

JULY-SEPTEMBER 2023

# CONSERVATION VOLUNTEER PROGRAM NEWSLETTER



## Welcome to the first edition of the new CVP Newsletter!

GREETINGS FROM ALEX ANTRAM, CVP COORDINATOR

Moving forward, we'll be publishing this four times/year to celebrate the work accomplished each quarter by our committed volunteers. Eighteen new ongoing volunteers have joined our ranks since May, ready to dedicate their time and energy to conservation at Quantico alongside about 30 long-time CVP members. This newsletter is not exhaustive of everyone's contributions, but rather an overview of projects completed July-September 2023, including several new initiatives. Thank you for all you do for the wildlife and habitat on Base!



## THIRD QUARTER TOTALS

HOURS GIVEN

439

ACROSS  
151 VISITS

PROJECT AREA WITH  
THE MOST HOURS

Waterfowl Blind Work  
158 hours



## Volunteer Spotlight: Earl Sechrist



Earl Sechrist has been a vital member of the CVP from the beginning. While the program has ebbed and flowed, Earl's contribution to conservation at Quantico has been unwavering – he remains one of the first people to respond to calls for help with projects. While he supports all manner of activities, Earl's true love is anything turkey-survey and turkey-hunting related. We are incredibly grateful to have him as a team member and friend.

“I have been blessed to have been a part of the CVP since back when a couple of Marine Colonels and Tim Stamps [former Head of Natural Resources] started this program in 1986. Seeing it grow and all the folks I meet over the years is priceless. But the main and greatest achievement was seeing the time and work spent on projects and seeing how it helped many others enjoy the outdoors no matter their interests in hunting, fishing, bird watching, etc. It is one of the best conservation activities program I have been associated with. Now I can see once again a new generation of volunteers and the enthusiasm and drive that I was a part of generations ago.”



Earl pictured here with staff biologists Boomer Malanchuk (left) and Anna Dustin (right), along with CVP Coordinator Alex Antram.



## Waterfowl Blind Work

BY SETH HOLLAND, CVP MEMBER SINCE 2023

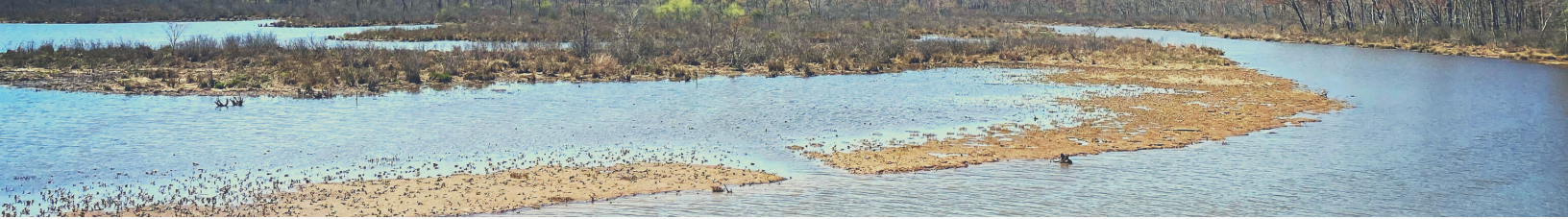
Quantico waterfowl blinds are captivating places where memories are made and stories are shared. We gather with friends both two-legged and four to hunt waterfowl, to watch the sun rise, and to sip hot coffee on cool mornings. Whether you're a seasoned veteran or brand new to waterfowl hunting, the need to be concealed is a basic necessity of the hunt. We hope you find the new blinds a good hide this season, that the waterfowl like your spread, and we hope to see you out there!



New blinds designed by Trey Gaskins, CVP '23

Your Waterfowl Conservation Volunteers have been busy over the late Summer into Early Fall! Many might not know that you can float hunt (if you have the appropriate Virginia Floating Blind License) within 150 feet of the reserved blinds. The team has rebuilt most waterfowl blinds on the Quantico Creek! All of the old blinds and structures still exist on the Quantico Creek and can be hunted as an auxiliary blind. Starting Spring of 2024 we will look to start construction on the new floating blinds for the Chopawamsic Creek!





## Waterfowl Blind Work Con't

PHOTOS HERE AND ON PREVIOUS PAGE BY SAM WINDISCH, CVP MEMBER SINCE 2023

We are soliciting new volunteers for the current seasons as we still need to brush a few blinds on the Chop. Please do not hesitate to reach out to the team with any questions and feedback as we do not want to conduct work in a vacuum! - Seth

Waterfowl Team: Seth Holland, Trey Gaskins, Samuel Windisch, Tate Williams, Cain Whiting, Luke Richmond, Karl Arbogast, Ty Yount, Daniel Burrell, Joseph Devroy, and Brett Rankin





# Archery Range Revamp: Renewing a CVP-Built Site

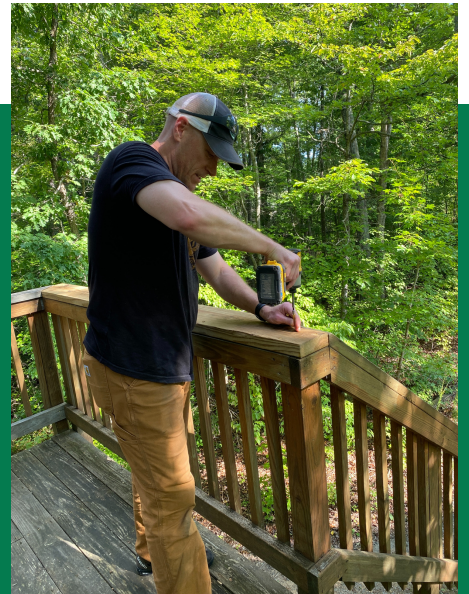
BY JIM KIRKMAN, CVP MEMBER SINCE 2003

With the archery deer season approaching, six CVP volunteers assembled on August 26 at the Archery Site to undertake some badly needed repairs and refurbishing. It was an all-day event that not only saw much needed work being accomplished, but also a time when new CVP acquaintances were made and old friendships renewed.



Numerous repairs were made. This included repairing the split rail fence where rails had fallen to the ground in several places. Carpentry work was performed on the wooden bench seats and picnic table to replace the deteriorating slats, and rotting wood on the archery stand was replaced. The foam backings on the lower lanes' targets were in bad shape, and were either replaced or reversed, while new bag targets were put in place for those practicing from the tower.

Grounds improvements were also made. This included mowing and weed-whacking between the target lanes and on the site's perimeters, restoring a kept and inviting look to the site. The thinned-out mulch on several travel paths was replaced and raked, making for improved walking and weed control conditions. And in several places, encroaching tree limbs and bushes were cut back.





## Archery Range Revamp: Renewing a CVP-Built Site Con't

BY JIM KIRKMAN, CVP MEMBER SINCE 2003

We thank our NREA Forestry friends who offered their labor and helped with a backhoe. The day's work ended with picking up the new and old trash at the site, and hauling it away.

The work party included Chris Chown, Beetle Bailey, Vinnie Pacella, Earl Sechrist, Duane Kortman, and myself.



CVP members came together in building the Archery Site in June 2010 (see Jim Kirkman on the far left side of group photo).

The CVP has now formed an Archery Site Committee to regularly monitor and maintain the range. Reach out if you'd like to join! - Alex





## CVP & QMTB: A Partnership for Safe Trails Aboard MCBQ

BY MARTIN FERNANDEZ, CVP MEMBER AND QMTB TRAIL BOSS

Members of the Quantico Mountain Bike Club (QMTB) have been actively involved in ensuring trails aboard Marine Corps Base Quantico (MCBQ) are properly maintained, free of debris, and safe for all. The Club, a 501(c)(3) non profit organization has been operating aboard MCBQ for nearly 15 years. QMTB's membership is composed of 70% DoD affiliated personnel, including active duty military members from all services, DoD civilians, and 30% non-affiliated sponsored civilians. Twenty-three individuals are both QMTB and CVP members.



Left Photo: Martín Fernández, QMTB Trail Boss and authorized base sawyer, works on clearing a blowdown across Gray's Connector on Quantico's West Side Trails. Photo CWO5 Neil Bray (QMTB President)

Below Photo: Paul Haag, QMTB Treasurer, helping to build a bridge for trail use as part of the CVP.

The club's charter is to promote the sport of mountain biking aboard MCBQ and the surrounding areas, as well as to provide opportunities for group recreational rides. The club works closely with Quantico's Natural Resources and Environmental Affairs (NREA) Branch to maintain, improve, and ensure the Mainside and West Side (6C) trail systems are safe and accessible to all users.

Members of the club routinely use the trails and identify issues that need to be addressed. This summer, between July and September, base-authorized QMTB sawyer teams cleared over 30 blowdowns along various trail corridors on Mainside and the West Side trail system. Club volunteers have dedicated hundreds of annual hours in support of trail maintenance efforts, and helped to ensure this valuable resource is available to all personnel stationed or authorized to be on MCBQ.





## Introduction to Mountain Biking Course

Most recently, the QMTB hosted a beginner mountain bike clinic along Mars Station Road on Mainside, sponsored by NREA.

Certified Professional Mountain Bike Instructor Association (PMBIA) Level 1 instructor, and club member, Jarred Steffen (Active Duty Air Force) led a team of club volunteers and provided basic mountain bike instruction to base residents, including active duty Marines, spouses, and base employees. The course, held on Saturday, September 30, included lessons on basic mountain bike nomenclature, bike set-up, shifting, braking, body positioning, and rough terrain riding.

The capstone of the event was a group ride along the Mainside trail system. Many of the participants who attended used the bikes from the Single Marine Program house. Similar bikes are available for rent at the MCCS Outdoor Recreation Center.

Active duty Marines stationed at MCBQ can join the club for free. The club is also open to retired, former service members, their dependents and civilians from the surrounding area. To learn more about QMTB please visit [QMTB.org](http://QMTB.org).



Mark Zaragoza of the CVP and QMTB, supporting the bike course for active Marines.

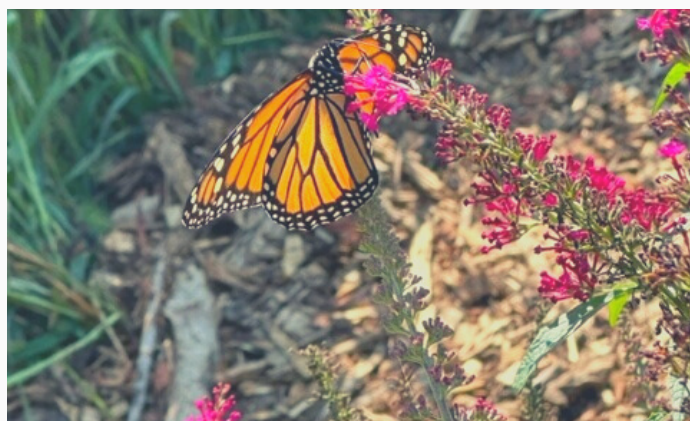
The CVP is grateful for the strong collaboration with the QMTB in maintaining trails for all to use on Base.





## New Pollinator Garden on Mainside

The CVP and Quantico Spouses' Garden Club are partnering on a new pollinator garden on Mainside at the intersection of Nicholas Rd and Biddle Ave, near the Single Marine Program building. The small garden, sponsored by NREA, was installed in May and has already attracted monarchs (bottom left photo), hummingbird moths (right), and more pollinators (photos by Dawn Reynolds). Volunteers have painstakingly removed grass, weeded, and mulched around the native plants this quarter. Soon the area will be winterized and mulch put down on mowed grass surrounding the garden to expand in the spring through planting native seeds provided by Virginia Tech. Pollinators are key to ecosystem functioning and volunteers are happy to support the species utilizing the garden. Special thanks to Dawn Reynolds, current president of the Quantico Spouses' Garden Club, for her help in coordinating this important initiative (see down on the header of Page 1. We also appreciate the contributions of CVP member Tom Caufield '23 for making "no mow, pollinator garden" signs, and Gavin and Killian Gordon (bottom right photo by Evan Gordon) who chose to volunteer at the garden as part of their school service requirement.





On July 8, seven CVP members participated in sawyer training led by NREA forester Chris Crawford. Volunteers are required to take this course to use chainsaws for projects on Base, notably trail maintenance. We thank Chris for serving as our instructor on a sunny Saturday morning.

Attendees included Trey Gaskins, David Gaske, Tom Caulfield, Scott Haller, Sam DeLapp, Steven Hanson, and Amando Carigo.



Seasoned volunteer John McCoy organized the installation of four new hunting blinds for Wounded Warriors in September. These blinds were provided by the Quantico Injured Military Sportsmen Association (QIMSA) and installed in Training Areas 11A, 14A, 14B, and 15C. CVP members had to work together to load and unload the blinds onto trucks, set them in position, and anchor them into the ground. Led by another long-term volunteer Bill Campbell, this project was quickly organized and took great collaborative physical effort from CVP members John Gulatsi, Jim Diggins, Earl Sechrist, Tate Williams, and Chris Chown. Photos were taken by Bill.

NREA staff Chris Crawford and Justin Jennings of Forestry and Jim Ma and Corey Boswell of Fish & Wildlife were also instrumental in executing the installation.





# JOIN US

Sign up for opportunities here:

[https://bttr.im/iq3j\\_](https://bttr.im/iq3j_)

## Fall CVP Potluck



Saturday, Nov 18, 12pm

Bring a dish and chat with your fellow volunteers at the Game Check Station (27175 Telegraph Rd). Family and friends welcome!

## Winter Watershed Cleanup



Saturday, Dec 9, 9-11am  
We will meet at low-tide to clean up the Potomac Shoreline! Hot chocolate and tea to follow.

### Ongoing Opportunities

- Waterfowl, Shorebird, and Raptor Surveys - Now through March 2024
- Hunting Mentors - Teach novice hunters about the sport this hunting season
- Grounds Maintenance Committee - Support our work by helping to control vegetation by mowing and weed-whacking
- Trail Steward Committee - Help monitor and maintain trails on Mainside



Quantico Conservation  
Volunteer Program  
[quantico.isportsman.net/CVP.aspx](http://quantico.isportsman.net/CVP.aspx)