



# NEWS RELEASE

*from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service*

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Inez Connor 202-219-3861

## **MORE HUNTING AND FISHING OPPORTUNITIES ON NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGES**

Nine new hunting and 12 new sport fishing programs have been proposed on national wildlife refuges, Secretary of the Interior Bruce Babbitt said today. "This makes 23 new refuge hunting programs and 18 new refuge fishing programs that have been opened by this administration," he said.

The proposed openings for this fall were published in the June 21, 1996, Federal Register. Public comments will be accepted through July 22 and should be sent to Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (RF), 1849 C Street, NW, Washington, DC 20240.

"The new hunting and fishing programs respond to the President's Executive Order and my own directive to the Fish and Wildlife Service," he said. "Both measures call for expanded opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation on our national wildlife refuges. I'm pleased to see this positive and timely action.

"These new hunting and fishing programs also carry out our pledge to expedite the procedure for continuing these compatible recreational activities when new refuge lands come into the system," he said, citing Cossatot, a new refuge in Arkansas, as an example.

The 23 new refuge hunting programs and 18 new refuge fishing programs opened by this Administration compare to the total of 23 hunting and 8 fishing openings during the last Administration. With the new programs, 283 refuges will be open to hunting and 276 to fishing. The National Wildlife Refuge System includes 508 refuges in all 50 states. Its 92.3 million acres also include easements on waterfowl production areas in 12 states and state-managed coordination areas in 19 states.

New hunting and fishing programs were proposed on the following national wildlife refuges:

### Hunting and Fishing

Arkansas--Bald Knob, Cossatot  
Illinois--Emiquon  
Indiana--Patoka River  
Louisiana--Big Branch Marsh, Mandalay  
Minnesota--Windom WMD  
Missouri--Big Muddy

### Fishing

Louisiana--Grand Cote  
Mississippi--Dahomey,  
Tallahatchie  
Nebraska--Boyer Chute

### Hunting

Oklahoma--Deep Fork

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Office of Public Affairs  
1849 C Street, NW  
Washington, DC 20240  
Room 3447

(202) 208-5634  
FAX (202) 219-2428