

DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

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MIGRATORY BIRD CONSERVATION COMMISSION ACTIONS BRING COMPLETED REFUGE IN NEW MEXICO, NEW NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE IN WASHINGTON

Recent actions by the Migratory Bird Conservation Commission will enable the Interior Department's Fish and Wildlife Service to complete one national wildlife refuge in New Mexico and start another in Washington State.

At its January meeting, the Commission, which approves land acquisitions from duck stamp funds, authorized the Service to acquire the remaining 280 acres for the 23,000-acre Bitter Lake Refuge eight miles east of Roswell, New Mexico, and purchase 1,290 acres for the new Nisqually Refuge 50 miles south of Seattle, Washington.

Members of the Commission are Secretary of the Interior Rogers C. B. Morton (chairman), Secretary of Agriculture Earl Butz, Secretary of Transportation Claude Brinegar, Senator Henry Bellmon of Oklahoma, Senator Lee Metcalf of Montana, Representative Silvio Conte of Massachusetts, and Representative John Dingell of Michigan.

Bitter Lake Refuge, begun in 1935, is of particular importance as a wintering area for thousands of migratory birds. Its habitat also attracts a variety of mammals, fish, and other wildlife.

The Nisqually Refuge will be located at the mouth of the Nisqually River where it enters Puget Sound. Because the river flows down from Mt. Rainier, it deposits large amounts of sand, gravel, and finely grained silt on the delta.

Nisqually Delta is attractive to migrating brant, snowy and lesser Canada geese, whistling swans, canvasbacks, scaups, buffleheads, and a host of other diving and dabbling species. Nesting pairs of mallards, gadwalls, and green-winged teal also make use of its valuable habitat.

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