

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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## **FIRST WILDLIFE REFUGE CELEBRATED WITH ISSUANCE OF NEW POSTAGE STAMP**

WASHINGTON — Next month the United States Postal Service will issue a new commemorative postage stamp celebrating the centennial of the creation of Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge, which also marks the beginning of the National Wildlife Refuge system.

The Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge postage stamp will be issued at a 10:00 a.m. ceremony on March 14 at Riverview Park in Sebastian, Fla., 32958. The issuance ceremony will be part of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service's year-long Centennial Celebration and Festival that will also include a flag ceremony, exhibits, a time capsule dedication, live music and boat and kayak tours of the island.

"This new commemorative stamp helps the Postal Service mark a milestone in the history of wildlife conservation in America," said Patrick R. Donahoe, Chief Operating Officer and Executive Vice President, U. S. Postal Service, who will dedicate the stamp. "This stamp will provide Americans an opportunity to learn more about our natural resources and encourage people to help preserve the beauty and majesty of American wildlife."

"It is truly an honor to have the Postal Service recognize the birth of America's National Wildlife Refuge System through this commemorative stamp," said Steve Williams, Director of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. "Enthusiasm for the stamp has spread across the country, as hundreds of dedication ceremonies for the Pelican Island stamp will be hosted on refuges from Maine to Alaska over the coming months."

Jack Hanna, Director Emeritus of the Columbus Zoo and member of the National Wildlife Refuge Centennial Commission, will be the emcee for this ceremony. Joining Donahoe and Hanna will be Toni Jennings, Lieutenant Governor of Florida; Gale Norton,



(more)

Secretary of the Interior; Steven Williams, Director, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service; Craig Manson, Assistant Secretary of the Interior for Fish and Wildlife and Parks; Edmund Morris, author and biographer of Theodore Roosevelt; Henrietta Holsman Fore, Director, United States Mint; Roy Disney, with Walt Disney Studios and Pete Captain, District Manager, Central Florida District, Postal Service.

Established on March 14, 1903, by executive order of President Theodore Roosevelt, Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge was the first official wildlife refuge in the United States. According to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, in 1903 Pelican Island was “the last breeding ground for brown pelicans along the entire east coast of Florida.”

Today, in addition to the three acres of Pelican Island, the refuge also encompasses 5,377 acres consisting largely of submerged land, mangrove islands, marshes and maritime hammocks (raised, fertile areas usually occupied by hardwood vegetation). Hundreds of species of birds, fish, plants and mammals live within the refuge, including some that have been listed by the federal government as threatened or endangered.

The National Wildlife Refuge System encompasses more than 95 million acres across more than 540 national wildlife refuges and wetland management districts. At least one can be found in every state and U.S. territory.

The stamp features a photograph by James Brandt of a brown pelican. The other North American species of pelican, the American white pelican, can be found within the Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge during winter. Carl T. Herrman was the art director for this stamp.

Text along the bottom of the stamp reads “Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge 1903-2003.” The following text appears on the back of the stamp: Established in Florida on March 14, 1903, Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge was the first official wildlife refuge in the United States. Its creation marked the beginning of the National Wildlife Refuge System.

Postal retail items including T-shirts, tote bags, pins and cachets manufactured by official Postal Service licensed vendors, will be available for sale at the event.

Current U.S. stamps and philatelic products, as well as the free USA Philatelic catalog, are available by calling toll free 1 800 STAMP-24. A selection of U.S. stamps and gift items are also available at the Postal Store at [www.usps.com/shop](http://www.usps.com/shop). Images of many current, past and future stamp issues can be found in the Stamp Issues section of the Collector’s Corner.

Since 1775, the U.S. Postal Service has connected friends, families, neighbors and businesses by mail. It is an independent federal agency that visits 137 million homes and businesses every day and is the only service provider to deliver to every address in the nation. The Postal Service receives no taxpayer dollars for routine operations, but derives its operating revenues solely from the sale of postage, products and services. With annual revenues of more than \$66 billion, it is the world’s leading provider of mailing and delivery services, offering some of the most affordable postage rates in the world. The U.S. Postal Service delivers more than 46 percent of the world’s mail volume—some

207 billion letters, advertisements, periodicals and packages a year—and serves 7 million customers each day at its 40,000 retail locations nationwide.

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#### TECHNICAL DETAILS

Issue: *Pelican Island National Wildlife Refuge*  
Item Number: 454000  
Denomination & Type of Issue: 37-cent commemorative  
Format: Pane of 20 (1 design)  
Series: N/A  
Issue Date & City: March 14, 2003, Sebastian, FL 32958  
Designer: Carl T. Herrman, Carlsbad, CA  
Engraver: N/A  
Art Director: Carl T. Herrman, Carlsbad, CA  
Typographer: Carl T. Herrman, Carlsbad, CA  
Photographer: James Brandt, Davis, CA  
Modeler: Banknote Corporation of America, Inc. (BCA)  
Manufacturing Process: Offset/Microprint "USPS"  
Printer: Banknote Corporation of America, Inc. (BCA)  
Printed at: Browns Summit, NC  
Press Type: Man-Roland, 300  
Stamps per Pane: 20  
Print Quantity: 55 million stamps  
Paper Type: Phosphored tagged, Block, Nonphosphored type III  
Adhesive Type: Pressure-sensitive  
Processed at: BCA, Browns Summit, NC  
Colors: Yellow, Magenta, Cyan, Black  
Stamps Orientation: Vertical  
Image Area (w x h): 0.82 x 1.39 in./20.83 x 35.31 mm  
Overall Size (w x h): 0.99 x 1.56 in./25.15 x 39.62 mm  
Booklet Size (w x h): 5.90 x 7.26 in./149.86 x 184.40 mm  
Plate Size: 120 stamps per revolution  
Plate Numbers: "B" followed by four (4) digits  
Marginal Markings: "© 2002 USPS" • Price • Plate position diagram • Barcodes and text on back  
Catalog Item Number(s): 454020 Block of 4 — \$1.48  
454030 Block of 10 — \$3.70  
454040 Full pane of 20 — \$7.40  
454061 First day cover — \$0.75  
454093 Full pane w/FDC — \$8.15

#### HOW TO ORDER THE FIRST DAY OF ISSUE POSTMARK

Customers have 30 days to obtain the first day of issue postmark by mail. They may purchase the new stamps at their local post office, affix the stamps to envelopes of their choice, address the envelopes (to themselves or others), and place them in a larger envelope addressed to: PELICAN ISLAND NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE STAMP, POSTMASTER, 1290 MAIN STREET, SEBASTIAN FL 32958-9991. After applying the first day of issue postmark, the Postal Service will return the envelopes through the mail. There is no charge for the postmark. All orders must be postmarked by April 14, 2003.

Stamp Fulfillment Services also offers first day covers for new stamp issues and postal stationery items postmarked with the official first day of issue cancellation. Each item has an individual catalog number and is offered in the quarterly *USA Philatelic* catalog. Customers may request a free catalog by writing to: INFORMATION FULFILLMENT, DEPT 6270, US POSTAL SERVICE, PO BOX 219014, KANSAS CITY MO 64121-9014, or by calling 1 800 STAMP-24.

First day covers remain on sale for at least one year after the stamp's issuance.