

Tonight's Agenda:

- Introduction and Background on National Wildlife Refuge System Management
- Review of Root River project
- Questions and Comments



Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge

261 river miles, about 244,500 acres

Four districts:

- Winona (pools 4, 5, 5a and 6)
- La Crosse (pools 7 and 8)
 - Trempealeau NWR
- McGregor (pools 9, 10 and 11)
 - Driftless Area NWR
- Savanna (pools 12, 13, 14)
 - Lost Mound Unit

Habitat: consists of bottomland timber, shallow backwaters, marshes, secondary channels, main channel, and blufflands.



Mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System:

The Mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.

National Wildlife Refuge System Improvement Act 1997



Refuge Purpose:

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

“Upper Miss” is born

1924: Plans to dike and drain the valuable backwaters of the Upper Mississippi River for agricultural purposes spurred the Izaak Walton League to action. For the first time, a refuge would be purchased with appropriated funds, primarily for migratory waterfowl and for the protection of black bass habitat.

Upper Mississippi River National Wildlife and Fish Refuge

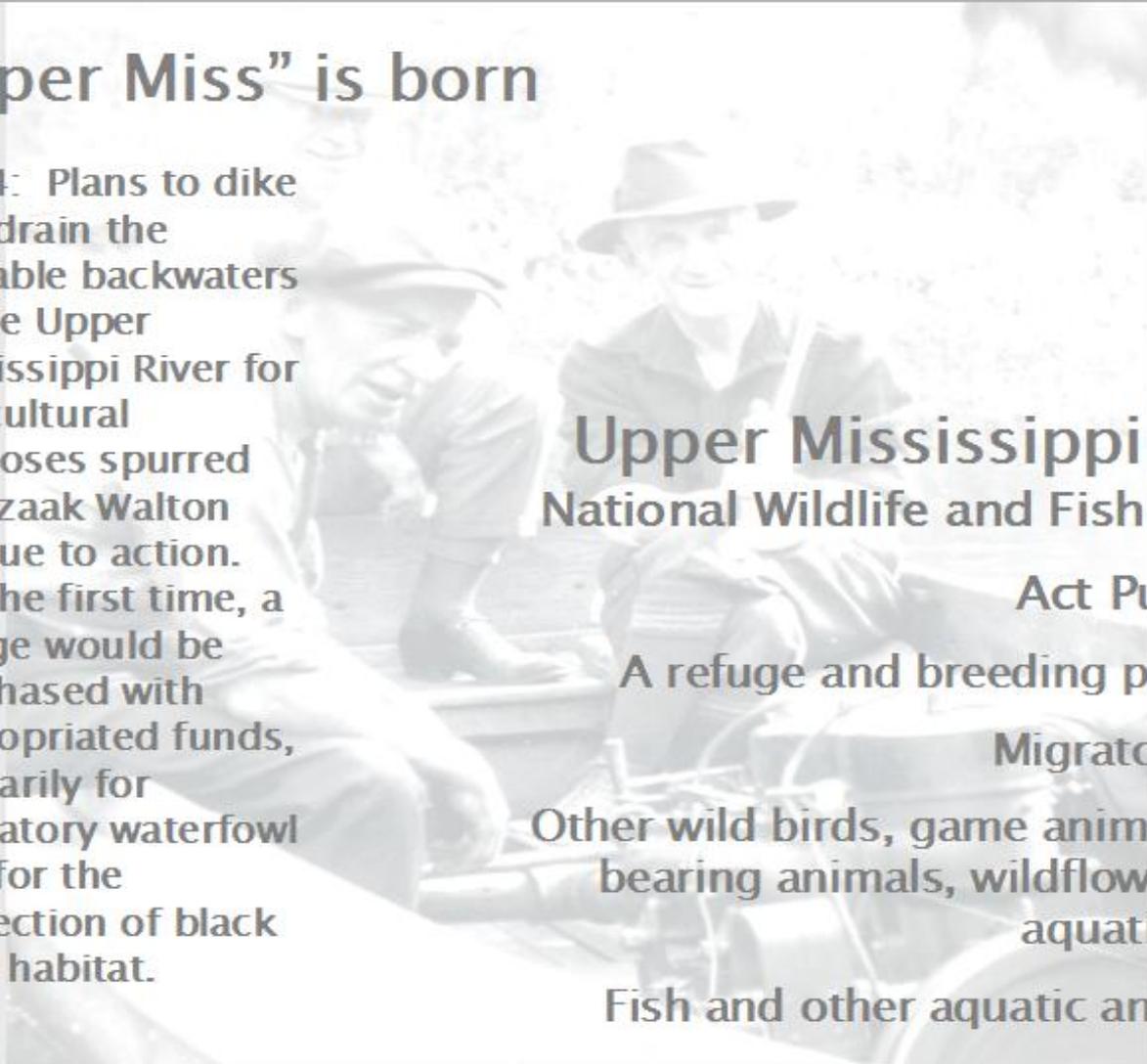
Act Purposes

A refuge and breeding place for:

Migratory birds

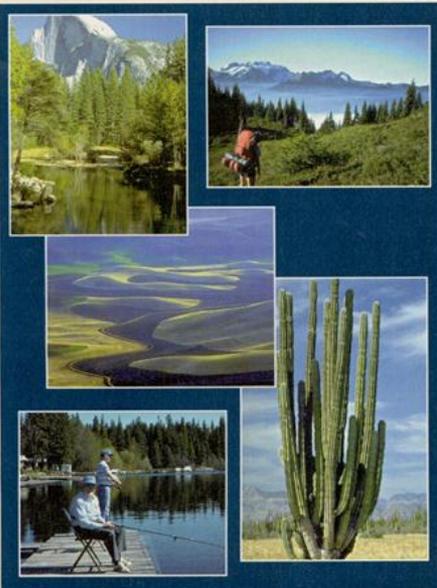
Other wild birds, game animals, fur-bearing animals, wildflowers, and aquatic plants

Fish and other aquatic animal life



OUTDOORS AMERICA

*Recreational
Opportunities
on Public Lands*



Refuges are Different

National Forests: Multiple use (timber, recreation, grazing, fish and wildlife)

National Parks: Scenic and historic significance

Bureau of Land Management: Multiple use (resource extraction/use, recreation)

National Wildlife Refuges:

Wildlife Comes First!

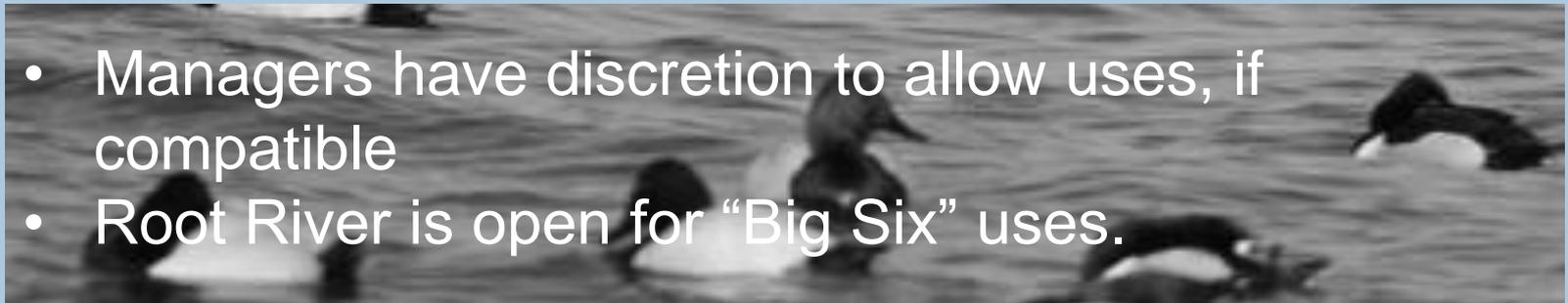


Congress said: Wildlife and wildlife conservation must come first; the Refuge System is to stand as a monument to the science and practice of wildlife management.

Refuges are Closed until Opened

- The Upper Mississippi River NWFR Act of 1924 provided inviolate sanctuary status
- 50 CFR Part 26 prohibits trespass, take, disturbance, etc.

- Managers have discretion to allow uses, if compatible
- Root River is open for “Big Six” uses.



“Big Six” Uses

- Hunting
- Fishing
- Wildlife Observation
- Wildlife Photography
- Wildlife Interpretation
- Environmental Education

Also “Compatible”

- Trapping
- Several other uses



Root River Tract

- Presentations from
 - Jim Nissen (history and background)
 - Josh Eash (hydrology and potential features)
 - Tim Miller (Refuge management)

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