

106TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 3292

To provide for the establishment of the Cat Island National Wildlife Refuge
in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

NOVEMBER 10, 1999

Mr. BAKER introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee
on Resources

A BILL

To provide for the establishment of the Cat Island National
Wildlife Refuge in West Feliciana Parish, Louisiana.

1 *Be it enacted by the Senate and House of Representa-*
2 *tives of the United States of America in Congress assembled,*

3 **SECTION 1. FINDINGS.**

4 The Congress finds that—

5 (1) as the southernmost unleveed portion of the
6 Mississippi River, Cat Island, Louisiana, is one of
7 the last remaining tracts in the lower Mississippi
8 Valley that is still influenced by the natural dynam-
9 ics of the river;

1 (2) Cat Island supports one of the highest den-
2 sities of virgin bald cypress trees in the entire Mis-
3 sissippi River Valley, including the Nation's cham-
4 pion cypress tree which is 17 feet wide and has a
5 circumference of 53 feet;

6 (3) Cat Island is critical habitat for several de-
7 clining species of forest songbirds and supports
8 thousands of wintering waterfowl;

9 (4) Cat Island supports high populations of
10 deer, turkey, and furbearers, such as mink and bob-
11 cats;

12 (5) protection and enhancement of this area
13 through inclusion in the National Wildlife Refuge
14 System would help meet the habitat protection goals
15 of the North American Waterfowl Management
16 Plan;

17 (6) these forested wetlands represent one of the
18 most valuable and productive wildlife habitat types
19 in the United States, and have extremely high rec-
20 reational value for hunters, fishermen, birdwatchers,
21 nature photographers, and others; and

22 (7) the Cat Island area is deserving of inclusion
23 in the National Wildlife Refuge System.

24 **SEC. 2. DEFINITIONS:**

25 For purposes of this Act—

1 (1) the term “Refuge” means the Cat Island
2 National Wildlife Refuge authorized to be estab-
3 lished under section 3; and

4 (2) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
5 of the Interior, acting through the United States
6 Fish and Wildlife Service.

7 **SEC. 3. ESTABLISHMENT AND PURPOSES OF REFUGE.**

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—There is hereby established
9 as a National Wildlife Refuge the “Cat Island National
10 Wildlife Refuge”. The Refuge shall consist of the lands,
11 waters, and interests therein acquired by the Secretary for
12 the Refuge, including those acquired under section 5(a).

13 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Refuge are—

14 (1) conservation and enhancement of wetlands;

15 (2) general wildlife management as a unit of
16 the National Wildlife Refuge System, including man-
17 agement of bottomland hardwood wetland habitat
18 for migratory waterfowl, neotropical songbirds, and
19 bald eagles;

20 (3) protection and enhancement of endangered
21 species;

22 (4) promotion of fish and wildlife-oriented rec-
23 reational activities that are compatible with the pur-
24 poses described in paragraphs (1), (2), and (3); and

1 (5) promotion of increased stewardship of the
2 natural resources through environmental education,
3 interpretation, and other outreach methods.

4 (c) NOTICE OF ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary
5 shall publish a notice of the establishment of the Refuge—

6 (1) in the Federal Register; and

7 (2) in publications of local circulation in the vi-
8 cinity of the Refuge.

9 **SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION OF REFUGE.**

10 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer all
11 lands, waters, and interests therein acquired under section
12 5(a) in accordance—

13 (1) with the National Wildlife Refuge System
14 Administration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd–
15 668ee) and the Refuge Recreation Act (16 U.S.C.
16 460k–460k–4); and

17 (2) the purposes of the Refuge set forth in sec-
18 tion 3(b).

19 (b) USE OF OTHER AUTHORITY.—The Secretary
20 may use such additional statutory authority as may be
21 available to the Secretary for conservation and develop-
22 ment of wildlife and natural resources, water supplies, and
23 water control structures, outdoor recreational activities,
24 and interpretive education as the Secretary deems appro-
25 priate to carry out the purposes of this Act.

1 **SEC. 5. ACQUISITION OF LANDS, WATERS, AND INTERESTS**
2 **THEREIN.**

3 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall seek to ac-
4 quire for inclusion in the Refuge, by purchase or donation,
5 approximately 9,477 acres of lands and interests therein
6 on Cat Island, Louisiana, and water areas adjacent to
7 such lands. All lands, waters, and interests acquired under
8 this subsection shall be part of the Refuge.

9 (b) AVAILABILITY OF MAP; NOTICE.—After making
10 the acquisitions authorized by subsection (a), the Sec-
11 retary shall—

12 (1) produce a map depicting the boundaries of
13 the designated area of the refuge;

14 (2) keep the map of the Refuge on file and
15 available for public inspection at offices of the
16 United States Fish and Wildlife Service; and

17 (3) publish in the Federal Register a notice of
18 that availability.

19 **SEC. 6. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATION.**

20 There are authorized to be appropriated to the De-
21 partment of the Interior—

22 (1) such sums as are necessary for the acquisi-
23 tion of lands and waters designated pursuant to sec-
24 tion 5(a); and

- 1 (2) such sums as are necessary for the develop-
- 2 ment, operation, and maintenance of the Refuge.

○