



DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR INFORMATION SERVICE

UNITED STATES FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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FWS ESTABLISHES NEW NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

The newest addition to the national wildlife refuge system came into existence this week when Secretary of the Interior Fred A. Seaton signed a document giving official refuge status to certain lands along the Mississippi River between Rock island and Alton, Ill., the Department of the Interior announced today.

The new refuge, comprising some 20,000 acres in Illinois, Iowa, and Missouri will be known as the Mark Twain National Wildlife Refuge.

The area was acquired by the Corps of Engineers, Department of the Army, for the improvement of navigation in the upper Mississippi River to provide a nine-foot channel from the Missouri River to Minneapolis. These lands have been under the management of the Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, U. S. Fish and Wildlife Service, for some years.

Under the provisions of the Coordination Act of August 14, 1946, general plans for the use of these lands for wildlife conservation and management were entered into by the Secretary of the Army, the Secretary of the Interior, and the heads of the State conservation departments involved. Subsequently on January 21, 1954, the lands were made available to the Department of the Interior under a cooperative agreement with the Department of the Army.

Although the lands have been managed for wildlife purposes for a number of years, Secretary Seaton's action gives formal recognition to the importance of these lands in the national migratory bird management program.

Segments of this new and important refuge in the Mississippi flyway will include waterfowl concentration areas in Illinois at Long Island, Portage Island, Mtchtown, and at the Keithsburg Levee District, and in Iowa at the Louisa Drainage District. Portions of the refuge will be designated for public hunting while other important waterfowl concentration points will continue to be maintained as sanctuaries for migratory waterfowl and other wildlife.

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