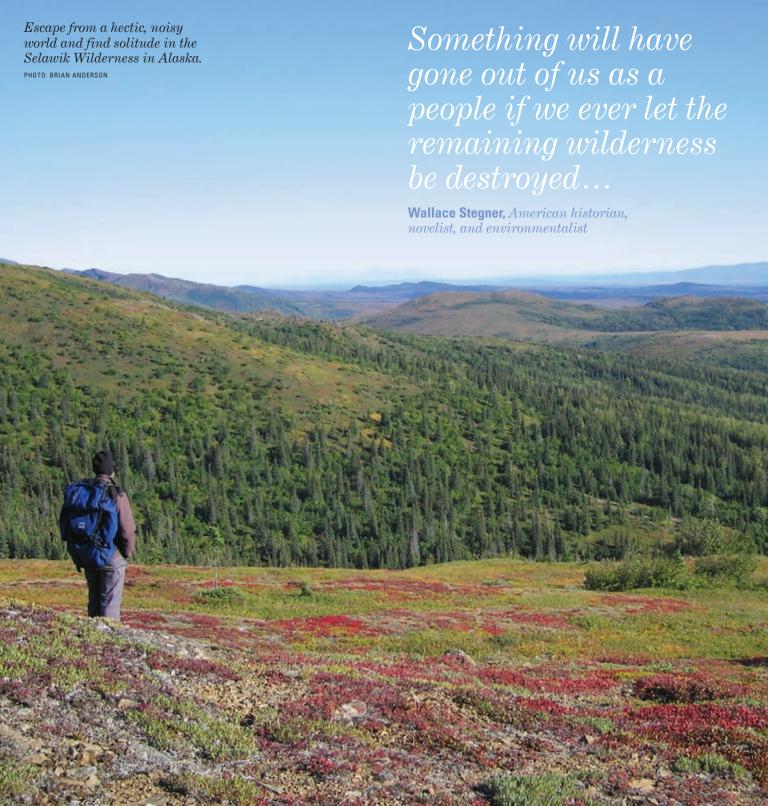
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

Welcome to Wilderness

In the National Wildlife Refuge System





Experience Wilderness in the National Wildlife Refuge System

Wilderness areas are wild, roadless, undeveloped places where you can see wildlife in its natural habitat.

Wilderness is a place for primitive and unconfined recreation. It is a place of solitude and of peace and quiet.

Wilderness is a place where children can connect with nature and learn about the intricate web of life. It is a place where families can create memories with challenging adventures in remote forests, or through more gentle pursuits such as wildlife photography and observation in coastal wetlands.

You can find about 20 million acres of designated wilderness in 63 national wildlife refuges. These lands contribute valuable wetlands, coastal islands, and deserts to the National Wilderness Preservation System.

National wildlife refuges allow

visitors to explore wilderness without motor vehicles, motorized equipment, or mechanical transport such as bicycles. Some refuges may limit public use to protect wildlife and its habitat.



AARON DREW







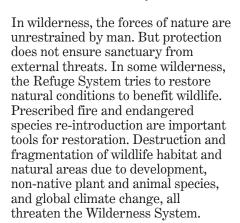
Encounter diverse wildlife, like this young piping plover (a threatened species), in the Brigantine Wilderness in New Jersey.

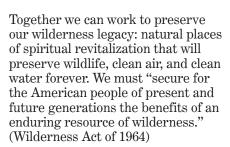
The National Wilderness Preservation System

The first European explorers encountered an American continent that presented an almost unbroken wilderness. Within 500 years, it was nearly gone. The drive to conserve remnants of our wilderness legacy stirred the nation to pass the Wilderness Act of 1964, creating the National Wilderness Preservation System. This Wilderness System protects more than 107 million acres.

Only Congress can designate wilderness, but every year local citizens and national conservation groups successfully recommend many additional areas to Congress for designation.

Wilderness Stewardship

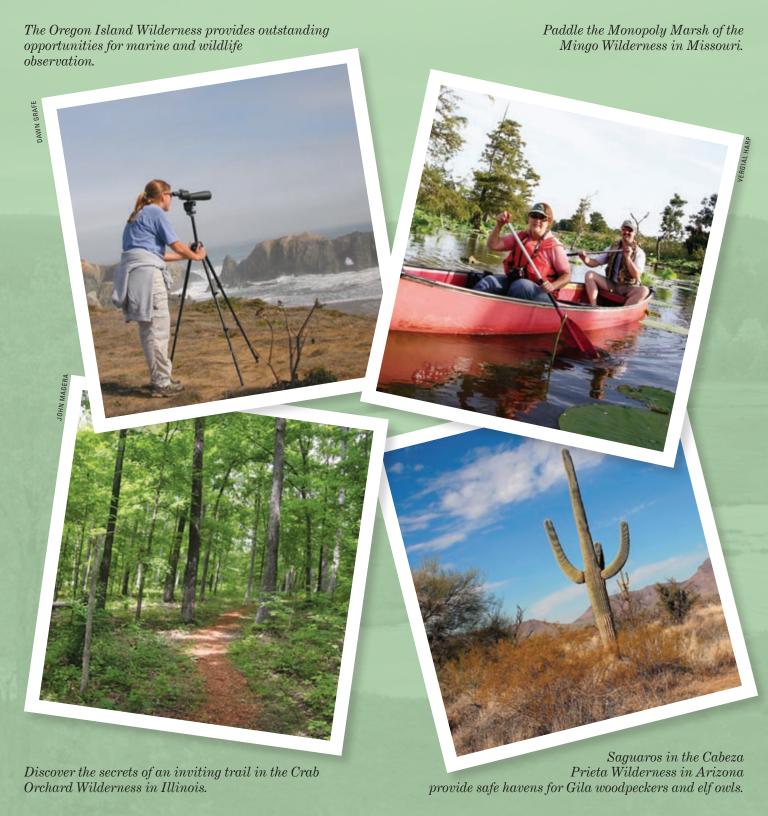






Managementignited fires in Cape Romain Wilderness in South Carolina help restore the natural habitat.





NSPWS USERVICE AND ADMINISTRATION OF THE PARTY OF THE PAR

Hike in the untrammeled beauty of the Havasu Wilderness in Arizona.

How YOU Can Help Safeguard Wilderness

Practice Leave No Trace

Follow these seven steps as you enjoy the wilderness areas. www.lnt.org/programs



- Plan ahead and prepare
- Travel and camp on durable surfaces
- Dispose of waste properly
- Leave what you find
- Minimize campfire impacts
- Respect wildlife
- Be considerate of other visitors

Join

Get involved by joining a local Refuge Friends group. www.fws.gov/friends

Volunteer

Check with your local refuge office or register online to volunteer. fivs.gov/volunteers

Plan Your Trip

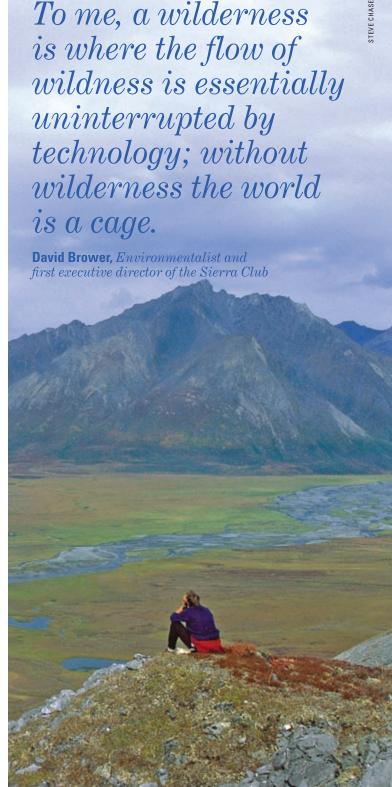
Visit www.wilderness.net for a map of all federal wilderness locations, history of wilderness, and other information.

Learn More

National Wildlife Refuge Wilderness www.fws.gov/refuges/whm/wilderness.html

Help preserve habitat. Volunteers restore native plants in the Pelican Island Wilderness in Florida.





National Wildlife Refuge System Designated Wilderness

Sixty-three national wildlife refuges and one fish hatchery have designated wilderness. The Refuge System administers its part of the National Wilderness Preservation System in partnership with the National Park Service, Bureau of Land Management, and Forest Service.





The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System is to administer a national network of lands and waters for the conservation, management, and where appropriate, restoration of the fish, wildlife, and plant resources and their habitats within the United States for the benefit of present and future generations of Americans.





Cover: Water lilies in the Okefenokee Wilderness trail in Georgia.