

Calendar No. 906

106TH CONGRESS
2D SESSION**H. R. 3292****[Report No. 106–459]**

IN THE SENATE OF THE UNITED STATES

JUNE 20, 2000

Received; read twice and referred to the Committee on Environment and
Public Works

OCTOBER 2 (legislative day, SEPTEMBER 22), 2000

Reported by Mr. SMITH of New Hampshire, with amendments

[Omit the part struck through and insert the part printed in *italie*]**AN ACT**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. SHORT TITLE.**

4 This Act may be cited as the “Cat Island National
5 Wildlife Refuge Establishment Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds that—

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

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

11 (3) Cat Island is important habitat for several
12 declining species of forest songbirds and supports
13 thousands of wintering waterfowl;

14 (4) Cat Island supports high populations of
15 deer, turkey, and furbearers, such as mink and bob-
16 cats;

17 (5) conservation and enhancement of this area
18 through inclusion in the National Wildlife Refuge
19 System would help meet the habitat conservation
20 goals of the North American Waterfowl Management
21 Plan;

22 (6) these forested wetlands represent one of the
23 most valuable and productive wildlife habitat types
24 in the United States, and have extremely high rec-

1 reational value for hunters, anglers, birdwatchers,
2 nature photographers, and others; and

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

5 **SEC. 3. DEFINITIONS.**

6 For purposes of this Act—

7 (1) the term “Refuge” means the Cat Island
8 National Wildlife Refuge; and

9 (2) the term “Secretary” means the Secretary
10 of the Interior.

11 **SEC. 4. PURPOSES.**

12 The purposes for which the Refuge is established and
13 shall be managed are—

14 (1) to conserve, restore, and manage habitats
15 as necessary to contribute to the migratory bird pop-
16 ulation goals and habitat objective as established
17 through the Lower Mississippi Valley Joint Venture;

18 (2) to conserve, restore, and manage the signifi-
19 cant aquatic resource values associated with the
20 area’s forested wetlands and to achieve the habitat
21 objectives of the “Mississippi River Aquatic Re-
22 sources Management Plan”;

23 (3) to conserve, enhance, and restore the his-
24 toric native bottomland community characteristics of

1 the lower Mississippi alluvial valley and its associ-
 2 ated fish, wildlife, and plant species;

3 (4) to conserve, enhance, and restore habitat to
 4 maintain and assist in the recovery of endangered,
 5 and threatened plants and animals; *and*

6 ~~(5) to provide opportunities for priority public~~
 7 ~~wildlife dependent uses for compatible hunting, fish-~~
 8 ~~ing, trapping, wildlife observation and photography,~~
 9 ~~and environmental education and interpretation; and~~

10 ~~(6)~~(5) to encourage the use of volunteers and
 11 facilitate partnerships among the United States Fish
 12 and Wildlife Service, local communities, conservation
 13 organizations, and other non-Federal entities to pro-
 14 mote public awareness of the resources of the Ref-
 15 uge and the National Wildlife Refuge System and
 16 public participation in the conservation of those re-
 17 sources.

18 **SEC. 5. ESTABLISHMENT OF REFUGE.**

19 (a) ACQUISITION BOUNDARY.—The Secretary is au-
 20 thorized to establish the Cat Island National Wildlife Ref-
 21 uge, consisting of approximately 36,500 acres of land and
 22 water, as depicted upon a map entitled “Cat Island Na-
 23 tional Wildlife Refuge—Proposed”, dated February 8,
 24 2000, and available for inspection in appropriate offices
 25 of the United States Fish and Wildlife Service.

1 (b) BOUNDARY REVISIONS.—The Secretary may
2 make such minor revisions of the boundary designated
3 under this section as may be appropriate to carry out the
4 purposes of the Refuge or to facilitate the acquisition of
5 property within the Refuge.

6 (c) ACQUISITION.—The Secretary is authorized to ac-
7 quire the lands and waters, or interests therein, within the
8 acquisition boundary described in subsection (a) of this
9 section.

10 (d) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish
11 the Refuge by publication of a notice to that effect in the
12 Federal Register and publications of local circulation
13 whenever sufficient property has been acquired to con-
14 stitute an area that can be efficiently managed as a Na-
15 tional Wildlife Refuge.

16 **SEC. 6. ADMINISTRATION.**

17 (a) *IN GENERAL*.—The Secretary shall administer all
18 lands, waters, and interests therein acquired under this
19 Act in accordance with the National Wildlife Refuge Sys-
20 tem Administration Act (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.). The
21 Secretary may use such additional statutory authority as
22 may be available for the conservation of fish and wildlife,
23 and the provision of fish- and wildlife-oriented recreational
24 opportunities as the Secretary considers appropriate to
25 carry out the purposes of this Act.

1 *(b) PRIORITY USES.—In providing opportunities for*
 2 *compatible fish- and wildlife-oriented recreation, the Sec-*
 3 *retary, in accordance with paragraphs (3) and (4) of sec-*
 4 *tion 4(a) of the National Wildlife Refuge System Adminis-*
 5 *tration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd(a)), shall ensure that*
 6 *hunting, fishing, wildlife observation and photography, and*
 7 *environmental education and interpretation are the pri-*
 8 *ority public uses of the Refuge.*

9 **SEC. 7. AUTHORIZATION OF APPROPRIATIONS.**

10 There are authorized to be appropriated to the De-
 11 partment of the Interior—

12 (1) such funds as may be necessary for the ac-
 13 quisition of lands and waters designated in section
 14 5(c); and

15 (2) such funds as may be necessary for the de-
 16 velopment, operation, and maintenance of the Ref-
 17 uge.

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