



22 Environmental and Sporting Groups Announce Stimulus Plan to Create 20,000 Green Jobs on Wildlife Refuges

Historic Opportunity Modeled After Depression-Era Public Lands Jobs Program

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

December 11, 2008 (Washington, DC) – The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (C.A.R.E.), a coalition of 22 diverse environmental, sporting and scientific organizations representing more than 14 million Americans, released a plan today that would create nearly 20,000 green jobs on national wildlife refuges in all 50 states within 90 days.

The jobs creation program would help a beleaguered National Wildlife Refuge System, which receives just 57 percent of necessary funding and has a \$3.5 billion backlog of high-priority projects. In recent years, the System has been forced to close numerous refuges, allow the unchecked spread of invasive species over millions of acres, and spend millions of dollars on inefficient sources of energy.

The refuge job-creation plan includes calls for investing:

- \$443 million in combating invasive species and restoring native habitat, creating 5,644 jobs
- \$243 million in improving energy efficiency, creating 5,103 jobs
- \$201 million in new green construction, creating 5,025 jobs
- \$60 million in renewable energy, creating 1,260 jobs

“Since Refuges can put people to work on shovel-ready projects almost immediately, we urge Congress to include at least \$1 billion for Green Jobs for Refuges in the 2009 economic recovery package,” said Evan Hirsche, president of the National Wildlife Refuge Association (NWRA) and Chair of CARE. “These projects will keep local construction, electrical, landscaping and other companies working throughout 2009.”

The Refuge System, created by President Theodore Roosevelt in 1903, put thousands of Americans to work as part of President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s plan to pull the nation out of the Great Depression. The Civilian Conservation Corps (CCC) was responsible for much-needed conservation and construction projects on refuges all over the nation. This plan is modeled after the successful response to the economic crisis of the 1930s.

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Refuges are economic engines: for every \$1 appropriated by Congress, refuges return at least \$4 in economic activity. The plan to invest \$1 billion in refuges would not only strengthen local economies, but would strengthen ecosystems, giving wildlife greater adaptability in face of climate change.

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The Cooperative Alliance for Refuge Enhancement (CARE) was created in 1995 as a loose coalition of diverse organizations concerned about the ability of our National Wildlife Refuges to fulfill their missions. Members of CARE recognize the inadequacy of existing funds to operate and maintain the National Wildlife Refuge System and the biological, recreational, and economic consequences that this lack of funding has on the Refuge System and its surrounding communities.

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ALSO AVAILABLE TO JOURNALISTS:

- Green Jobs for Refuges Fact Sheet
- Status of Local Refuges in Journalist's Reporting Area
- Interviews with Evan Hirsche, NWRA president, and CARE Coalition Members
- Photos – backlog projects, new construction and historical CCC
- Examples of projects including new construction, energy efficiencies, habitat restoration, etc...
- Report: Restoring America's Wildlife Refuges 2008