauren Puleo

Lauren Puleo
2024 Camp Habitat Director





2024 IN REVIEW

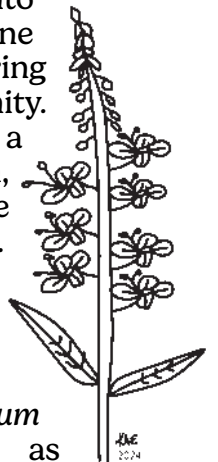
2024 featured record attendance for most of our events, new partnerships with local organizations and of course, lots of fun!

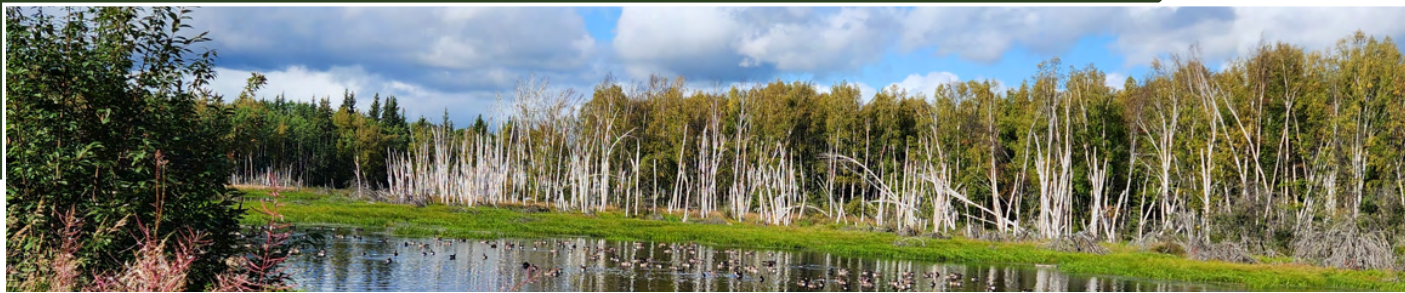


The **Spring Migration Celebration** welcomed 681 enthusiastic nature lovers to Creamer's Field, celebrating the return of our feathered friends to the Interior for the summer. Guests enjoyed guided birdwatching with Arctic Audubon, crafts, and educational exhibits from 15 local organizations, all sharing their passion and knowledge with the community.



The **Design Alaska Wild Arts Walk** brought even more energy to Solstice weekend, transforming the Refuge trails into a vibrant outdoor gallery. Thirty-one local artists lined the paths, sharing their creativity with the community. Spectators gathered to watch a thrilling timed art competition, where artists raced against the clock to create masterpieces. This year's commemorative cup, designed by Design Alaska Marketing Specialist Katherine East, beautifully featured *Epilobium angustifolium*—better known as Fireweed. Thanks to the generosity of Design Alaska, participating artists, and enthusiastic attendees, we raised an incredible \$13,000 to support our mission!





Cows, ice cream, farm games, tractors, and history made **Creamer's Dairy Day** a must-attend event! Alaska Range Dairy brought up a few of their cows from Delta, delighting attendees with fresh dairy samples—chocolate milk was a clear favorite! The Fairbanks Power Club showcased their impressive tractors, while members of the Creamer family shared heartfelt stories of life on the historic dairy. It was a day filled with fun, nostalgia, and appreciation for Alaska's farming heritage.



We bid farewell to 1,600 cranes during the 27th annual **Tanana Valley Sandhill Crane Festival**, a weekend filled with nature, art, and celebration. This year's event featured insightful presentations from keynote speaker Liliana Naves of the Alaska Department of Fish & Game and stunning artwork by Alaskan artist Kassandra Mirosh.

The festivities began with unique pre-festival events, including bird yoga, a lively kick-off at Black Spruce Brewing, and a magical evening at the "Broadside Theatre", where *Wings Over Water* was projected onto Creamer's Barn. Over the festival weekend, attendees enjoyed crane-watching, waterfowl banding, nature walks, hands-on crafts, the famous annual Crane Calling contest, art seminars, and live music.





2024 in Review CONTINUED...



Creepy Critters took attendees on a fascinating journey into the world of seasonal camouflage, exploring how animals adapt and blend into their landscapes. Participants got creative by crafting their own disguises before testing their skills at spotting nature's ultimate masters of disguise!



The birds of Fairbanks feasted this Thanksgiving, thanks to the 168 individuals who joined us at the Farmhouse Visitor Center for **Thanksgiving for the Birds!** Participants got hands-on crafting pinecone bird feeders, spreading a little holiday cheer to our feathered friends.



We kicked off the holiday season with a beloved tradition at Creamer's Field—**Holiday Craft Nights!** Participants got into the festive spirit by decorating tree cookies (sliced spruce) with custom designs and hand-stamping holiday cards to share with loved ones. All the while, they sipped on warm hot chocolate, making for a cozy and creative evening filled with holiday cheer!



The 2024 season came to a glowing close with the magical **Luminary Trail**. More than 100 candles illuminated the path around the historic barns, creating a breathtaking winter wonderland. An estimated 1,000 people strolled the trail, embracing the beauty of the season. Meanwhile, in the warmth of the Farmhouse, hot chocolate and cookies were enjoyed as quickly as they were served—adding to the cozy, festive atmosphere of this cherished tradition.



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FOUNDATION**
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GOLDEN HEART**



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RESORT**



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Sandhill Crane (\$1,000 or more)

ACE Roofing, LLC
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Don & Marcia Ives
Juneau Raptor Center
Jerry Lipka & Janet Schichnes
Jamie & Bud Marschner
Gail Mayo
Sonia Mazurek & John Hagey
Glenn Potts
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Mark A. Smiley, Ph.D., P.E.
Scott & Janet Taylor
Ken Whitten & Mary Zalar
Jack & Carol Wilbur

Swan (\$500-\$999)

Arctic Audubon Society
Bill Ellis & Pat Baser
In Memory of Mike McCann
Roger & Sylvia Burns
Terry & Melissa Chapin
Jeffrey Creamer
Mark Hodge & Anne Demuth
Keith & Susan Gaudin
Malcolm & Kathleen Goepfert
Anne & Owen Hanley

Peregrine Falcon (\$250-\$499)

Lawrence Kaplan & Janice Dawe
Marcella Knowlton
Elmer J. Leistikow
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Don Hampton & Anne Ruggles
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James Kari
In Memory of Pat Sackinger
S. Lewis
La Raw & Kit Maran
Lisa Rogers Peter
Premier Alaska Tours

Wigeon (\$100-\$249)

Sherry Abrahams
Jay Allyn
James & Cassie Atwell
Lucy Avenson
Maria Bahr
Karen Baker
Sharon & Tom Baring
Kelly Barsdate
Stefani & Joshua Bell
Rhonda Bennon
Maggie Billington
Greg Bringham
Kari Burrell
Erica Carrillo
Andre Carrillo
Karen Cook
Elizabeth Cook
In Memory of John P. Cook
Anthea Mary Craven
Lori Davis
Verice Doble & Jackie Stormer
Sheree Dohner
Kate Doran
Nicole Eiseman
Kristine Fister
Jeffrey & Nancy Gibson

Mary Lee Guthrie
Trisha Haines
Aislinn Hebrink
Lois Heine
Eva Hewitt
Michael Hostina
Eszter Janossy
Stan Justice
Sarah Keller & Cary Keller MD
April Knox
Carol Larson
Don & Carol Lokken
Mary MacFarlane
Thomas Marsh
Janet Matheson
Erica Mathews
Mary Matthews
Peter Mayo
Sheila & John McCleary
Katie McClellan
Mike & Joan McGlinchy
Ruth McHenry & Cliff Eames
Lisa McLellan
Tehya McLeod
Raymond & Tamara Miller
Michelle Miller
Francis Nelson
The Ott Family

**Wigeon (cont.)**

Tracie Batson Pendergrast
 Scott Peterson & Barbara Fairhurst
 Dana Phillips
 Brianna Reagan
 Bill & June Rogers
 Ronnie Rosenberg
 Kimberly De Ruyter
 Shayla Sackinger
 John Sargent
 Carole J Schultz & Ann Bullock
 Mark Simon
 Howard Smith
 Betsy Ross Smith
 Stephen and Elena Sparrow
 Michael Stephens & Darleen Masiak
 June Pinnell-Stephens
 Katie Stubbe
 Betsy Sturm
 Iris Sutton
 Anne & David Vick
 Jacque Virgin
 Jeffery Walters
 Cynthia Wentworth
 Paulette Wille
 Frank & Judy Williams
 Lauren Winterton
 Kate Wood
 Constance Zachel

Canada Goose (\$50-\$99)

Janet Ames
 Linda Baker
 Charlotte Basham
 David Albert Behr
 Charlotte Bird
 James Brader
 Alex Buetow
 Mary Bunch
 Tianna Christopher
 Edmund Clausen
 In Memory of Ida Laine
 & Ansgar Clausen
 Laurel Devaney & Ken Russell
 Sarah Douglas-Cameron
 Jenny Duncan
 Joseph Dupras
 Jamelle Duszynski
 Mary Fenno
 Maureen Fink
 Yoriko Freed
 David Frey & Laurie Walton
 Deborah and Richard Fuelling
 Nicholas Hajdukovich
 Brian Haley
 Barbara Hameister
 Patricia Harris
 Stephanie Haskins
 Nancy Herning
 Traci Hill

Phillip Hokenson
 Polly E. Hyslop
 Scott Justesen
 Robert & Janet Kauffman
 Katie Kennedy
 Teresa Knezek
 Kim Krinke
 Mary Leith
 Brian & Marilyn Marsh
 Lynn Mayo
 Virginia McDowell
 Hilda Melchior
 Carol & Hal Meyer
 Kaarin Mullowney
 Marilyn Richardson
 Rebekah Riley
 Brian Rogers & Sherry Modrow
 Hugh Rose
 Tom Schneider
 Sally Smith
 Christine & Larry Smith
 Diana Solie
 Maria & Larry Terch
 Jim & Chris Villano
 Michael & Annie Wenstrup
 Jackson Westfall
 Stephanie Winter
 Kara Yancey
 Joesi Zastrow

Swallow (\$49 or less)

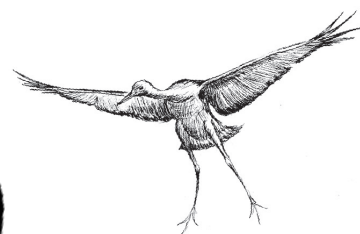
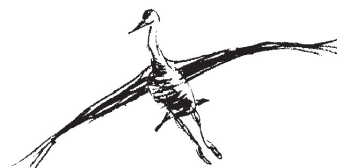
Jeff Adams
 Anne Aleshire
 Magnolia Altamirano
 Gracen Anderson
 Sarita Arya
 Kristian Beckner
 Scotty Berg
 Barbara Braley
 Andrew Brooks
 Bryan Chang
 Jeanne Creamer-Dalton
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 Maximilian Erickson
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 Anita Hartmann
 Bernie Hoffman
 Stephen Hovenden
 Amelia Jansen
 David & Dawn Kersula
 Virginia Kinne
 Mia Kohloff-Reynolds
 Deborah Koons
 Danielle Marquez-Kohloff
 Zoe Marshall
 Vince & Laurie Mauro
 Nancy Mazurek
 In Memory of Robyn McFetridge
 Michael McCann

Michael McCann
 Carol Nielsen
 Susan Padgett
 Jennifer Page
 Patricia Peirsol
 Betty Pixley
 Gary & Deborah Porter
 Mary Powers

In Honor of Teri Spires

Kemper Riehm
 Terry Roberts
 Jan Rud
 Phil & Katie Sanders
 Judy See
 Jane Sellin
 Nancy Smoyer
 Shandy Stanfill
 Rosalie Stockwell
 Sharon Story
 Sarah Sullivan
 Hazel Sutton
 Cheyanna Swisher
 Richard Tarkiainen
 Todd Trygstad
 James Warren
 Moira Westervelt
 Helen Weston
 Addie Willsrud
 Ann Wood
 Rachel Wright

** Thank you to all of the donors
 we may have missed!**





"Inspiring environmental stewardship and lifelong learning through experience, awareness, appreciation and conservation of the natural and historic resources of Creamer's Field Migratory Waterfowl Refuge."

www.friendsofcreamersfield.org

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