



200th RED HORSE Squadron 2016 IRT ONWR, OAK HARBOR, OHIO

In June 2016 the 200th RED HORSE Squadron (RHS) was approached by the Ottawa National Wildlife Refuge (ONWR), U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to seek assistance in providing electrical service to a wildlife viewing station. The station was constructed by community volunteers with funds obtained by a Charitable Donation from Rich Kimple and Jennifer Shriver. Initial construction planning did not

foresee a need for electric service, but

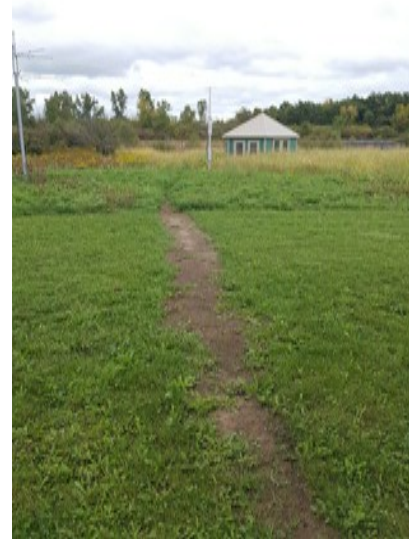
as public use of the observatory increased, the need for lighting and other electric services became evident. With construction funds depleted, ONWR officials reached out to the 200 RHS for help.



Since federal recognition on 25 Sep 1971, the 200 RHS has partnered with ONWR several times, creating a mutually beneficial relationship that supports the local community while simultaneously obtaining specialty skills training for the Airmen of the 200 RHS.

The electrical improvement of the bird observatory station fell under the new Innovative Readiness Training (IRT) program guidelines, and without a funding requirement, project approval could now be obtained in 60-90 days. After a quick site survey to ONWR, which is only a few miles down the road from the 200 RHS, we determined the project was a great training opportunity for the electrical and equipment operators at the 200 RHS, along with opportunities for logistics and project management.

The project consisted of trenching approximately 240 feet from the power source to the wildlife viewing station, concrete cutting and patching, running conduit underground, breaker wiring, light and ceiling fan mounting, and installing switches and receptacles.





After approval by NGB and OSD in August, TSgt Walp and a team of three Airfields Airmen (SrA Kyle Lindo, SrA James Massara and SrA Evan Machado) moved all tools and equipment to the site on Saturday of our training weekend. The team immediately began trenching and saw cutting concrete to allow for the conduit to go under the pavement and eliminate a tripping hazard. Once the trenching was complete, SMSgt Craig Boston and four Electrical Airmen (MSgt Cris Kenyan, TSgt Spencer Magers, A1C Jarrod Townsend and Amn Bailey Watkins) installed 240ft of one-inch conduit and pulled wire to the wildlife viewing station. Once the conduit and wire were placed, the Airfields team backfilled the trench and repaired the cut concrete.

On Sunday, the electricians moved inside the wildlife viewing station and completed the interior electrical work, installing a ceiling fan with lights, several outlets and switches. The project was completed with the final connection of all the wiring to the electrical panel located in the utility room of an adjacent building.



The newly electrified wildlife viewing station will greatly enhance the experience of the 200,000 annual visitors to ONWR. And, the Airmen assigned to the project were able to be task certified on several core training requirements. We look forward to partnering with ONWR long into the future, and thank them for the great training opportunity.



(The 200th RED HORSE Squadron, Ohio Air National Guard, is based out of Camp Perry and Mansfield Ohio; story by TSgt Jerrod A. Walp)