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FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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CONSERVATION COMMISSION ACTS TO FILL GAPS IN WATERFOWL PROGRAM

Purchase of 3,760 acres of land in six States to fill gaps in America's waterfowl conservation program was authorized by the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission on February 28, Secretary of the Interior Douglas McKay announced today. In addition to approving the purchases, the Commission authorized the leasing of 260 acres for the Pinellas National Wildlife Refuge in Florida.

Topping the list, from the standpoint of acreage, is the 1,911-acre purchase authorized for the Malheur National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon. This tract cuts deep into the old bed of Malheur Lake and its acquisition will put the Fish and Wildlife Service within 2,000 acres of complete control of the big 48,000-acre lake bed. The old lake bed is a division of the 169,000-acre Malheur Refuge.

The 1,498-acre acquisition for the Quivira National Wildlife Refuge in Kansas includes two existing hunting clubs. The Quivira Refuge was established last year because of the need for a waterfowl wintering area in that part of the Great Plains.

An acquisition of 125 acres was approved for the Shiawassee National Wildlife Refuge in Michigan. Here the Michigan Department of Conservation and the Fish and Wildlife Service are cooperating in a program designed to discourage geese from migrating until after farm crops have been harvested. The program should materially aid the distribution of waterfowl in the Great Lakes States, Kentucky, Tennessee and Alabama.

At McKay Creek National Wildlife Refuge in Oregon, 36 acres will be purchased primarily to provide additional food supplies. The Fish and Wildlife Service is building an area at McKay Creek to compensate for the loss of feeding area resulting from the inundation of Great Pasco Bend in the Columbia River when McNary Dam was constructed.

Three other acquisitions approved by the Commission will eliminate administrative problems in the respective areas, as well as add considerable value to the marshes, Secretary McKay said. One of these is an 11-acre purchase on the Adirondack National Wildlife Refuge in Vermont. Another is the 160-acre purchase authorized at Monte Vista National Wildlife Refuge in Colorado, which will bring in

additional water as well as iron out administrative problems. The third is a 19-acre area which will be added to the Laguna Atascosa Refuge in Texas.

Since January 1953, the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission has authorized the purchase of 58,214 acres of waterfowl areas. The purchases are financed by the sale of Federal duck stamps.

The Migratory Bird Conservation Commission consists of Secretary of the Interior McKay, Chairman; Secretary of Agriculture Ezra Taft Benson; Secretary of Commerce Sinclair Weeks; Senator John W. Bricker of Ohio; Senator Thomas C. Hennings of Missouri; Representative August H. Andresen of Minnesota; Representative Frank M. Karsten of Missouri and Arthur A. Riemer, Chief, Branch of Lands, Fish and Wildlife Service, who serves as Commission Secretary.

The Commission operates in accordance with the Migratory Bird Conservation Act of 1929 which authorizes appropriations for the establishment of a Federal system of refuges for migratory birds. Appropriations under this Act, together with funds from the sale of Federal duck stamps and from other sources have resulted in the world's most extensive system of bird refuges.

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