



NEWS

from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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**CONGRESS PASSES \$103.3 MILLION EMERGENCY
APPROPRIATIONS FOR U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**

The FY 1997 Emergency Supplemental Appropriations bill signed by the President includes \$103.3 million in funding for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service to repair damage to national wildlife refuges from natural disasters and other resources managed by the Service and to acquire land and water rights to mitigate damage caused by floods.

Out of the total, Congress designated \$88 million for construction projects including road reconstruction, bridge rehabilitation, repair of levees and water control structures, and repair of visitors' facilities.

The funds are distributed as follows:

- \$52.9 million to repair damage in California, Idaho, Nevada, Oregon, Washington;
- \$7.3 million for work in Oklahoma and Texas;
- \$5.5 million for construction in Illinois, Indiana, Iowa, Minnesota, and Wisconsin;
- \$5.1 million for work in Alabama, Arkansas, Louisiana, Mississippi, and Tennessee;
- \$1.7 million for construction in Maine, Massachusetts, and West Virginia; and
- \$15.5 million for work in Montana, North Dakota, South Dakota and Utah.

In addition, Congress designated \$10 million for emergency acquisition of land and water rights and \$5.3 million for technical assistance, fire restoration, fish replacement, and payments to private landowners for the use of lands to store water in restored wetlands.

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"This has been a difficult year with many natural disasters," said John Rogers, Acting Director of the Service. "The money Congress has appropriated will allow the Service to address the significant damage to our facilities and to our Nation's fish and wildlife resources caused by these disasters."

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service manages 509 national wildlife refuges and 72 national fish hatcheries. Storm and flood damage occurred on 103 refuges and 28 hatcheries.

The Service also enforces Federal wildlife laws, manages migratory bird populations, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, administers the Endangered Species Act, and oversees the Federal Aid program that funnels Federal excise taxes on angling and hunting equipment to state wildlife agencies.