

NWRA Applauds \$300 Million for Refuge System Green Jobs in House Stimulus Proposal

Washington, DC - The National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA), an advocacy group for the National Wildlife Refuge System, today applauded the House Appropriations Committee for recommending \$300 million in economic stimulus funds for green jobs on national wildlife refuges. If enacted, the 2009 American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will provide critical funding to the National Wildlife Refuge System to improve visitor facilities and rehabilitate habitats, while creating new green jobs on refuges throughout the country.

"The House has taken bold action that will allow the National Wildlife Refuge System to put thousands of Americans to work within 90 days of enactment," said Evan Hirsche, President of the NWRA. "Green jobs on refuges will improve wildlife habitat, create outstanding visitor opportunities, and help bolster local economies across the country."

Funding through the American Recovery and Reinvestment Act will greatly help the beleaguered National Wildlife Refuge System, which receives only 57% of necessary funding and has a backlog of more than \$3 billion in priority infrastructure and visitor center improvement projects ready to be implemented. Founded in 1903 by President Theodore Roosevelt, the Refuge System played an integral part in the economic recovery during the Great Depression, providing thousands of jobs through projects executed by the Civilian Conservation Corps.

Investing in wildlife refuges pays off for local communities; studies show that for every \$1 allocated to the National Wildlife Refuge System, there is at least a \$4 return in economic activity.

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to conserve America's wildlife heritage for future generations through strategic programs that protect, enhance, and expand the National Wildlife Refuge System and the landscapes beyond its boundaries that secure its ecological integrity.