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★ news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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NEW FEDERAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ESTABLISHED ALONG LOWER COLORADO RIVER

Secretary of the Interior Stewart L. Udall today announced establishment of the Cibola National Wildlife Refuge on the Lower Colorado River in California and Arizona.

The new refuge is on both sides of the Colorado River about 50 miles upstream from Imperial Dam. It includes about 9,400 acres previously acquired or withdrawn from public entry, and eventually is expected to have a total area of about 16,600 acres.

Daniel H. Janzen, Director of the Department's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, said the refuge will be put into operation when funds are available.

He said establishment of the refuge is vital to maintaining and conserving several species of waterfowl, including the Great Basin Canada goose, whose existence is threatened by the continuing loss of wintering grounds. Channeling of the Colorado River and continuing development of lands in its lower reaches have materially reduced wintering grounds available to waterfowl, he added.

Historically the Lower Colorado area has been the wintering ground for waterfowl produced in 11 Western States and 3 Canadian provinces. The Cibola Refuge, when operative, will provide added wintering habitat for the Great Basin Canada goose, and for ducks such as canvasback, redhead, pintail, green-winged teal, and gadwall.

Director Janzen estimated that Cibola Refuge will have a peak waterfowl population of about 150,000 ducks and geese which would add to the populations of both the Pacific and Central Flyways, benefiting thousands of hunters in many parts of the West and Southwest.

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