

approved \$35.7 million for refuge acquisitions and wetlands grants for migratory birds. Of that amount, \$30.4 million will conserve more than 6.1 million acres of wetlands and associated habitats in the United States and Canada under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act, and \$5.3 million in Federal Duck Stamp funds will add about 1,850 wetland acres to six units of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

The latter funding will acquire and restore 180 acres of bottomland wetlands at Cache River National Wildlife Refuge, AR; acquire 288 acres for protection of wetlands at San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge, TX; protect 866 acres that support wintering waterfowl at Lower Hatchie National Wildlife Refuge, TN; protect 243 acres of wetlands and upland fringes at Edwin B. Forsythe National Wildlife Refuge, NJ; protect 162 acres of northern forest wetland and waterfowl nesting habitat at Silvio O. Conte National Fish and Wildlife Refuge, NH; and protect 110 acres of riparian habitat at Stone Lakes National Wildlife Refuge, CA.

### Minnesota and Wisconsin

More than 160 people entered the Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge “Island Naming Contest” this spring. The public was asked to help name nine newly constructed islands in a 3,000-acre backwater area between Brownsville, MN, and Stoddard, WI, built as part of an Environmental Management Program-funded project to restore habitat for migratory birds, reptiles, amphibians, fish and mammals in Pool 8 of the Mississippi River. The names selected were: Broken Bow Island, Snake Tongue Island, Small Fry Island, Log Island, Old Scribbler Island, Cant Hook Island, Cygnet Island, Dabbler Island and Raft Island. The winners received a certificate designating their contribution to the project.

### Nevada

Two new species of bees were discovered this spring at Ash Meadows National Wildlife Refuge northwest of Las Vegas. David Tanner, who is a biologist and postdoctoral fellow at Utah State



Starting next June, visitors will be able to view wild bears in the O'Malley River area of Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge, AK. (USFWS)

University, and two graduate students made the discovery when they were collecting data at the refuge for a study about the relationship between pollinators and rare desert plants. Both of the new species are distinct forms of the genus *Perdita*, according to Tanner. The new species have not yet been named. A lab operated by the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Logan, UT, has confirmed the find. Tanner told the *Salt Lake Tribune* that stumbling onto a new species made him “feel like a child again.”

### Alaska

Beginning in June 2011, wildlife photographers and other visitors to Kodiak National Wildlife Refuge will be able to view wild bears in the O'Malley River area of the refuge. The opportunity is scheduled to be open to guided groups of 10 people or fewer from late June to late September annually. A 12-foot-by-20-foot viewing platform is to be built this summer. “We’d expect that folks coming to O'Malley would see quite a number of bears,” refuge manager Gary Wheeler told the *Anchorage Daily News*. “There have been times we’ve documented 60 bears or more fishing on O'Malley at one

time. It’s certainly one of the highest – if not *the* highest – density on the refuge.”

A former drug-running vessel that has been retooled for research duty and was featured in the May-June issue of *Refuge Update*, has been renamed the *Arlluk*. *Arlluk* means “orca” in the native Alutiiq language. The vessel will ferry biologists, conservationists and law enforcement officers around the Alaska Peninsula and Becharof National Wildlife Refuges.

### California

A new canoe area dedicated to a former refuge employee opened to the public this spring at Tule Lake National Wildlife Refuge. Visitors may use their own non-motorized boats or check out a canoe available on-site when the refuge visitor center is open. The canoe area is in Discovery Marsh, which often dries up during the late spring and summer, so visitors should contact the refuge before planning a trip. Wildlife viewing opportunities vary seasonally. The canoe area was developed in memory of David Champine, a refuge visitor services specialist who died in 2009 at age 40 after battling a lifelong heart condition. 🦋