



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

Fish and Wildlife Service

For Release: June 2, 1992

Inez Connor (703) 358-1784

CANADA AND U.S. CONSERVATIONISTS SALUTE LONGSTANDING COOPERATION ON MIGRATORY BIRDS AND WETLANDS

As a million shorebirds gathered in migration along Delaware Bay, conservationists from Canada and the United States met today at the Canadian Embassy to mark the 75th anniversary of international cooperation to protect these and other migratory birds.

The events in Washington, D.C., featured messages from President George Bush and Prime Minister Brian Mulroney which reaffirmed their countries' support for the principles of the Convention for the Protection of Migratory Birds. Representing the two governments were Deputy Secretary of the Interior Frank A. Bracken and Ross Stevenson, member of Parliament representing the Minister of the Environment.

The reception, hosted by Canadian Ambassador Derek H. Burney, also observed the 40th anniversary of the four North American flyway councils and the 5th anniversary of the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, both cooperative ventures between the two nations aimed at protecting waterfowl.

The 75-year-old Convention was the first international agreement designed to manage and protect a shared wildlife resource. It was implemented in Canada through the 1917 Migratory Bird Convention and in the United States as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act of 1918.

"I salute the visionaries in our two countries, who, in the midst of the First World War, acted to preserve this great natural heritage," said Bracken.

Stevenson reaffirmed Canada's commitment to continued cooperation with the United States, stating that "International

(over)

cooperation for migratory bird management remains essential if we are to protect North America's invaluable wildlife heritage."

The four flyway councils -- Pacific, Central, Mississippi, and Atlantic -- which are organized along the migratory patterns waterfowl follow between their nesting and wintering grounds, are instrumental in planning effective waterfowl management activities.

To reverse the declines in both wetlands and wildlife, Canada and the U.S. launched another international effort five years ago -- the North American Waterfowl Management Plan. The largest partnership on the continent of public and private sector conservation organizations, the Plan works to fill the remaining void -- habitat conservation -- to protect migratory birds.

Meanwhile, unaware of international borders, the other "gathering" on Delaware Bay feasted on horseshoe crab eggs, refueling for the remainder of their rigorous migration northward. That migration is more secure because of the 75 years of evolving international conservation measures and commitment, reconfirmed today by both countries.

-DOI-