

October 3, 2011

WASHINGTON, DC—Rep. Peter DeFazio (D-Ore.) was honored on Oct. 1 for his work in restoring the tidal marsh at the Bandon Marsh National Wildlife Refuge, in Bandon, Ore.

The congressman was presented with a plaque announcing that the overlook at the tidal marsh has been named in his honor. The plaque reads, "Rep. Peter DeFazio Marsh Overlook, in recognition of his support and commitment to the National Wildlife Refuge System. October 1, 2011."

Background

In 1983, Congress established the Bandon Marsh as a national wildlife refuge to protect the largest remaining tidal salt marsh in the Coquille River Estuary. In 1999, DeFazio led the effort to pass the refuge expansion to include the Ni-les'tun Unit. This area includes an intertidal marsh, a freshwater marsh, and riparian areas for migratory birds and salmon, steelhead, and cutthroat trout.

DeFazio also helped secure \$765,000 in land acquisition funds from Land and Water Conservation Fund and \$4.2 million in SAFETEA-LU High Priority project for North Bank Lane improvements, a critical component of the restoration.

Tidal channels were excavated and 11 miles of agricultural ditches were disked and filled. Two miles of river levees and 3 tidegates were removed, allowing tides to flow freely across the historic marsh for the first time in 100 years.

Roy Lowe, project leader from the Oregon Coast National Wildlife Refuge Complex, presented the congressman with a replica of a plaque that will be affixed to the overlook. Others speaking at the dedication were Ed Shepard, state director, Oregon and Washington Bureau of Land Management; Ken Bierly, deputy director of the Oregon Watershed Enhancement Board; Clara

Conner, division engineer, Federal Highway Administration; Tom Dwyer, director of Conservation Programs, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; and Rowan Gould, deputy director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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