

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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WILDERNESS HEARINGS SCHEDULED REGARDING NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE AREAS IN NEBRASKA

Public hearings on classifying parts of Valentine National Wildlife Refuge and Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge as wilderness areas will be held at two Nebraska locations in December, the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service announced today.

Specific times, meeting locations, and the areas involved are:

- I. Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, Cherry County, 16,317 acres, hearing Dec. 12, 9 a.m., Cherry County Court House, Valentine, Nebr.

Included in this proposal are two large lakes, three smaller lakes, and some of Nebraska's unique sandhill country. The refuge, established in 1935 to protect waterfowl and other wildlife, is located 26 miles south of Valentine.

Oral or written statements may be submitted at the hearing or written comments may be sent to the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Building, Fort Snelling, Twin Cities, Minnesota 55111, by January 13, 1973. A map and other information on the Valentine wilderness proposal is available from the Refuge Manager, Valentine National Wildlife Refuge, Kennedy Star Route, Valentine, Nebraska 69201, or from the regional director.

- II. Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Garden County, 24,520 acres, hearing Dec. 14, 9 a.m., Garden County Court House, Oshkosh, Nebr.

The proposal includes almost all of the eastern part of the refuge, including a portion of the wild and undeveloped sandhills. One small lake also is included. This refuge, also established in 1935, is located 28 miles north of Oshkosh.

Oral or written statements may be submitted at the hearing or written comments may be sent to the Regional Director, Fish and Wildlife Service, Federal Building, Fort Snelling, Twin Cities, Minnesota 55111, by January 15, 1973. A map and other information on the proposal may be obtained from the Refuge Manager, Crescent Lake National Wildlife Refuge, Star Route 30178, Ellsworth, Nebraska 69340, or from the regional director.

The lands of both refuges have been grazed under refuge management for many years. New grazing methods implemented recently will improve the wildlife habitat and increase the native grasses and flowering plants.

Under wilderness designation, hunting without the use of motorized equipment would be permitted. Other public uses would include grazing, photography, and bird watching.

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