

108TH CONGRESS
1ST SESSION

H. R. 2894

To establish the Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge and the Holt Collier Wildlife Interpretation and Education Center.

IN THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES

JULY 24, 2003

Mr. THOMPSON of Mississippi introduced the following bill; which was referred to the Committee on Resources

A BILL

To establish the Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge and the Holt Collier Wildlife Interpretation and Education Center.

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 “Theodore Roosevelt
5 National Wildlife Refuge Act”.

6 **SEC. 2. FINDINGS.**

7 The Congress finds the following:

8 (1) The Yazoo-Mississippi Delta, located in
9 Holmes, Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey,
10 Warren, Washington, and Yazoo Counties, Mis-

1 Mississippi, popularly known as the Lower Delta, is of
2 critical importance to the Louisiana Black Bear,
3 over 350 species of birds (including migratory and
4 resident waterfowl, shore birds, and neotropical mi-
5 gratory birds), aquatic life, and a wide array of
6 other species associated with river basin ecosystems.

7 (2) The bottomland hardwood forests of the
8 Lower Delta have been significantly cleared. Refor-
9 estation and restoration of native habitat will benefit
10 a host of species.

11 (3) The Lower Delta is part of a major conti-
12 nental migration corridor for migratory birds fun-
13 neling through the midcontinent from as far north
14 as the Arctic Circle and as far south as South Amer-
15 ica.

16 (4) The Lower Delta offers extraordinary rec-
17 reational, research, and educational opportunities for
18 students, scientists, bird watchers, wildlife observers,
19 hunters, anglers, trappers, hikers, and nature pho-
20 tographers.

21 (5) The Lower Delta is an internationally sig-
22 nificant environmental resource that has been ne-
23 glected and requires active restoration and manage-
24 ment to protect and enhance the value of the region
25 as a habitat for fish and wildlife.

1 (6) The Lower Delta’s existing natural, histor-
2 ical, and cultural assets and environmental restora-
3 tion potential may provide for a large component of
4 the economic revitalization of this area.

5 (7) The Lower Delta has the Nation’s highest
6 potential carbon sequestration storage capacity.

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

8 (a) ESTABLISHMENT.—The Secretary shall establish
9 as a national wildlife refuge the lands, waters, and inter-
10 ests therein acquired under section 5, at such time as the
11 Secretary determines that sufficient property has been ac-
12 quired under that section to constitute an area that can
13 be effectively managed as a national wildlife refuge for the
14 purposes set forth in subsection (b) of this section. The
15 national wildlife refuge so established shall be known as
16 the “Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge”.

17 (b) PURPOSES.—The purposes of the Refuge are the
18 following:

19 (1) To restore and preserve native Mississippi
20 River ecosystems.

21 (2) To provide habitat for migratory birds and
22 the Louisiana Black Bear.

23 (3) To maximize fisheries on the Mississippi
24 River and its tributaries, natural lakes, and man-
25 made reservoirs.

1 (4) To provide habitat for and population man-
2 agement of native plants and resident animals (in-
3 cluding restoration of extirpated species).

4 (5) To provide technical assistance to private
5 landowners in the protection, restoration, and en-
6 hancement of their lands for the benefit of fish and
7 wildlife.

8 (6) To provide the public with opportunities for
9 hunting, angling, trapping, photographing wildlife,
10 hiking, bird watching, and other outdoor recreational
11 and educational activities.

12 (7) To celebrate President Theodore Roosevelt
13 and his 1902 bear hunt in Mississippi, which gave
14 birth to the “teddy bear”.

15 (8) To increase natural, cultural, and historical
16 resource education and business.

17 (9) To achieve the purposes under this sub-
18 section without violating section 6.

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

21 (1) in the Federal Register; and

22 (2) in publications of local circulation in the vi-
23 cinity of the Refuge.

1 **SEC. 4. ADMINISTRATION OF REFUGE.**

2 (a) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall administer all
3 lands, waters, and interests therein acquired under section
4 5 in accordance with—

5 (1) the National Wildlife Refuge System Ad-
6 ministration Act of 1966 (16 U.S.C. 668dd et seq.)
7 and the Act of September 28, 1962 (76 Stat. 653;
8 16 U.S.C. 460k et seq.; popularly known as the Ref-
9 uge Recreation Act);

10 (2) the purposes of the Refuge set forth in sec-
11 tion 3(b); and

12 (3) the management plan issued under sub-
13 section (b).

14 (b) MANAGEMENT PLAN.—

15 (1) IN GENERAL.—Not later than 18 months
16 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
17 retary shall issue a management plan for the Ref-
18 uge.

19 (2) CONTENTS.—The management plan shall
20 include provisions that provide for the following:

21 (A) Planning and design of trails and ac-
22 cess points.

23 (B) Planning of wildlife and habitat res-
24 toration, including reforestation.

1 (C) Permanent exhibits and facilities and
2 regular educational programs throughout the
3 Refuge.

4 (3) PUBLIC PARTICIPATION.—

5 (A) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall
6 provide an opportunity for public participation
7 in developing the management plan.

8 (B) LOCAL VIEWS.—The Secretary shall
9 give special consideration to views by local pub-
10 lic and private entities and individuals in devel-
11 oping the management plan.

12 (c) WILDLIFE INTERPRETATION AND EDUCATION
13 CENTER.—

14 (1) IN GENERAL.—The Secretary shall con-
15 struct, administer, and maintain, at an appropriate
16 site within the Refuge, a multiagency wildlife inter-
17 pretation and education center, which shall be
18 known as the Holt Collier Wildlife Interpretation
19 and Education Center.

20 (2) PURPOSES.—The center shall be designed
21 and operated—

22 (A) to provide continuing, natural, cultural
23 and historical resource conservation and res-
24 toration educational programs to the public and

1 business development education and assistance
2 for natural resource-based tourism activities;

3 (B) to promote environmental education;

4 (C) to provide an opportunity for the study
5 and enjoyment of wildlife in its natural habitat;
6 and

7 (D) to honor the legendary African Amer-
8 ican hunting guide Holt Collier.

9 **SEC. 5. ACQUISITION OF LANDS, WATERS, AND INTERESTS**
10 **THEREIN.**

11 (a) **IN GENERAL.**—The Secretary shall seek to ac-
12 quire up to 25,000 acres of land, water, or interests there-
13 in (including permanent conservation easements or ser-
14 vitudes) within the boundaries designated under sub-
15 section (c). All lands, waters, an interests acquired under
16 this subsection shall be part of the Refuge.

17 (b) **METHOD OF ACQUISITION.**—The Secretary may
18 acquire an interest in land or water for inclusion in the
19 Refuge only by donation, exchange, or purchase from a
20 willing seller.

21 (c) **DESIGNATION OF BOUNDARIES.**—

22 (1) **IN GENERAL.**—Not later than 12 months
23 after the date of the enactment of this Act, the Sec-
24 retary shall—

1 (A) consult with appropriate State and
2 local officials, private conservation organiza-
3 tions, and other interested parties, regarding
4 the designation of appropriate boundaries for
5 the Refuge within the selection area;

6 (B) designate boundaries of the Refuge
7 that are within the selection area and adequate
8 for fulfilling the purposes of the Refuge set
9 forth in section 3(b); and

10 (C) prepare a detailed map, entitled
11 “Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge”,
12 depicting the boundaries of the Refuge des-
13 igned under subparagraph (B).

14 (2) SELECTION AREA.—For purposes of this
15 subsection, the selection area consists of Holmes,
16 Humphreys, Issaquena, Leflore, Sharkey, Warren,
17 Washington, and Yazoo Counties, Mississippi.

18 (3) AVAILABILITY OF MAP; NOTICE.—The Sec-
19 retary shall—

20 (A) keep the map prepared under para-
21 graph (1) on file and available for public in-
22 spection at offices of the United States Fish
23 and Wildlife Service in the District of Columbia
24 and Mississippi; and

1 (B) publish in the Federal Register a no-
2 tice of that availability.

3 (d) BOUNDARY REVISIONS.—The Secretary may
4 make such minor revisions in the boundaries designated
5 under subsection (c) as may be appropriate to achieve the
6 purposes of the Refuge under section 3(b) or to facilitate
7 the acquisition of property for the Refuge.

8 **SEC. 6. CONTINUED PUBLIC SERVICES.**

9 Nothing in this Act shall be construed as prohibiting
10 or preventing, and the Secretary shall not for purposes
11 of the Refuge prohibit or prevent—

12 (1) the continuation or development of commer-
13 cial or recreational navigation on the Mississippi
14 River or Yazoo River;

15 (2) necessary construction, operation, or main-
16 tenance activities associated with the proposed
17 Yazoo Backwater Pump Project;

18 (3) the construction, improvement, or expansion
19 of public port or recreational facilities on the Mis-
20 sissippi River or Yazoo River; or

21 (4) the construction, improvement, or replace-
22 ment of railroads or interstate highways within the
23 selection area described in section 5(c)(2), or bridges
24 that cross the Mississippi River, Sunflower River, or
25 Yazoo River.

1 **SEC. 7. DEFINITIONS.**

2 For purposes of this Act:

3 (1) REFUGE.—The term “Refuge” means the
4 Theodore Roosevelt National Wildlife Refuge estab-
5 lished under section 3.

6 (2) SECRETARY.—The term “Secretary” means
7 the Secretary of the Interior.

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