

UNITED STATES  
DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

★ news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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MACKAY ISLAND REFUGE OPENED TO SPORT FISHING

The 6,500-acre Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia and North Carolina is the most recent addition to the approximately 105 Federal refuges open to sport fishing, the Department of the Interior announced today.

Mackay Island Refuge is on the Knotts Island Peninsula, a strip of land separating Back Bay, Virginia, and Currituck Sound, North Carolina. Largemouth bass, pickerel, and perch are the most common game species in the refuge vicinity, while carp, bowfin, and gars also are plentiful. Bass fishing is outstanding, with adjacent waters noted for big and hard-fighting bass. Before establishment of the refuge, the ponds, canals, and ditches now within the refuge boundaries attracted fishermen from many miles away.

Both Back Bay in Virginia and Currituck Sound in North Carolina are famous for their great concentrations of waterfowl. The largest known wintering concentration of greater snow geese can be found on and near the refuge.

Opening of refuge areas to fishing is part of a concerted effort by the Department of the Interior to provide additional outdoor recreation for the Nation. Sport fishing on National Wildlife Refuges is allowed when studies show that it is compatible with wildlife management.

Many wildlife refuges are closed to fishing during the migration and wintering period in order to prevent disturbance to migratory birds. In addition, no firearms are permitted and fishermen must comply with all State regulations.

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