

ECCLES WILDLIFE EDUCATION CENTER VOLUNTEER HANDBOOK



THE GEORGE S. & DOLORES DORÉ
ECCLES WILDLIFE
EDUCATION CENTER
—at—
FARMINGTON BAY



Where you make the difference!

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wildlife.utah.gov/discover/eccles-education-center

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WELCOME!

Thank you for joining the Eccles Wildlife Education Center team! We have ambitious goals at the Center and we couldn't hope to accomplish them without the work of dedicated volunteers. Every hour you complete here helps the EWEC provide opportunities for our community to explore, learn about, appreciate and foster stewardship for our natural world. This manual explains your role and responsibilities here at the EWEC and Hasenyager Reserve, and will help you become acquainted with our basic guidelines. It also answers common questions, serves as a reference and provides volunteer job descriptions.

Working as a team, we can ensure that our wetlands are conserved for generations to come.

We look forward to learning as much from you as you learn from us.
Welcome to the EWEC team!



EWEC GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Mission, vision and values

EWEC mission

Our mission is to nurture a life-long interest and respect for Utah's wildlife and its wetland habitats through outreach, education, research and conservation for current and future generations.

EWEC vision

The Eccles Wildlife Education Center's vision is to be a leader in the region for environmental education while providing enriching hands-on visitor experiences and a venue for community activities. We will continue to offer exciting, unique and interactive educational programs for people of all ages, as well as a range of community activities to engage people, businesses and governmental entities with each other on environmental sustainability issues. The EWEC aims to instill in future generations an appreciation for and will to protect nature.

EWEC values

- Hands-on learning based on discovery and science.
- Teamwork among staff, volunteers and community.
- The highest standards of professional and personal integrity.
- Dedication to the Eccles Wildlife Education Center and its mission.
- The highest level of quality in everything we do.
- Outreach to all members of the community.

Volunteer program purpose and objectives

Purpose of the EWEC volunteer program

The EWEC offers opportunities to participate in meaningful activities that further our goals and those of the Utah Division of Wildlife Resources. Through the efforts of our volunteers, the EWEC has been able to expand its services to meet the needs of the wetlands, its wildlife and our surrounding community.

Volunteer program objectives

- To develop and expand the volunteer program through continued volunteer training, workshops, field trips and ongoing recruitment throughout the surrounding area.
- To provide an environment in which volunteers can maximize their skills and interests for the benefit of the EWEC and to the satisfaction of every volunteer.
- To enhance the public image of the EWEC and its mission through friendly, courteous and informed volunteers.
- To further the life-long learning process for EWEC visitors and volunteers, leading towards a culture of conservation.
- To give back to each volunteer through training and skill development.

EWEC volunteer expectations

What volunteers can expect from the EWEC

As a volunteer, you are regarded as a valuable asset to the Eccles Wildlife Education Center and our staff. In return, you can expect from the EWEC:

- Respect as a member of the EWEC team.
- Annual recognition events for volunteers.
- A safe and harassment-free environment.
- Acknowledgement for a job well done and a sincere “thank you” for helping whenever and wherever needed.
- Receive training so you can perform your job confidently and with skill.
- To be listened to when you have a question or concern.
- Support from EWEC staff in resolving issues.
- A positive work environment.

What the EWEC expects from volunteers

As a volunteer you will be joining a team of dedicated individuals who make a tremendous difference to our agency, our community, wildlife and nature. In return, we expect that you will:

- Work the agreed-upon scheduled hours or complete agreed-upon project(s).
- Be prompt and reliable in reporting for scheduled work times.
- Share feedback and ideas with staff and other volunteers.
- Participate in a professional, friendly and enthusiastic manner.
- Wear your nametag and vest during your scheduled volunteer hours.
- Accurately record volunteer hours in the designated manner.
- Keep emergency and contact information up to date.
- To consult with the Volunteer Coordinator before assuming any volunteer responsibilities.
- Comply with rules, policies and procedures as outlined in the Volunteer Manual.

EWEC GENERAL INFORMATION



History of the Eccles Wildlife Education Center

On Sept. 18, 2018, the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Wildlife Education Center completed construction and a dream was realized. Funding from the Utah state legislature, Utah Division of Wildlife Resources and a generous donation from the George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Foundation made this project possible. The Utah Wildlife and Conservation Foundation also played an important fundraising role, and a substantial financial contribution by the ALSAM Foundation led to the addition of the L.S. Skaggs Wetland Discovery Classroom.

The EWEC is a shining example of public and private contributors coming together to provide a valuable resource that will benefit our community for years to come.

While visiting the facility, thousands of schoolchildren and other guests learn about the many species that depend on the wetlands for survival. Visitors can see firsthand how active wildlife management plays a key role in maintaining this remarkable habitat.

After a stop at the EWEC, visitors can set out to explore the one-mile nature trail and enjoy a close-up view of wetland wildlife. Wildlife enthusiasts of all ages and interests — whether they're students, photographers, hunters, birders or families out for a stroll — benefit from a trip to the Center.

The EWEC is a place where science and imagination go hand-in-hand. It's a place that engages communities and sparks creativity. A visit to the EWEC increases visitors' knowledge and appreciation of the Great Salt Lake wetlands, expands their understanding of active wildlife management and provides a place to make lasting memories with friends and family.

General information about the EWEC

Location

The George S. and Dolores Doré Eccles Wildlife Education Center is located west of Farmington, Utah, just off of Glovers Lane at 1157 Waterfowl Way. The EWEC is situated on the 250-acre Robert N. Hasenyager Great Salt Lake Nature Reserve, providing a gateway to the Great Salt Lake wetlands. The EWEC site houses the Conservation Hall, auditorium, wetland classroom and the wetland manager's office building.

Hours of operation

The trails are open from dawn to dusk, 365 days a year.

The EWEC is open during the following hours:

- Tuesday-Saturday: 9:30 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.
- Closed Sunday, Monday and all state and federal holidays.

Hours are subject to change and are updated online: wildlife.utah.gov/eec-visit

Telephone number

801-451-5536

EWEC website

wildlife.utah.gov/discover/eccles-education-center

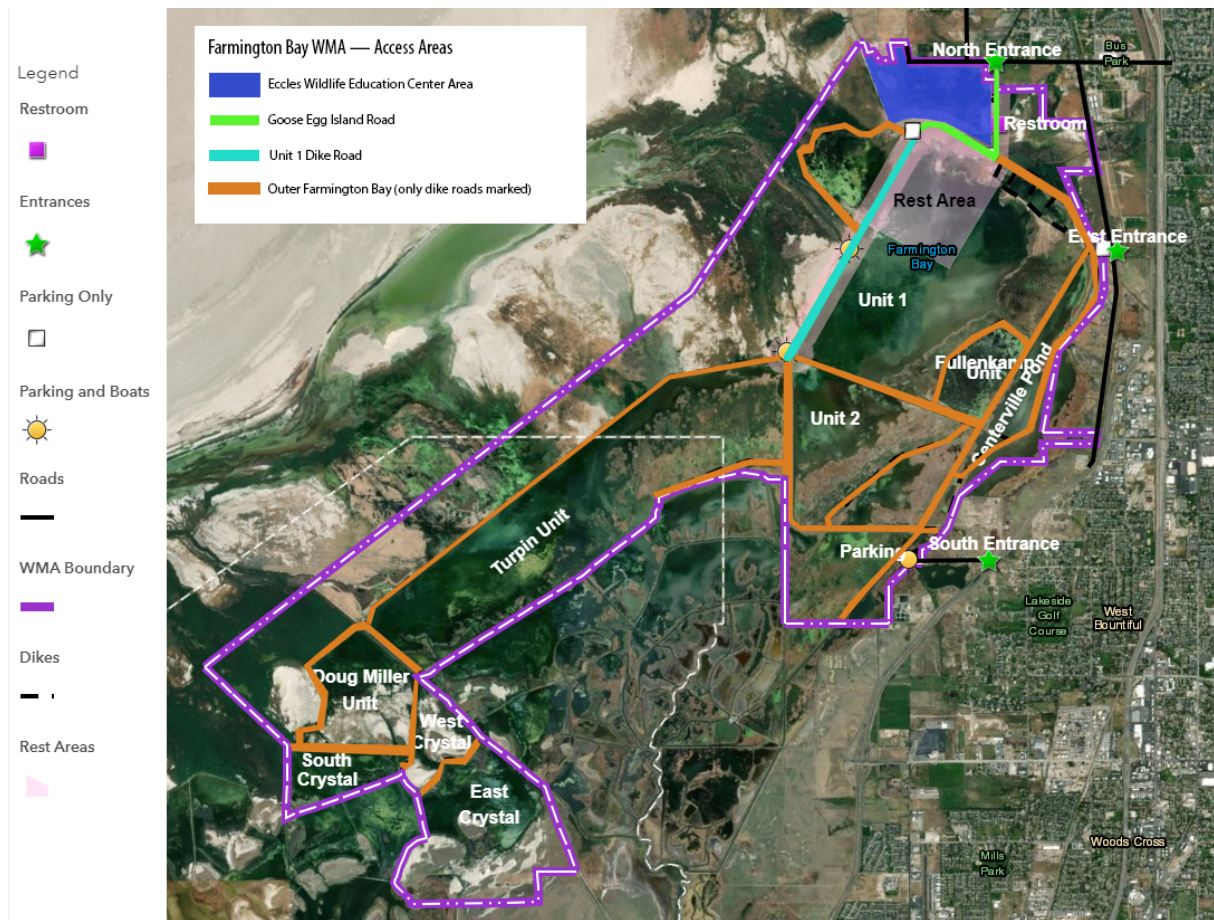
Alternatively:

1. Enter Utah Division of Wildlife Resources into the search engine or *website*: wildlife.utah.gov.
2. Hover over the "Discover" tab option at the top of the page.
3. Select the Eccles Education Center option.
4. The Eccles Wildlife Education Center page will display.

Facebook page

George S. and Dolores Dore Eccles Wildlife Education Center

FARMINGTON BAY WATERFOWL MANAGEMENT AREA



History of Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area

The Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area is located along the east shore of the Great Salt Lake. Construction began in 1935, and the original 3,800 acres has now increased to more than 18,000 acres. In the 1980s, the Great Salt Lake water level rose and flooded the entire management area. This unprecedented high water displaced wildlife and damaged dikes, water control structures and wetland vegetation. A massive reconstruction effort has been completed since the lake receded.

The FBWMA is an accessible birding, hiking and seasonal hunting area along the eastern shore of Great Salt Lake. It is one of eight Waterfowl Management Areas located on and around the lake.

General information about the FBWMA

Habitat

Farmington Bay hosts an array of wetland habitats including fresh water ponds, marshes, uplands, mud flats and open salt water. Freshwater and brackish marshes support vegetation such as cattail, hardstem and alkali bulrush, salt grass and sago pondweed; all of which are important as food sources and protective cover for wildlife. Saline mudflats support a range of salt-tolerant plants (known as halophytes) which produce seeds that are consumed by migrating waterfowl and other species. The open salt water habitat is too salty for fish, but it's teeming with two invertebrates: brine shrimp and brine flies. Some waterfowl species consume large quantities of these invertebrates during migration.

Access to the FBWMA

East entrance: Accessed at 1250 West Glover Lane; travel south 1.5 miles.

South entrance: Accessed by taking 500 South in Bountiful west over Legacy Parkway. This road turns into a frontage road that goes north. Travel about 2 miles north and turn left (the road is between the Bountiful pond and landfill). Travel west on the dirt road about 0.5 miles to the south parking lot.

Seasonal access to Waterfowl Management Areas

- The road from the main gate to Goose Egg Island is open year-round to vehicle access.
- The road from the Goose Egg Island gate to the 4-way parking lot (area where the roads continue south, east and west) is open year-round to foot and bicycle traffic; vehicle access is only allowed on this road from the Thursday before the youth waterfowl hunt to Feb. 28.
- There is no access beyond all other closed gates from March 1 to Aug. 1 in order to reduce disturbance to nesting waterfowl.
- Bicycle and foot traffic is allowed on all dikes from Aug. 1 to Feb. 28.

Managed by the DWR, the function of these WMAs is to maximize habitat values for a range of waterfowl, shorebirds, songbirds and raptors during migration and nesting seasons.

Hasenyager Preserve Nature Trail

Nature trail



The late Robert Hasenyager had a vision to create a gathering place for the community to come together and learn about all that is wild in our wetlands, and the Hasenyager Preserve is named in honor of him. He had a lifelong career with the DWR and shared his passion for the natural world with all who came into contact with him.

The trail is 1.14 miles long and runs throughout the wetlands. There are two observation platforms that allow the opportunity to view a variety of waterfowl and songbirds. A boardwalk takes you over the wetland ponds, and possibly you will spy a muskrat adding vegetation to his den.

Benches are available throughout the trail and allow the opportunity to relax and take in the song of the common yellowthroat staking out its marshland territory in the spring.

A foot bridge crosses Farmington Creek and more opportunities to catch a glimpse of the belted kingfisher as it snags lunch from the creek.

Great Blue Heron Rookery



Sometimes an established heron rookery – an area where a colony of breeding birds congregates and raises young – is destroyed due to severe weather conditions or high winds. The FBWMA artificial rookery was built through a community effort to replace a destroyed rookery and encourage herons to return to their nesting habitat.

Rocky Mountain Power and the DWR joined forces to erect eight nesting platforms. Although birds of all sizes and types can collide with power transmission lines, birds that build big nests up high – like herons, egrets and raptors – are at greater risk for collision and are more likely to roost on distribution and transmission structures. RMP offered available crews, equipment and helped complete the project.

Herons return to the rookery in early February. Male herons will spar with other males to establish a hierarchy within the rookery. Herons are colonial nesters, so after the hierarchy is established, the herons tolerate one another for the remainder of the nesting season. A male heron will begin constructing the nests with large sticks and is later joined by the female heron. The two will breed and raise the young together. Herons lay 2-7 eggs and incubate for a period of 25-30 days. The heron families will be with us until the end of May before the young fledge.

WHAT WE DO

What we do at the Eccles Wildlife Education Center

We provide hands-on opportunities for students, adults and families to learn about wildlife and the natural environment.

Volunteering at the EWEC

Purpose of volunteer program

The purpose of the EWEC volunteer program is to allow community members to directly connect with and positively impact their environment. We welcome the individuality and diversity that volunteers offer, and value the wealth of ideas they foster.

Your role as a volunteer

This handbook will increase your awareness and knowledge of EWEC's volunteer program. Please be sure you understand the goals and objectives, activities, emergency procedures and philosophy, and can articulate them to the public as appropriate.

Expectations of our volunteers

- **Enjoy yourself!** By showing your enthusiasm about the EWEC and its mission, you will have gone a long way toward fulfilling our expectation of you.
- **Be an ambassador!** Any time you are acting as a EWEC volunteer, you are representing the Center and our work. Your role as an ambassador is key to connecting us with the community.
- **Maintain a good attitude!** Your attitude and performance are direct reflections on the quality of our Center and the work we do. Courtesy and helpfulness to the public and respect for fellow EWEC volunteers and staff are of the utmost importance.

We're excited to have you come work with us!

The EWEC has multiple volunteer opportunities for you. Volunteers at the EWEC help with many of the center's day-to-day activities. You can choose to participate in a variety of volunteer positions. Whatever your level of knowledge or capability, you'll surely find a niche here. Training for each position will be provided, as needed. Each volunteer job has its own time commitment level and areas of expertise. Volunteers who choose to have ongoing commitments with the EWEC will be given specialized training opportunities.

For more information on volunteering at the EWEC, please contact Billy Fenimore at bfenimore@utah.gov

VOLUNTEER ORIENTATION, TRAINING & BENEFITS

Volunteer orientation

Each new volunteer participates in an orientation meeting with EWEC staff. Volunteers are encouraged to take advantage of the EWEC's varied opportunities for personal growth, social experiences and field trips.

Volunteer training

You will receive the appropriate training for each volunteer position offered at the EWEC. You are also highly encouraged to initiate training requests as you feel the need and ask questions if you are not comfortable with any aspect of a project.

Scheduling volunteer duties

The EWEC staff handles scheduling for volunteer hours.

Volunteer benefits

- Invitation to volunteer recognition events.
- Invitation to activities just for volunteers.
- Rewards for number of hours of service completed.
- Gain new skills and work with a great team of staff and volunteers.
- If applicable, Master Naturalist training courses paid for by the DWR.
- Make a difference and have a positive impact on the community!

Awards and appreciation

We feel strongly that the hard work and dedication of our volunteers should be recognized, appreciated and celebrated. We regularly nominate our volunteers for service recognition awards both at the EWEC and with the following organizations:

- AARP
- RSVP Davis County
- Utah Division of Wildlife Resources
- State of Utah

Nature program volunteer training example

Objective

Offer opportunities for volunteers to become comfortable and competent in the delivery of Nature Trail Walks and/or Nature Discovery Programs through a six-hour-long Saturday training.

Outcome Indicators

- Volunteers feel comfortable delivering program content accurately to a variety of age groups.
- Volunteers understand and make an effort to incorporate the fundamental concepts of environmental interpretation into their delivery of content.

- Volunteers not only understand the basic content covered in the training, but are equipped to seek out further self-learning in order to improve the programs they lead.

Timeframe

We will begin offering volunteer nature program training once weekly programs receive consistent visitation.

Sample draft agenda

9:00 - 10:30	The Environmental Interpreter <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basics of environmental interpretation • Instructional methodologies • Educating vs. advocating • Adapting to different audiences
10:30 - 11:30	How to Become a Well-Rounded Naturalist <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Basic birding skills • Tips for nature study • Resources for nature study
11:30 - 12:30	Sack Lunch
12:30 - 3:00	Content Training <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • (Separate training days for Nature Trail Walk and Nature Discovery Program) • If training for walk, go over content • If training for program, go over lesson options

If a volunteer has already attended training like this before, they can skip the morning section. For example, if they've been trained to lead Nature Trail Walks previously but want to take training for Nature Discovery Programs, they would only need to attend the afternoon section, as some of their training would be repeated.

For the Nature Discovery Program training, we will offer training for two to three different lessons that the volunteer may choose to lead on any given day.

EWEC VOLUNTEER PROCEDURES AND POLICIES

Commitment to diversity

EWEC values diversity, and recognizes that staff members, constituents, visitors, donors and volunteers from diverse backgrounds and cultures bring new perspectives to our vision, keep our mission relevant and important, and allow the DWR to make a greater difference across the state.

Communication with visitors and media

Interacting with visitors

- Visitors have many questions about the EWEC, its history and function, as well as questions about the natural world. Volunteers should be certain the answer given is correct. The best answer may be, “I don’t know, let me see if (staff person/another experienced volunteer) is available.”
- It is most important to remember that everyone should choose his/her words carefully during any type of interaction with the public.
- Avoid getting involved in discussions regarding controversial subjects with visitors.
- Be polite and encourage visitors to make their comments to staff members if you cannot field their questions or comments accurately.

Media communications policy

- If a representative from the media shows up without an appointment, volunteers should greet the person and find out what information they are seeking in order to connect them with an appropriate EWEC staff member.
- Refer all media persons – on the telephone or in person – to a staff member.
- **Do not speak with the media regarding emergency or crisis situations: In these circumstances all contact with the media should immediately be reported to the site coordinator.**

Volunteer policies

Volunteer role communication

- Check in and out for your shift at the volunteer headquarters.
- Update the volunteer coordinator if you have a change of address or phone number.

Dress code

- Volunteers should dress neatly and appropriately for their assigned job.
- Please keep in mind that the nature of your job will determine what you wear.
- A volunteer vest and name tag will be provided to you and should be worn whenever you are on duty.

Background check policy

The EWEC requires criminal background checks of all long-term volunteers. These measures have been instituted in an attempt to ensure the safety of participants, guests, employees and volunteers. Only legal infractions which are a direct risk to the EWEC or its visitors will be considered when determining a volunteer's eligibility. All volunteers will need to pass a background check before their first shift.

Illegal substances policy

The EWEC maintains a work environment free of alcohol use and illegal or improper drug use. Violation of this policy may result in a volunteer's immediate dismissal.

Injury and liability policy

- In the case of a medical emergency, call 911 and then contact the closest staff member.
- If an injury occurs, report the injury to a supervisor or staff person immediately.
- Please remember that first aid kits are located in the Conservation Hall on the north wall behind the volunteer divider wall.
- After any incident or injury – no matter how slight – that involves volunteers, staff or visitors, a EWEC staff member must be notified.

Food and drinking water

- Volunteers are welcome to pack their lunch and eat at the education center. A refrigerator and microwave are available for use.
- A water fountain is available outside of the Conservation Hall near the restrooms.

Recording volunteer hours

- Volunteers are responsible for writing down and recording their own hours. The volunteer timesheets are available at the volunteer headquarters desk.
- Volunteers should be conscientious about keeping their hours up to date. It is important to have an accurate record of your hours worked.
- Count work done on behalf of the EWEC, as well as participation in volunteer workshops, training and field trips.
- If you have questions about counting hours, please ask the Volunteer Coordinator.

Recruitment policy

Applicants will be considered for service based on their qualifications and availability without regard to race, color, national origin, creed, religion, sex, marital status, pregnancy, sexual orientation, gender identity or physical abilities. In order to be considered for a volunteer position, you must complete and sign a volunteer application which will be retained in your personnel records.

Volunteer complaint procedure

- If a volunteer has a grievance, it is important to address the concern as soon as possible. Discuss the grievance with the Volunteer Coordinator to resolve the complaint.

- In situations where differences arise between volunteers or between volunteers and staff, it is advised to first resolve these differences amongst the parties involved. If a third party is needed, the Center Coordinator should be informed.
- Under no circumstances shall grievances be made public.
- If the grievance is in regard to the Center Coordinator, an appeal may be made to Marni Lee at the DWR Salt Lake Office: 801-538-4700.

Emergencies, health and safety

Safety and security policy

- If an injured person requires immediate medical care, the first priority is to make sure that the person receives that care by calling 911 and then calling EWEC staff.
- Bring a two-way radio or cell phone on all outdoor programs and/or activities.

First aid kit

The first aid kit is in the Conservation Hall on the north wall behind the volunteer divider wall.

Fire extinguishers

- Fire extinguishers are located in all EWEC buildings, in the garage and in the pole barn.
- Location and use of fire extinguishers is covered during orientation and training.
- The location of all fire extinguishers is shown on a poster hanging above the refrigerator in the Conservation Hall.

Fire and general evacuation

- Fire at the EWEC could occur in a building or as a wildfire.
- Call 911 immediately.
- Alert staff about the fire.
- Staff will inform visitors to evacuate.
- Staff, volunteers and visitors should exit the buildings and gather at the northeast corner of the parking lot.
- Fire extinguishers are available at designated locations.

Weather safety

- Always be on the alert for hazardous weather conditions when conducting outdoor activities or programs.
- Be aware of current and predicted weather conditions and adjust your activities accordingly. Make sure program participants are properly attired for inclement weather.
- Look for and advise as necessary when a participant is wearing improper clothing for the weather conditions.
- Please report any hazardous or unsafe conditions immediately to the EWEC staff. Call 911 for any fire, police or medical emergencies.

Sick or bold wildlife

Notify EWEC staff and they will notify a DWR Conservation Officer.

Access and use of the EWEC and Hasenyager property**Restrooms and drinking fountain**

There are public restroom facilities and a drinking fountain accessible outside the Conservation Hall.

Lost and found

Turn in any items found on EWEC property at the front volunteer desk in the Conservation Hall.

Accessibility

EWEC staff and volunteers work hard to preserve and protect the land for all visitors, animals, plants and insects that call the EWEC nature preserve home.

Fishing, hunting and dogs

The following rules apply to all EWEC staff, volunteers and visitors:

- Fishing and hunting is prohibited on the EWEC and Hasenyager property.
- Dogs must be leashed at all times on the EWEC and Hasenyager property.

Cleaning, disinfecting and sanitizing the facility

Here are the basics you need to know about cleaning, sanitizing and disinfecting, and why it's necessary for keeping a healthy facility.

Know the difference

- Cleaning removes germs, dirt, and other impurities from surfaces, but doesn't necessarily kill them.
- Sanitizing lowers the number of germs on surfaces or objects—either by killing them or removing them—to a safe level, according to public health standards or requirements.
- Disinfecting kills germs on surfaces or objects.

When to clean and when to disinfect

When no people with confirmed or suspected Covid-19 are known to have been in a space, cleaning once a day is usually enough to sufficiently remove viruses that may be on surfaces and help maintain a healthy facility. If there has been a sick person or someone who tested positive for Covid-19 in the EWEC facility within the last 24 hours, you should clean **and** disinfect the space.

Routine cleaning

- Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants.
- High-touch surfaces should be cleaned at least once a day. **Examples of highly-touched areas:** tables, door handles, light switches, countertops, desks, phones, keyboards, toilets, faucets, sinks, chair arms, trash receptacles, hand dryers, soap and sanitizer dispensers, binoculars, spotting scopes, craft tools, electronics and visitor sign-in keypads.
- Spray the surface with a cleaning solution. Wipe with a cleaning rag and or a scrubbing pad to remove debris. Use a cleaner such as Buckeye Terminator One-Step Disinfectant.
- **If a surface is not visibly dirty, you can clean it with Buckeye Terminator One-Step Disinfectant or Buckeye Sanicare Tbx using paper towels; a water rinse is not required.**

Disinfecting

- Always follow label directions on cleaning products and disinfectants.
- Wear disposable gloves to disinfect.
- Wipe down the surface of highly touched areas of the EWEC using paper towels.
- Use enough Purell Professional Disinfectant, Lysol Disinfecting Wipes or Buckeye Sanicare Tbx for a treated surface to be visibly wet.
- Let the surface air dry.

Use products safely

- Pay close attention to hazard warnings and directions on product labels.

- Cleaning products and disinfectants often call for the use of gloves or eye protection. For example, gloves should always be worn to protect your hands when working with bleach solutions.
- **Do not mix cleaners and disinfectants unless the labels indicate it is safe to do so.** Combining certain products (such as chlorine bleach and ammonia cleaners) can result in serious injury or death.

Can't find a cleaner? Make your own.

- Bleach is a great disinfectant and can be easily and safely mixed.
 - To make a bleach solution, mix using cool water, not hot water.
 - Always add the bleach to the water.
 - Do not mix liquid bleach with other cleaning products.
 - Use personal protective equipment when preparing bleach solution: disposable gloves, eye protection and clothing to cover exposed skin.
- Sanitizing = 1 teaspoon bleach to 1 gallon water
- Disinfecting = 2 tablespoons bleach to 1 gallon water

Soft surfaces

Soft surfaces include carpeted floors, rugs, couches and drapes.

- Clean the surface with a cleaner appropriate for use on these surfaces such as Buckeye Terminator One-Step Disinfectant or Buckeye Sanicare Tbx.
- Vacuum floors and rugs.

Laundry

- Table linens after an event are sent out to be dry cleaned.
- Faye's Laundering Service in Layton, set up with SLO Accounting.

MEET THE EWEC CREW!



Left to right: Marni Lee, Nicaela Haig and Billy Fenimore

Nicaela Haig

EWEC Programs Specialist Nicaela Haig has been coordinating education programs and teacher professional development at the Center since it opened in 2018. Prior to joining the EWEC team, she was involved in several research projects and education programs both in Utah and other areas of the country. Nicaela has studied the effects of wildfire on lake invertebrates in Minnesota, placed GPS trackers on threatened box turtles in Iowa, helped build a junior naturalist program on the coast of Massachusetts, supervised programs that connected students with mountain habitats close to home and more. Although her academic background is in biology, she has been an educator in Utah for nearly a decade. Nicaela is most interested in using education to directly benefit wildlife management efforts. She also enjoys programs that build appreciation for lesser-known or underappreciated wildlife, especially invertebrates.

Billy Fenimore

EWEC Director Billy Fenimore oversees environmental education programming, community engagement activities and volunteer coordination for the Center. He has been with the DWR since 2019 and has worked at the EWEC since its inception. Billy is also a governor-appointed member of the DWR Wildlife Board Nominating Committee. An accomplished birder by ear as well as by sight, he is a professional birdwatching and naturalist guide specializing in the birds and habitat of the Intermountain West. For over 20 years, Billy's passion for birding and bird conservation has motivated adventures throughout the lower 48 states, as well as Puerto Rico and the Dominican Republic. In addition to his full-time position with the EWEC, Billy has been involved with countless bird survey and conservation projects with the DWR, owns the Wild About Birds Nature Center and is a Wasatch Audubon Committee Board Member.

Marni Lee

Marni Lee has been with the DWR for over 17 years. She had the amazing experience of working with architects, builders and fundraisers to make the visions of past and current employees, volunteers and friends come alive with the installation of the buildings and grounds at the EWEC. Currently, Marni splits her time coordinating Wildlife Recreation at Hardware Ranch WMA and the EWEC. She has a passion for education and interpretation and has spent much of her career in the field with youth and adults inspiring the next generation of naturalists – and cleaning bathrooms.

From all of us: Welcome volunteers to the Utah Division of Wildlife and the EWEC team. We look forward to working with you!

THANK YOU FOR BECOMING PART OF THE EWEC TEAM!

We couldn't do it without you. Volunteers are the strength of the Eccles Wildlife Education Center.

Please contact Billy Fenimore, EWEC Coordinator, if you have any questions about the information presented in this handbook.

VOLUNTEER SERVICE POSITION: **Welcome Host**

The Welcome Host greets guests as they enter the Nature Center building and helps them decide what exciting things to see and do during their visit. Also, welcome hosts support the mission of nurturing a life-long interest and respect for all things wild in current and future generations through outreach, education, research and conservation. This position represents the EWEC to the visiting public.

Key responsibilities

- Answers phones and direct calls.
- Greets guests and orients them to the property.
- Answers questions.
- Assists in cleaning and keeping the office organized.
- Performs light housekeeping in the EWEC buildings.
- This position involves the typical physical requirements of an office setting.
- Other duties as assigned.

Direct supervisor

Billy Fenimore, EWEC Coordinator

Length of appointment

The Welcome Host is assigned several hours a week to train with the EWEC staff for a period of one month. After one month, they may start working independently in the position.

Time commitment

Minimum of one day per week; shifts and hours are flexible.

Qualifications

- Must be over the age of 18.
- Must pass a background check.
- Have a pleasant manner, and be patient and dependable.

Support

Volunteers undergo an orientation and receive a volunteer handbook. In addition, the EWEC Programs Specialist will be working closely with new volunteers for specific training and questions.

Benefits

- Invitation to volunteer recognition events.
- Invitation to activities just for volunteers.
- Rewards for number of hours of service completed.
- Gain new skills and work with a great team of staff and volunteers.
- Make a difference and have a positive impact on the community!

VOLUNTEER SERVICE POSITION: **Grounds and Maintenance**

Works with our grounds and maintenance team to help keep the EWEC beautiful and to maintain daily operations. This volunteer position works closely with EWEC staff and has the opportunity to learn about grounds and facility maintenance.

Key responsibilities

- Assist and train with EWEC staff on the grounds and maintenance of the Center.
- Perform groundskeeping and building maintenance duties.
- Perform any needed trail maintenance work.
- Safely use tools and equipment and return them when you are finished.
- Perform light housekeeping in the EWEC buildings.
- This position involves the typical physical requirements of an indoor and outdoor maintenance job, such as cleaning, groundskeeping, using tools and equipment, and work in inclement weather.

Direct supervisor

Billy Fenimore, EWEC Coordinator

Length of appointment

A grounds and maintenance volunteer is assigned several hours a week to train with EWEC staff for a period of one month. After one month, they may start working independently in the position.

Time commitment

- Grounds and maintenance volunteers are required to commit one day per week; shifts and hours are flexible.
- Qualifications
- Must be able to safely and effectively operate tools and equipment.
- Must pass a background check if over the age of 18.
- Must be dependable and respectful.

Support

Volunteers undergo an orientation and receive a volunteer handbook.

Benefits

- Invitation to volunteer recognition events.
- Invitation to activities just for volunteers.
- Rewards for number of hours of service completed.
- Gain new skills and work with a great team of staff and volunteers.
- Make a difference and have a positive impact on the community!

VOLUNTEER SERVICE POSITION: **Education Program**

Education program volunteers work with the EWEC Programs Specialist and other naturalists on staff to run environmental education programs for visiting school groups. Also, volunteers support the mission of nurturing a life-long interest and respect for all things wild in current and future generations through outreach, education, research and conservation. If you love working with kids and teaching about the natural world this is the job for you!

Key responsibilities

- Assist EWEC staff and other volunteer naturalists during school field trips, preschool and homeschool programs.
- Help prepare materials for school programs.
- Assist with setup before and cleanup after programs.

Direct supervisor

Billy Fenimore, EWEC Coordinator

Length of appointment

The Education Program volunteer is assigned several hours a week to train with EWEC staff for a period of one month. After one month, they may start working independently in the position.

Time commitment

Education program volunteers are required to commit one day per week; shifts and hours are flexible.

Qualifications

- Must be over the age of 18.
- Must pass a background check.
- Must be dependable.
- Must be comfortable and physically able to work inside and outdoors with groups of 30 or more students of all ages.
- Must be willing to learn and have fun!

Support

Volunteers undergo an orientation and receive a volunteer handbook. In addition, education program volunteers work closely with the EWEC Programs Specialist and other naturalists on staff for specific training and answering frequently asked questions.

Benefits

- Invitation to volunteer recognition events.
- Invitation to activities just for volunteers.
- Rewards for number of hours of service completed.
- Gain new skills and work with a great team of staff and volunteers.
- Make a difference and have a positive impact on the community!

VOLUNTEER SERVICE POSITION: **Trail Maintenance**

Walk the nature trail and report any significant maintenance needs to EWEC staff. Help us keep the nature trail in good condition by pulling weeds, filling holes and performing other light maintenance duties. This position requires standing and walking in both indoor and outdoor settings, in all weather conditions and possibly for extended periods of time on uneven terrain. This position may also involve lifting, bending, twisting, stooping and other physical activities associated with working in the outdoors.

Key responsibilities

- Assist and train with the Eccles Staff on the trail maintenance of the center's pathways.
- Perform grounds keeping duties.
- Perform any trail maintenance work.
- Safely use tools and equipment and return them when you are finished.

Direct supervisor

Billy Fenimore, EWEC Coordinator

Length of appointment

The Trail Maintenance Volunteer is assigned several hours a week to train with EWEC staff for a period of one month. After one month, they may start working independently in the position.

Time commitment

Trail maintenance volunteers are required to commit one day per month; shifts and hours are flexible.

Qualifications

- Must be over the age of 18.
- Must pass a background check.
- Must be dependable.
- Must be willing to learn and have fun!

Support

Volunteers undergo an orientation and receive a volunteer handbook. In addition, trail maintenance volunteers work closely with the EWEC Programs Specialist for specific training and questions.

Benefits

- Invitation to volunteer recognition events.
- Invitation to activities just for volunteers.
- Rewards for number of hours of service completed.
- Gain new skills and work with a great team of staff and volunteers.
- Make a difference and have a positive impact on the community!

VOLUNTEERS AT EWEC EVENTS

Planning and volunteer support

Event volunteers work under the direction of the EWEC Coordinator. Typically, the site coordinator will provide task-specific training.

- All volunteers will be provided with a description of the event.
- Volunteer responsibilities will be outlined.
- Event volunteers assist on the event day for setup, visitor assistance, registration/check-in or cleanup. Volunteers may also choose to be involved in event planning.
- **Time commitment:** Event day volunteers will typically be asked to commit to a minimum number of hours. Those volunteers who would like to commit for more or fewer hours the day of the event should speak to the event coordinator well in advance so that planning/staffing considerations can be made before the day of the event.
- Depending on the type of event, volunteers may be able to attend the event before or after their shift.
- Volunteers will be provided water and light snacks during the event in a private area.
- EWEC staff will provide all materials necessary to carry out the event and to ensure our volunteers are successful in carrying out their volunteer responsibilities.
- Volunteers will be given 2-way radios. The radios will allow for communication between the EWEC staff and EWEC volunteers during an event.
- Volunteers should take rest breaks. When you need a break, use the radios to communicate this need to the EWEC staff.
- **Event follow up:** Timely thank you notes will be sent out to thank our presenters and guests to ensure that engagement with the EWEC continues. Volunteers are essential in assisting with these notes.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

EWEC front desk

If you don't know the answer to a question, don't feel shy asking an EWEC staff member to help. Occasionally, visitors will come to the desk with specialized biology questions or advanced animal identification questions. These are best referred to a staff member right away.

The staff have different knowledge sets, but can usually answer any question:

- Billy is a specialist. He can identify birds by appearance and call/song and provide a variety of advanced information on bird life. Since most advanced visitor questions tend to be about birds, he's a good first person to ask.
- Nicaela is a generalist. She can identify and provide general information on most local mammals, snakes, frogs, turtles, salamanders, spiders, insects, fish and birds.

FAQs listed from most- to least-frequently asked

Q: Where are the trails located?

A: One straight-in and straight-out trail is located right outside the north doors (back doors) of the Conservation Hall. However, our main nature trail is not connected to the buildings. Walk back up to the parking lot from the entrance ramp and walk down the driveway. You'll see two boulders and a sign leading to a gravel nature trail. This is the main entrance to the trail loop.

Q: How do I drive out to Farmington Bay WMA or Goose Egg Island?

A: Drive out of our driveway and turn right on Glover's Lane. Then take your first right on 1325 West. Follow this road all the way to Goose Egg Island. This is a dirt road, but is usually in good condition for most vehicles to use.

Q: How long is the nature trail loop?

A: 1.14 miles.

Q: Is there anything else to see in the other building(s)?

A: The closest building is an auditorium and has large canvas prints of bird photographs that might be nice to see. (The auditorium is closed on a typical day; if you're not busy, you can bring the group in to see it if they want.) The classroom is used for scheduled nature programs and school field trips.

Q: Where are the restrooms?

A: Leave the main entrance of the Conservation Hall (the south doors), turn left and then turn left again. The restrooms are located by the drinking fountain.

Q: Which birds are nesting on those poles out there?

A: That's a great blue heron breeding colony (also known as a rookery). All of the birds that use those nests are great blue herons. The only exception is a barn owl nest box, located at the bottom of the second pole from the right.

Q: Are dogs allowed on the nature trail?

A: Dogs are not allowed at Farmington Bay, including the nature trails, from March 1 to Sept. 15. Volunteers do not need to enforce this if you see a dog on site; please let a staff member know. Outside of nesting season, leashed dogs are allowed anywhere that people are allowed.

Q: Are the trails handicap accessible and/or stroller-friendly?

A: The nature trail loop is flat and made of gravel or boardwalk, making it accessible for wheelchairs and strollers. The approaches to the bridges and boardwalks can be difficult and chairs may need a push. The Buffalo Ranch trail which comes out of the Conservation Hall is a mowed grass and dirt path, so it might be more rugged for wheelchairs and strollers. Both trails are flat.

Q: When are bald eagles present at the WMA?

A: Bald eagles are at Farmington Bay during the winter. Bald eagle viewing usually peaks in January or February.

Q: When is the gate past Goose Egg Island closed for nesting season?

A: March 1 to Sept. 15.

Q: Can we walk off trail at Farmington Bay WMA?

A: You cannot walk off trail from March 1 to Sept. 15 (during nesting season). During other times of the year, you are free to go anywhere on the WMA except areas posted as "No Trespassing" or "Waterfowl Rest Area."

Q: Are the telescopes in front of the classroom free or coin-operated?

A: The telescopes are free to use.

Q: When are there baby great blue herons in the rookery?

A: The great blue herons usually lay their eggs in March and incubate those eggs for about a month. Start looking for chicks in April or May. Once nestlings are about two months old, they will fledge (leave) the nest, so they are usually gone by June or July.

FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area

These are common questions about the Farmington Bay Waterfowl Management Area, which is the large state property that the EWEC is located within. All rules related to FBWMA also apply to the EWEC and its nature trails.

Farmington Bay general information

Q: Who owns FBWMA?

A: The people of Utah. The Utah Division of Wildlife Resources – a state government agency – is responsible for managing the WMA for wildlife (primarily waterfowl in this case), which benefits all Utahns. Basically, FBWMA is state-managed public land.

Q: How large is FBWMA?

A: About 22,000 acres. A portion of that land is part of the bed of the Great Salt Lake, so not all of those acres are wetlands.

Q: Which rivers flow into FBWMA?

A: The Jordan River is responsible for basically all of the water you see south of Goose Egg Island. All of the water north of Goose Egg Island is from Farmington Creek, which drains out of Farmington Canyon. A few smaller waterbodies also flow into FBWMA, but they account for only a tiny percentage of the total flow.

Q: Is the water we see by EWEC fresh or salty? Or a mix?

A: All of the water you can see from the Center or the nature trail is freshwater. You can't see Great Salt Lake from the EWEC – the terrain is too flat.

Q: Is legal hunting allowed?

A: Yes. Money from the sale of hunting licenses and permits is used to improve and maintain wildlife habitat. The most commonly hunted animals at FBWMA are ducks, geese and pheasants. There is also a swan hunt, but only a limited number of swan-hunting permits are issued each year. Hunters are only allowed to harvest a certain number of birds, and only certain types of birds during a specified range of dates. For example, shooting a pelican would be considered poaching (illegal hunting).

See the Utah DWR Waterfowl Guidebook (wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks/2021-22_waterfowl.pdf) and Upland Game and Turkey Guidebook (wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks/2021-22_upland_turkey.pdf) for more information on how the DWR regulates hunting.

Q: How popular is FBWMA?

A: Farmington Bay WMA is the most popular waterfowl hunting destination in Utah and is one of the top hotspots for birding and wildlife photography as well.

Q: Who uses FBWMA?

A: FBWMA receives over 100,000 visitors a year! Approximately 80% of FBWMA's users are non-hunters and 20% are hunters. This means that only 20% of FBWMA's users contribute financially to improving and maintaining the wetland. Wildlife photographers who sell photos taken at FBWMA profit from the land but do not contribute financially to it unless they also own a hunting or combination license.

Q: In general, how do biologists manage the habitat at Farmington Bay?

A: The basic gist of habitat management here is that water exiting the Jordan River is held back and then deliberately spread out across several water "units" separated by human-built dikes, canals and water control structures. These units are kept at different water depths to promote the growth of different types of wetland plants. This leads to diverse habitats, which attracts different animals and helps those animals fulfill their basic habitat needs. Water flowing through FBWMA eventually reaches Great Salt Lake after passing through these wetland units.

Q: What is the biggest threat to FBWMA?

A: The top concern for habitat managers is invasive plants, especially phragmites (pronounced "frag-MITE-eez"), which is also known as common reed. Fighting the spread of phragmites – often shortened to "phrag" – takes up a huge portion of biologists' time.

Q: Does FBWMA control predators?

A: The WMA's predator control program focuses on heavy-duty bird predators: red foxes and feral cats. Since coyotes will often attack foxes they encounter, they are generally left alone.

Q: Why don't we just leave Farmington Bay alone and "let nature take its course?" Why do we need biologists around to manage it?

A: The beautiful wetlands you see in Farmington are the direct result of constant, year-round hard work from DWR biologists. This happened because conservationists –

hunters and non-hunters – in the 1930’s noticed that the wetlands around Great Salt Lake were disappearing and degrading.

Constant human-directed maintenance is absolutely necessary to control water flow through the WMA, fight off invasive species and make sure that visitors are using the area in legal ways. Don’t forget: Everything we do at the EWEC supports the efforts of the FBWMA habitat managers, directly or indirectly!

Q: Are there fish at FBWMA?

A: Our freshwater units have a variety of warmwater fish species including invasive common carp, introduced western mosquitofish and sportfish such as bluegill, bass and green sunfish. Since trout are fish that prefer cold water, FBWMA isn’t a suitable habitat for them. Fishing is not allowed anywhere on FBWMA at any time of the year (a more detailed answer about why fishing is not allowed is below).

Q: Is Farmington Bay WMA part of the Great Salt Lake ecosystem?

A: The WMA is located along what are called the “wetland margins” of the Great Salt Lake: where fresh waters from the mountains meet the lake. Our wetland habitats lead into what is commonly thought of as the Great Salt Lake ecosystem, but our freshwater units don’t have the brine shrimp or brine flies that form the core of the Great Salt Lake food chain.

Accessing and using FBWMA

Q: Why is there a “nesting season” and when is it?

A: Every year from March 1 to Sept. 15, Farmington Bay WMA closes off most of its property to allow nesting birds to raise their young with minimal disturbance from people (and their dogs). Some types of birds that nest at FBWMA will abandon their nest and waste energy if disturbed/stressed, so this closure is important to maintaining healthy wildlife populations.

Some small groups have special permission to go into FBWMA during nesting season and conduct scientific research, construction, cattle grazing for phragmites or mosquito abatement. They must possess a Special Use Permit from the DWR to do so.

Q: When does the gate to the Unit 1 dike open in September?

A: Every year, the gate that allows cars access to drive along the Unit 1 dike to the four-way intersection reopens on the Thursday before the Youth Waterfowl Hunt. Check the most current Utah DWR Waterfowl Guidebook (wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks/2021-22_waterfowl.pdf) for the correct date.

Q: During nesting season (March 1 - Sept. 15), where can I legally access FBWMA?

A: You can access the EWEC and its nature trails. You can walk or drive down the dirt road between the north entrance and Goose Egg Island. You can walk or bicycle down the Unit 1 dike road (the straight dirt road located between Goose Egg Island and the four-way intersection). All other areas are closed to all access, and you can't go off trail or off road. The east and south entrances to the WMA are also closed. No dogs are allowed anywhere in the FBWMA during the nesting season.

The following access-related questions assume that the visitor is asking about access that is not during the nesting season.

Q: Where can I hunt?

A: Users can hunt anywhere at FBWMA unless the area they're entering doesn't allow hunting/trespassing. Prohibited areas may be posted as No Hunting, No Trespassing, Waterfowl Rest Area or Safety Zone. Also, in order to hunt you need to be at least 600 feet away from all buildings, parking lots and vehicle-accessible roads. Users can consult the Utah DWR Waterfowl Guidebook (wildlife.utah.gov/guidebooks/2021-22_waterfowl.pdf) for specific regulations or they can visit wildlife.utah.gov for a detailed hunt map.

Q: Can I walk off trail?

A: Yes, as long as the area is not posted as No Trespassing or Waterfowl Rest Area. You can enter areas posted as Safety Zone or No Hunting as long as you don't hunt there.

Q: Can I bring my dog? Does it need to be on a leash?

A: Dogs are allowed at FBWMA. They are required to be on a leash while on the EWEC property at all times.

Q: What is the speed limit on the roads at FBWMA?

A: The road to Goose Egg Island and the Unit 1 dike road both have a 25 mph speed limit.

Q: Is camping allowed?

A: Camping is allowed on the far ends of the parking lots at FBWMA during waterfowl hunting season. It is free, but there is a 14-day limit. Camping is technically allowed in the EWEC parking lot as well, but only because there isn't an explicit rule saying that you can't. Camping at EWEC is highly discouraged. You can tell the visitor that this is because the entrance gate closes at 4:30 p.m. and over the weekends.

Q: Is kayaking/canoeing allowed?

A: You can kayak or canoe anywhere that is not posted as a No Trespassing or Waterfowl Rest Area. You also can't go near the great blue heron rookery at the EWEC. Harassing protected wildlife is illegal and might cause the herons to abandon the nesting site.

Q: Is fishing allowed?

A: Fishing is not allowed anywhere on FBWMA at any time of the year. Litter from fishing tackle (such as excess line wrapped around a tree) can lead to birds becoming entangled or suffocating. Also, many types of fishing sinkers are made of lead, which is toxic to birds. Waterfowl have to swallow hard objects to grind up their food in their gizzards, and they can't tell the difference between a normal pebble and a lead pellet.

Q: Is recreational shooting (e.g. target shooting, trap shooting) allowed?

A: No.

Q: Are OHV's allowed?

A: Off-highway vehicles are only allowed on the posted OHV trail near Goose Egg Island.

Q: Where can I report someone breaking the access rules at FBWMA or breaking the law in general?

A: Connect them to an EWEC or FBWMA staff member immediately. For poaching cases, have the visitor call the 24-hour Utah Turn-in-a-Poacher (UTiP) hotline: 1-800-662-3337.