

National Wildlife Refuge System Administration Act

16 U.S.C. §§668dd-668ee, 715s

The Act designates all lands, waters, and interests therein administered by the Secretary of the Interior for the conservation of fish and wildlife as the “**National Wildlife Refuge System.**” The Secretary shall administer the system through the Fish and Wildlife Service. [16 U.S.C. §668dd(a)(1)]

The Act limits the transfer or disposal of National Wildlife Refuge System lands. [16 U.S.C. §668dd(a)(2)]

No person shall knowingly and without authorization disturb, remove, or destroy any property of the United States, including natural growth, in the National Wildlife Refuge System. No person shall, without authorization, take or possess any animal, nest, or egg within wildlife refuges, or enter such areas for any unauthorized purpose. [16 U.S.C. §668dd(c)]

The general **mining and mineral leasing laws** shall continue to apply to National Wildlife Refuge System

lands unless the lands are subsequently withdrawn under other authority of law. [16 U.S.C. §668dd(c)]

The Secretary may permit the use of any lands within the system for any purpose, including hunting and fishing. [16 U.S.C. §668dd(d)(1)]

The Act authorizes **criminal penalties, searches, seizures, and arrests** for enforcement purposes. [16 U.S.C. §668dd(e)-(f)]

The Secretary shall pay into a special fund, **proceeds** received from the sale or other disposition of animals, timber, minerals, and certain other products in connection with the operation and management of the National Wildlife Refuge System. The Secretary **shall pay from the fund to each county** in which system land is located certain amounts according to formulas specified in the Act. Those counties shall **distribute those amounts to local governments** according to guidelines the Secretary establishes. [16 U.S.C. §715s]