



NEWS

from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

June 15, 1996

Inez Connor 202-219-3861

MORE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES ON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES

Nine new hunting and 12 new sport fishing programs will open on national wildlife refuges when proposed regulations become final this fall, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt said today. "This makes 23 new refuge hunting programs and 18 new refuge fishing programs that have been opened by this administration," he said.

Babbitt made the announcement during a fishing trip on Lake Superior with outdoor writers attending the annual meeting of the Outdoor Writers Association of America in Duluth, Minnesota. The trip spotlighted successful cooperative efforts to restore lake trout.

"The new hunting and fishing programs respond to the President's Executive Order and my own directive to the Fish and Wildlife Service," he said. "Both measures call for expanded opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation on our national wildlife refuges. I'm pleased to see this positive and timely action.

"These new hunting and fishing programs also carry out our pledge to expedite the procedure for continuing these compatible recreational activities when new refuge lands come into the system," he said, citing Cossatot, a new refuge in Arkansas, as an example.

The 23 new refuge hunting programs and 18 new refuge fishing programs opened by this Administration compare to the total of 23 hunting and 8 fishing openings during the last Administration. With the new programs, 283 refuges will be open to hunting and 276 to fishing. The National Wildlife Refuge System includes 508 refuges in all 50 states. Its 92.3 million acres also include easements on waterfowl production areas in 12 states and state-managed coordination areas in 19 states.

When the regulations become final, new hunting and fishing programs will be available to the public on the following refuges:

Hunting

New Hampshire--Great Bay

Hunting and Fishing

Arkansas--Bald Knob, Cossatot

Illinois--Emiquon

Indiana--Patoka River

Louisiana--Big Branch Marsh, Grand Cote, Mandalay

Missouri--Big Muddy

Fishing

Maryland--Patuxent

Mississippi--Tallahatchie

Nebraska--Boyer Chute

West Virginia--Ohio River Islands

Office of Public Affairs
1849 C Street, NW
Washington, DC 20240
Room 3447

(202) 208-5634
FAX (202) 219-2428