

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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LAND DONATION TO BECOME FIRST NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE IN CONNECTICUT

A land donation by a long-time Connecticut resident will become the first national wildlife refuge in that State, Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton announced today.

Included in the 140 acres donated by Miss Esther Everett Lape is more than one-half mile of frontage on the Menunketesuck River. The area, which is located about 20 miles east of New Haven, will become the Salt Meadow National Wildlife Refuge.

Miss Lape, a writer and student of governmental problems, has used Salt Meadow as a summer residence since the 1930's. A frequent visitor there was one of her close friends, Mrs. Franklin D. Roosevelt.

As a wildlife sanctuary, Salt Meadow will benefit the osprey, a rare bird species that frequently has been seen in the area. The tidelands donated by Miss Lape are part of the coastal environment important to migratory birds and fish.

In addition to benefiting wildlife, Secretary Morton pointed out that the refuge could fulfill a growing need as a center for environmental studies carried out by public schools in the area.

The gift from Miss Lape, who spends the winter months in New York City, includes her summer home, a residence used by her staff, and a guest cabin. She and her companion, Dr. Helen Gavin, will continue to use the dwellings as long as either shall live.

With the addition of Salt Meadow, there are now national wildlife refuges operated by Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service in every State except New Hampshire and West Virginia.