

San Diego Bay National Wildlife Refuge

News 'n Notes

4 February 2008

D-Street Nesting Area, Sweetwater Marsh Unit

On 2 February 2008 when the call went out: *Who wants to go ice-plant yankin' on the D-Street Nesting Area!?* Eighty-nine, yes, 89 volunteers showed up at the 83-acre D-Street Nesting Area (aka. D-Street Fill) on the Sweetwater Marsh Unit of San Diego Bay NWR. Volunteers from San Diego State University Key Club, San Diego Audubon Society, Friends of San Diego Wildlife Refuges, and the San Diego Choice Program spent 3-hours Saturday morning yankin' and haulin' tons of ice-plant into piles to be disposed of later.



The D-Street Nesting Area habitat is maintained as a nesting site for California least terns in partnership with Unified Port of San Diego. Maximizing the potential for the D-Street Nesting Area to provide habitat for a greater breadth of species has been on-going through grants received by the San Diego Audubon Society from Audubon California. Currently, to protect and enhance salt grass habitat on the

nesting area, SDBNWR, Audubon, Port of San Diego, County of San Diego, and the Friends of San Diego Wildlife Refuges have partnered in eradication of ice-plant through ice-plant yankin' events such as the one that occurred on 2 February 2008.



D-Street Ice-plant yankin' events have been a great means of increasing salt grass habitat for such species as Belding's savannah sparrow and other less sensitive species. Sure, herbicides could be used to eradicate ice-plant, however, the application of these chemicals can harm surrounding native vegetation. Good old fashioned hand labor is a highly effective means of ridding D-Street

Nesting Area of this South African invader. At the end of the event, volunteers were impressed with their efforts.

Another ice-plant yankin' event is scheduled for early March before the terns arrive for nesting. The event is to include use of heavy equipment to haul the heaps of ice-plant to roll-off green waste bins.



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