



U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE

Region 7 - Alaska

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News

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In This Centennial Year, Alaska's National Wildlife Refuges Have Somewhere for Everyone!

This year the National Wildlife Refuge System is celebrating a Century of Conservation on the only network of federal lands where wildlife comes first. One hundred years ago, on March 14, 1903, Theodore Roosevelt designated Florida's Pelican Island as the nation's first sanctuary for birds, thus marking the official birth of the National Wildlife Refuge System. At the time, President Roosevelt probably did not imagine that this single seed would sprout into an entire network of lands and waters dedicated to the protection of our country's fish, wildlife, and plant resources, or that the system would someday include 540 units, touch every state in the union, and total almost 100 million acres.

The story of Pelican Island is a fascinating one, but Alaska's National Wildlife Refuges have their own tales to tell, stories that are uniquely Alaskan. In the days and months ahead, many of Alaska's National Wildlife Refuges will be hosting events that put a distinctive "Last Frontier" spin on the Centennial celebration. And, of course, year in and year out Alaska's refuges offer the public access to opportunities for hunting, fishing, wildlife observation, photography and outdoor adventure unequalled anywhere in the world. Visitors willingly pay thousands of dollars to travel here and experience the wonders that we find virtually at our doorsteps.

So whether you want to take part in a Centennial celebration or just explore the recreational opportunities that a Century of Conservation has preserved for you, begin your refuge adventure with a visit to <http://alaska.fws.gov/>. Just click on "100 Years," and you'll understand why we say Alaska's National Wildlife Refuges have *somewhere* for everyone!

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System which encompasses nearly 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces Federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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*For more information about the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service,
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