

# DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR  
DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY

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## INTERIOR TO ESTABLISH WILDLIFE REFUGE ON NAVY ISLAND OFF MASSACHUSETTS

Secretary of the Interior Walter J. Hickel and Secretary of the Navy John H. Chafee announced today that a national wildlife refuge will be established on the Navy's 620-acre Nomans Land Island off Martha's Vineyard, Massachusetts.

The Navy maintains the island for a gunnery range, but the area has value for migratory birds, including the Ipswich sparrow, which is threatened with extinction. The agreement signed by the two Secretaries will protect the island's wildlife.

Assistant Secretary Leslie L. Glasgow, who heads Interior's programs for fish, wildlife, parks, and marine resources, termed the agreement "an example of the cooperative attitude between the Defense Department and civilian agencies of Government in helping to save the Nation's wildlife and its habitat."

Because live ammunition was used on the gunnery range during World War II and some unexploded shells remain, the public is not permitted on the island. Personnel of Interior's Bureau of Sport Fisheries and Wildlife, which operates the national wildlife refuge system, will make periodic visits accompanied by Navy personnel to determine what can be done to improve the island's wildlife habitat.

The Navy said it would seek to coordinate its gunnery schedule to avoid firing on the island during periods of heavy waterfowl use. Only inert ammunition is used by the Navy in the area at present.

The agreement announced today culminates negotiations initiated by Congressman Hastings Keith of West Bridgewater, Mass., who is interested in wildlife conservation.

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