



Great egret by Burg Ransom



For More Information

Internet

The Service has posted information on the Internet about this project. Please select: Upper Ouachita National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) and Felsenthal NWR Connection Project.

<http://www.fws.gov/southeast/>

Service Contacts

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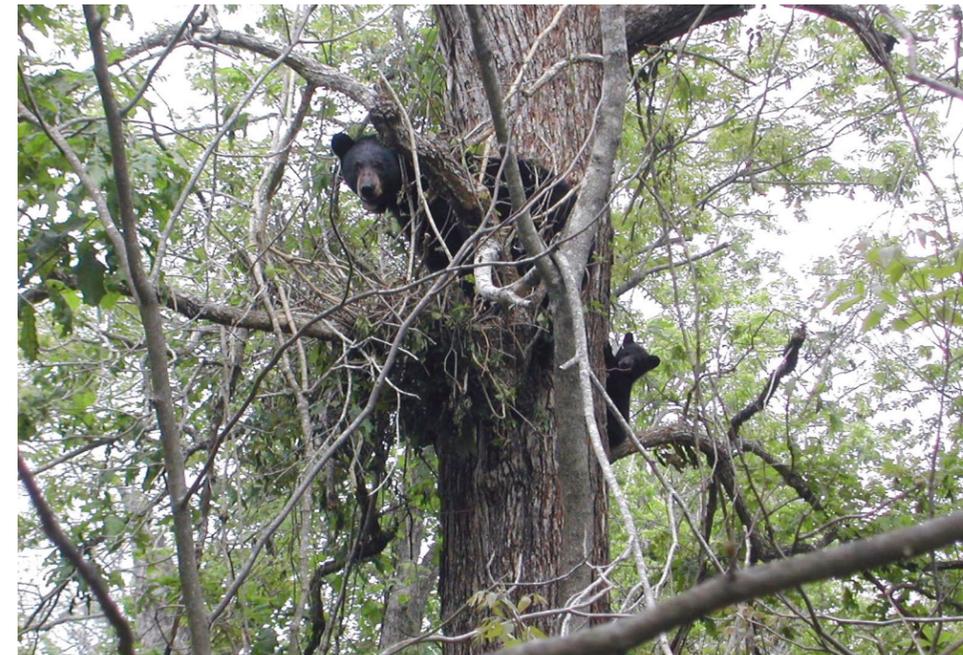
Left: red-cockaded woodpecker at cavity by M. Lammertink/Cornell Lab of Ornithology. Above: duck hunting at one of the refuges in the South Arkansas Refuge Complex, by Paul Gideon/USFWS



Proposed Expansion for Upper Ouachita and Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuges

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region, seeks to enhance conservation of the Mississippi River Valley Ecosystem by linking and expanding two major National Wildlife Refuges.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with the states of Louisiana and Arkansas and a variety of public and private partners to propose expanding the acquisition boundaries of Upper Ouachita and Felsenthal National Wildlife Refuges. Upper Ouachita NWR is administered from North Louisiana Refuges with a current refuge boundary of 42,594 acres and an approved acquisition boundary of 60,699 acres, and Felsenthal NWR, administered from South Arkansas Refuges, is 65,000 acres. The total number of acres proposed for this landscape expansion includes 27,664 acres for Felsenthal NWR and 18,405 acres for Upper Ouachita NWR.



Louisiana black bears by Rick Eastridge/USFWS.

If approved, the Service could purchase 46,064 additional acres from **willing sellers only** to ultimately allow for the conservation of more than 172,000 contiguous acres and 58 river miles of wildlife habitat.

Basic Facts about the Proposal:

The states and federal government have parallel wildlife and habitat conservation goals in this area. This proposal helps combine these goals and the efforts of other partners into one larger, combined project conservation area that includes non-governmental and local organizations.

This proposal supports the states of Louisiana and Arkansas Comprehensive Conservation Strategies and Action Plans and complements the states' landscape conservation efforts, the Red-Cockaded Woodpecker Recovery Plan, the Partners-In-Flight Initiative, and the North American Waterfowl Management Plan.

As part of the America's Great Outdoors program, it seeks to conserve a large functional landscape for wildlife, ecosystem services, and historic and cultural resource protection, while also providing the American public with outstanding recreational opportunities.

Benefits to the Public are Increased Access for:

- Fishing
- Hunting
- Wildlife observation
- Wildlife photography
- Environmental education
- Environmental interpretation

Wildlife Potential

This proposal will provide habitat and promote management for a diversity of wildlife, including endangered red-cockaded woodpeckers, threatened



Painted bunting by Ed McGuire



Black Bayou by R. David Breithaupt

Louisiana black bears, shorebirds, wading birds, marsh birds, woodcock, nesting wood ducks, and forest interior songbirds. The refuges attract hundreds of thousands of migratory waterfowl including mallards, teal, pintail, shovelers, gadwall and wood ducks during the winter.

Rafinesque's big-eared and southeastern bats, both species of concern, use water tupelo-baldcypress brakes within bottomland forests.

These lands are also important to Neotropical migrants as well as nesting warblers, Mississippi kites, cerulean warblers, and wood ducks.



Alligator by Mack Barham

How Can We Taxpayers Afford this Land in a Time of Tight Budget?

If approved, the Service will draw funding for this land acquisition from the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund and the Land and Water Conservation Fund.

These are not derived from traditional tax revenues, but are collected from the sale of Federal Duck Stamps, entrance fees from certain national wildlife refuges, and import duties on arms and ammunition (Migratory Bird Conservation Fund), and from the sale of offshore oil leases (Land and Water Conservation Fund). The money is intended for land conservation.

The policy of the Fish and Wildlife Service is to acquire land from **willing sellers only**.

Partners

This partnership landscape planning effort includes:

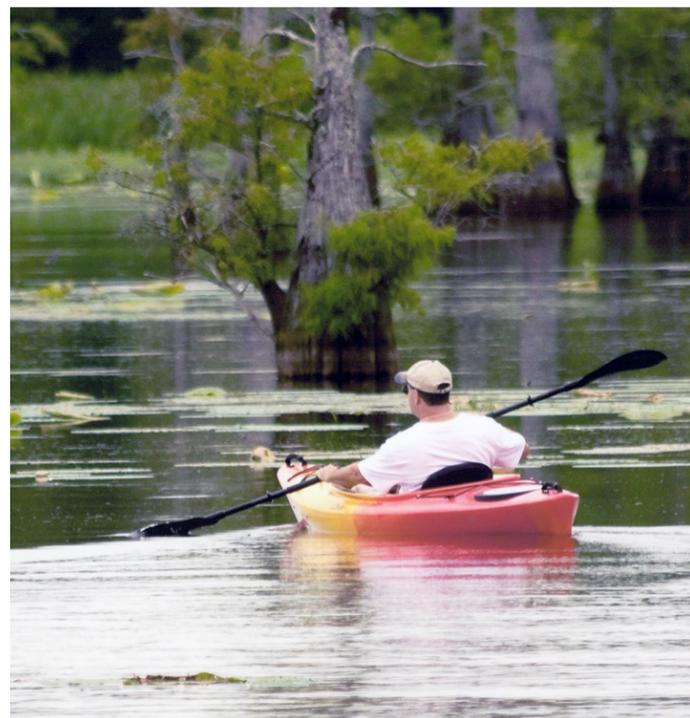
- Area landowners
- The general public
- National Wildlife Refuge Association
- The Nature Conservancy
- State of Louisiana
 - Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
- State of Arkansas
 - Arkansas Fish and Game Commission, Beryl Anthony WMA
- U.S. Department of Agriculture, Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, U.S. Department of the Interior



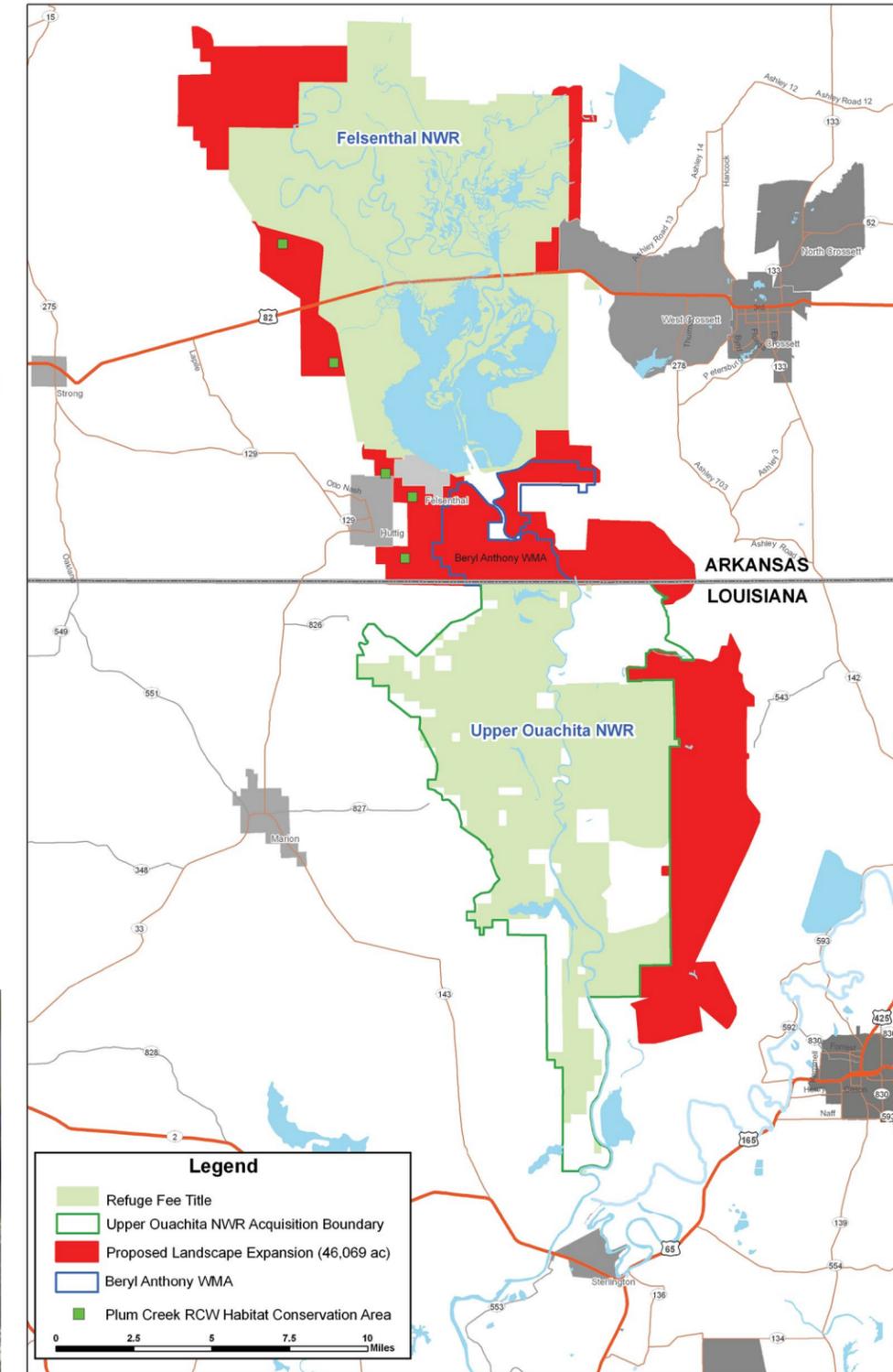
A bald eagle and eaglet by Bob Rickett

Schedule

- **April - May 2011:**
Conduct meetings with government contacts and key partners within the proposed expansion area.
- **July 2011:**
Conduct public scoping meetings
 Wednesday, July 6
 6 pm to 8 pm
 Crossett Economic Development Commission
 400 Main Street
 Crossett, AR
 870/364 8745



Peaceful pastime by Marie Frost



Thursday, July 7
 6 pm to 8 pm
 Bastrop Visitor Center
 124 North Washington Street
 Bastrop, LA 71220
 318/281 0911

■ **August - October 2011:**
 Develop Draft Land Protection Plan and associated NEPA documentation for Public review

■ **November 2011:**
 Public comment period

■ **December 2011 - January 2012:**
 Develop final plan and associated NEPA documentation.