



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

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**COMMENTS INVITED ON "UPDATE" TO THE NORTH AMERICAN WATERFOWL
MANAGEMENT PLAN; MEXICO EXPECTED TO BECOME A SIGNATORY**

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is seeking public comment through August 6, 1993, on "Wetland Habitats - Today and Tomorrow," a draft Update to the North American Waterfowl Management Plan (Plan). The Plan, signed in 1986, calls for periodic reviews and updates to ensure its goals and objectives are still current and on target through the year 2001.

The Plan has guided waterfowl and wetlands conservation in Canada and the United States since it was signed by the Minister of Environment and the Secretary of the Interior. Mexico is expected to become a co-signer when the Update is finalized later this year.

"With Mexico as a full, participating partner, the Plan will constitute a true, continent-wide commitment to restoring North America's waterfowl and wetland resources," said Interior Secretary Bruce Babbitt. "I look forward to the opportunity to renew this pledge in signing the Plan Update."

The Plan is part of a broader national effort in Mexico to conserve the country's vast biological diversity while meeting the need for economic development. This parallels the broadened objectives and ecosystem approach adopted by joint venture partnerships in Canada and the U.S.

"Wetlands Habitats - Today and Tomorrow" reaffirms the original commitment to rebuild waterfowl populations to 1970s levels. It revises habitat objectives to more accurately reflect the habitat needs identified by joint ventures, which have been implemented on an ecosystem, watershed basis. Joint ventures have grown in number, size, and scope, increasing from 8 to 14 and benefitting all wetland-dependent wildlife, including shorebirds and endangered species.

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Noting that the objectives are based on biology, not funding, the Update also recognizes that achieving them may take longer than the year 2001. It points out the need for additional partners representing diverse interests to join and cost-share with existing partners to help offset the serious, continuing losses of wetlands.

The Update includes a series of recommendations to support achieving the Plan's goals. Priorities are identified to restore key migratory bird habitat throughout the continent and to address waterfowl populations of international concern.

The comments received will be considered by the North American Waterfowl Management Plan Committee, composed of six members each from Canada and the U.S. and a representative from Mexico, whose role is to guide implementation of the Plan. After comments are received and considered, a succeeding draft will be prepared in September and a final Plan Update will be issued later this fall.

Copies of "Wetland Habitats - Today and Tomorrow" may be obtained from, and comments should be sent to, any of the following addresses:

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