



## Ducks Unlimited Wetlands Ponds Dedicated

'The early bird gets the worm' is how the old adage goes, and while this still holds true, recent evidence indicates that the early *birder* also is able to find a bit of breakfast. Approximately 100 members of local agencies, public and the media gathered shortly after sunrise on the morning of Aug. 28 to participate in the dedication of the Ducks Unlimited Wetland Ponds. Attendants of the dedication gathered at the Clark County Nature Preserve and were shuttled the short distance to one of the ponds.

After a complimentary breakfast, the dedication ceremony was held, featuring several speakers including Clark County Commission Chairman Rory Reid. The event was sponsored by Clark County Parks and Recreation, the Desert Wetlands Conservancy, Ducks Unlimited and James Hunt of Morgan Stanley Smith Barney.

The six seasonal ponds provide 45 acres of open water. The future addition of a mesquite tree community, located adjacent to the ponds, will bring the total to 112 acres of habitat for local wildlife and migrating bird populations. In its entirety, the Wetlands Park is 2,900 acres. The ponds are located between the Clark County Nature Preserve and Sam Boyd Stadium and each pond has the ability to adjust water levels to best suit wildlife populations throughout the variable seasons.



Peter Kingman, treasurer of the Desert Wetlands Conservancy, talks to the media after the dedication ceremony.

The \$2.5 million project was funded through a Clark County mitigation banking and in-lieu fee program. These programs collect fees from private and government developers, such as Regional Flood Control and Clean Water Coalition who contribute to the fund in an effort to prevent wetland loss. An in-lieu fee of \$141,000 for every acre of disturbance is put into a mitigation banking program to recreate one large wetland enhancement project, which tends to serve wildlife better than small areas of mitigated wetlands across Southern Nevada.

The Ducks Unlimited Wetlands Ponds were dedicated at the end of August, but wildlife and birds began taking advantage of the area as soon as the ponds filled with water. On the morning of the dedication, several ducks were observed in the deeper open water. Shore birds hunted invertebrates along the mud flats and there were sightings of great blue herons, egrets and cormorants. Since the installation of the ponds in the spring, seven species of birds have been observed that haven't been recorded in Southern Nevada since the 1970s. The Franklin's Gull, which has never been identified in the area, has already been seen nesting in the new wetlands. The Clark County Wetlands Park is open daily from dawn until dusk. For membership and information on the Desert Wetlands Conservancy, visit them online at [DesertWetlandsConservancy.org](http://DesertWetlandsConservancy.org).

### Upcoming Meetings

#### Research and Environmental Monitoring Study Team

Oct. 7, 2009 10:30 a.m

#### Las Vegas Valley Watershed Advisory Committee

Oct. 13, 2009 3 p.m

#### Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee

Oct. 27, 2009 9 a.m.

## Fall Green-Up Still Seeking Volunteers

Be a part of history and join 2,000 other participants at the Las Vegas Wash for what is expected to be the largest volunteer planting event to date in Nevada. The 15th semiannual Green-Up event takes place on Oct. 17 to revegetate 28-acres at the Clark County Water Reclamation District facility. Public participation has provided huge benefits in helping the Las Vegas Wash Coordination Committee further the organization's mission.



Participants spread across the site of a recent Green-Up event.

The revegetation process involves removing tamarisk and other non-native, invasive plants and replacing them with native trees and shrubs to integrate with engineering projects and help reduce bank erosion and improve water quality in the Las Vegas Wash. In an effort to manage the record number of volunteers, the event will be broken into three shifts: 9 to 11 a.m., 11 a.m. to 1 p.m. and 1 to 3 p.m. Lunch will be provided to all volunteers. For more information, please call **(702) 822-8400** or [register online](#).