



News Release

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REWARDS OFFERED FOR INFORMATION ABOUT DEATH OF ENDANGERED WHOOPING CRANE

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) and Texas Parks and Wildlife Department are seeking information about a state and federally protected whooping crane found dead on January 4 along the Texas coast near Sand Lake in Aransas Bay.

The Service is offering a reward in the amount of \$2,500 and TPWD is contributing \$1,000 for information about the death of the crane. Several Non-Governmental Organizations (NGOs) are also offering up reward money for this effort.

The reward will be issued if the death of the whooping crane is determined to be a criminal act and the information provided leads to the criminal conviction of the person(s) responsible.

Necropsy results show that the whooping crane may have been handled after death.

Anyone with information about the whooping crane's death is urged to come forward. Information can be provided to the Fish and Wildlife Service's Houston Office of Law Enforcement at (281) 876-1520, or Operation Game Thief at 1-800-792-GAME (4263). Callers may remain anonymous.

Whooping cranes are protected under the Endangered Species Act and the Migratory Bird Treaty Act. Penalties for harming or killing a crane can range up to a \$100,000 fine and/or one year in federal prison.

Whooping cranes almost became extinct with only 16 remaining in the 1940s. Through concerted recovery efforts there are now an estimated 304 cranes in the population that winters in Texas. Standing about 5 feet tall, the whooping crane is the tallest flying bird in North America. *The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service works with others to conserve, protect, and enhance fish, wildlife, plants, and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. For more information, visit www.fws.gov, or connect with us through any of these social media channels:*



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