

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

For Release to PMs July 21, 1971

Carroll 343-5634

PUBLIC HEARINGS SCHEDULED ON WILDERNESS PROPOSALS IN ARIZONA, NORTH DAKOTA, NEW JERSEY

Public hearings to discuss the results of wilderness studies involving national wildlife refuge areas are scheduled in Arizona in September and in North Dakota and New Jersey in August, the Interior Department announced today.

Specific times and the areas involved are:

- I. Cabeza Prieta Game Range in Yuma and Pima Counties, Arizona, approximately 744,000 acres, hearing 9 a.m., Sept. 15, Tucson. Hearing continued 9 a.m., Sept. 16, Phoenix; 10 a.m., Sept. 17, Ajo; and 9 a.m., Sept. 18, Yuma. Notice of hearing published in Federal Register June 9.

The 860,000-acre game range lies within the Sonoran Desert of southwestern Arizona, one of the hottest and driest regions in North America. The area, part of the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the Fish and Wildlife Service, is noted for its desert bighorn sheep. It also supports the largest U.S. population of the endangered Sonoran pronghorn antelope.

A map and other information about the Cabeza Prieta wilderness proposal is available from the Refuge Manager, Cabeza Prieta Game Range, P.O. Box 1032, Yuma, Arizona 85364, or the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Building, 500 Gold Avenue, S.W., Albuquerque, New Mexico 87103.

Oral or written statements may be submitted at the hearing or written comments can be sent to the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Albuquerque, New Mexico, by September 14, 1971, when the hearing record will be closed.

- II. Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge in North Dakota, 5,486 acres, hearing 7:30 p.m., Aug. 4, Burke County Court House, Bowbells, N.D. Notice of hearing published in Federal Register June 3.

The proposal includes approximately nine sections of "pothole" country typical of the Coteau du Missouri of the northern plains. Hundreds of small natural waterholes make this some of the most productive habitat for waterfowl on the continent.

A map and other information about the Lostwood wilderness proposal is available from the Refuge Manager, Lostwood National Wildlife Refuge, Lostwood, North Dakota 58754, or the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Building, Fort Snelling, Twin Cities, Minnesota 55111.

Oral or written statements may be submitted at the hearing or written comments can be sent to the Regional Director by September 6, 1971.

III. Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge in Atlantic and Ocean Counties, N.J., 4,250 acres, hearing 2 p.m., Aug. 11, Holy Spirit High School auditorium, Absecon, N.J. Notice of hearing published in Federal Register June 9.

The Brigantine Refuge, established on October 27, 1939, under the Migratory Bird Conservation Act, presently contains 19,388 acres. Part of the area (Little Beach Island) forms a protective barrier from storms for the marsh islands of Egg, Salt, Pullen, Elder, and 12 other unnamed islands totaling 4,250 acres. Little Beach is one of the last unspoiled barrier-beach islands in New Jersey and the marshlands it shelters are undisturbed, with significant values to wildlife for nesting, resting, and feeding, and to man as an outdoor "laboratory" for studies by schools.

A map and other information about the Brigantine wilderness proposal is available from the Refuge Manager, Brigantine National Wildlife Refuge, Great Creek Road, P.O. Box 72, Oceanville, New Jersey 08231, or the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Post Office and Courthouse, Boston, Massachusetts 02109.

Oral or written statements may be submitted at the hearing or written comments can be sent to the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, in Boston, by September 13, 1971, when the hearing record will be closed.

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