



U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Upper Mississippi River *National Wildlife and Fish Refuge*

Quick Facts

Refuge Facts

- Established: 1924
- Acres: 240,220
- Refuge covers 261 miles of Mississippi River Valley from Wabasha, Minn., to Rock Island, Ill., and is divided into four districts:
 - Winona, MN (Pools 4-6)
 - La Crosse, WI (Pools 7-8)
 - McGregor, IA (Pools 9-11)
 - Savanna, IL (Pools 12-14)
- The refuge includes land in 19 counties across four states (MN, WI, IA, and IL)

Financial Impact

- Thirty-seven person permanent staff
- 3.7 million visitors annually (refuge-wide)
- FY 2006 budget: \$3.9 million (refuge-wide)
- Mississippi River annually contributes an estimated \$1 billion in recreational benefits to the region
 - Refuge visitation generates nearly \$90 million per year in economic output
 - Visitation to refuge plus visits to adjacent counties generates \$255 million

Geopolitical Setting

- Established in 1924 by Act of Congress as refuge and breeding place for:
 - migratory birds; other wild birds, game animals, furbearers;
 - fish and other aquatic life; and,
 - the conservation of wildflowers and aquatic plants
- Represented in Congress by eight senators and six representatives
- Major navigation corridor through the refuge
- Eleven locks and dams within boundary creating navigation pools
- Seventy adjacent communities
- National Scenic Byways running along both sides its entire length

Biological Values

- More than 600 species of plants
- 48,000 acres of marsh habitat
- 51,000 acres of floodplain forest
- 5,700 acres of grassland including rare native prairie
- 40 percent of waterfowl in U.S. use the Mississippi Flyway
- 50 percent of the world's canvas-back ducks stage on the refuge
- 20 percent of the eastern population of tundra swans stage on the refuge
- 167 bald eagle nests; 2,700 peak population during spring migration
- 5,000 great blue heron and common egret nests in 15 colonies
- 119 species of fish
- 42 species of mussels
- 31 species of reptiles (19 snakes, 1 lizard, 11 turtles)
- 14 species of amphibians



Public Use Opportunities

- Hunting and fishing
- Wildlife observation
- Wildlife Interpretation
- Boating and camping
- 275,000 visits for waterfowl hunting
- One million visits for fishing (all seasons popular)
- 300,000 visits for wildlife observation, interpretation, and environmental education
- 1.3 million annual visits for water and beach-related activities

Contacting the Refuge

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