



DEPARTMENT of the INTERIOR

news release

OFFICE OF THE SECRETARY
BOARDS AND COMMISSIONS

For release: February 21, 1990

Paul Kranhold 202/343-6416 (O)
703/671-8466 (H)

INTERIOR SECRETARY LUJAN ANNOUNCES APPOINTMENTS TO NORTH AMERICAN WETLANDS CONSERVATION COUNCIL

Secretary of the Interior Manuel Lujan today announced the appointment of nine members to the newly created North American Wetlands Conservation Council which will guide the purchase and protection of wetlands vital to the environmental health of the Nation.

The new Council will be "a major force in our accelerated efforts to improve the environment," Lujan said. "Its work will help to accomplish President Bush's goal of 'no net loss of wetlands.'"

The Council was created late last year when Congress passed the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. Lujan said the act has three main goals: to protect, restore, and manage a diversity of wetlands and other habitats for migratory birds and other animals; to help maintain a proper distribution of waterfowl populations; and to sustain an abundance of migratory birds.

"The Council members, representing, as the Act requires, Federal, state and private conservation interests, are recognized experts in migratory bird conservation and wetlands preservation. Their work will assure a most effective campaign to restore wetlands and the wildlife they support throughout the hemisphere," Lujan said.

The Council will evaluate wetlands projects according to criteria in the Act and assign priorities for funding and acquisition. Composed of Federal, state and private members, it will recommend projects to the existing Migratory Bird Conservation Commission, a cabinet-level body consisting of the Secretaries of Interior and Agriculture and the Administrator of the Environmental Protection Agency, members of Congress, and representatives from states where projects are proposed.

The legislation is a milestone for the North American Waterfowl Management Plan, signed by the United States and Canada in 1986 to improve 6 million acres of wetlands in both countries and restore waterfowl flights to the 100 million bird level by the year 2000.

(more)

The Act authorizes annual appropriations for wetlands conservation projects of up to \$15 million and an additional sum of about \$10 million a year from a special trust fund composed of interest on Federal excise taxes from hunting equipment sales. The law also sets guidelines for use of the funds in the United States, Canada, and Mexico, which agreed in 1988 to participate.

Lujan said those appointed to the Council are: 3 year terms, Peter F. Bontadelli, Director, California Department of Fish and Game; Gary Meyers, Executive Director, Tennessee Wildlife Resources Agency; Matthew B. Connolly, Jr., Executive Vice-President, Ducks Unlimited.

Two year terms, Dr. W. Alan Wentz, Undersecretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks; Dr. John C. Sawhill, President, the Nature Conservancy.

One year terms: Dr. James A. Timmerman, Jr., Executive Director, South Carolina Wildlife and Marine Resources Department; William W. Howard Jr., Executive Vice-President and Chief Operating Officer, National Wildlife Federation.

The Act provides that John F. Turner, as Director of the Interior's Fish and Wildlife Service and Charles H. Collins, as Executive Director, National Fish and Wildlife Foundation, are automatically members of the Council.