

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE  
Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife

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## GIFT ESTABLISHES WASSAW ISLAND REFUGE IN GEORGIA

The Department of the Interior announced today that a new national wildlife refuge has been established on Wassaw Island in Georgia. The island was donated to the Federal Government by the Nature Conservancy.

The 12,000-acre island is located 15 miles southeast of Savannah and is accessible only by boat.

Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife will administer the refuge primarily to benefit waterfowl, but compatible recreation such as picnicking, fishing and swimming will be permitted.

The Nature Conservancy, a non-profit organization which seeks to preserve natural areas by acquiring them and then donating them to public agencies, purchased Wassaw from trustees of the George Parsons Trust.

The trustees had stipulated that the area remain in its natural state and closed to industrial and commercial purposes.

In a letter to Nature Conservancy President Thomas W. Richards, Under Secretary of the Interior Russell E. Train said: "The preservation of the marshes on Wassaw Island will be of a real benefit to the waterfowl resource of the Atlantic Flyway. We also believe that the preservation of the wooded upland and the beach in its natural condition will be for the long-term benefit of the residents of Georgia and the Nation. As the development of the Atlantic coast continues, this property will remain as one of the few remnants of the natural ecology of the Atlantic coast."

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