



PROPOSAL TO REMOVE THE BROWN PELICAN FROM THE ENDANGERED SPECIES LIST ANNOUNCED

Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne today celebrated the brown pelican's remarkable recovery from the brink of extinction by formally proposing to remove the remaining protected populations of the bird along the Gulf and Pacific coasts, and in the Caribbean, and Central and South America from protection under the Endangered Species Act. Kempthorne announced the proposal at the Louisiana Governor's Mansion in Baton Rouge during a joint appearance with Louisiana Governor Bobby Jindal.



Photo by Thomas Gresham

USFWS Director Dale Hall (left) and Secretary of the Interior Dirk Kempthorne sign the proposal to remove the brown pelican from the Endangered Species List as Gov. Jindal and LDWF Secretary Robert Barham look on.

“Thanks to decades of coordinated efforts on the part of state and federal agencies, conservation organizations and private landowners, the pelican has rebounded to historic levels,” said Interior Secretary Dirk Kempthorne. “I’d like to thank Gov. Jindal and the State of Louisiana for their contributions to the pelican's recovery and for inviting me here to mark this milestone in conservation history.”

Kempthorne also noted that the pelican's recovery is due in large measure to the federal ban on the general use of the pesticide DDT in 1972, after former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Biologist Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* and alerted the nation to the dangers of unrestricted pesticide use.

“The brown pelican is known for its fishing displays, plunging headlong from the air into the water and rising with a mouthful of fish. In the same dramatic fashion, the pelican has pulled off an amazing recovery after a steep plunge toward extinction,” said Kempthorne. “There are now more than 620,000 brown pelicans found across Florida and the Gulf and Pacific Coasts of our nation, as well as in the Caribbean and Latin America.”

Louisiana, long known as the “Pelican State,” has been a key partner with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service in efforts to recover the pelican in the Gulf Coast region. For example, the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries and Florida Game and Fresh Water Fish Commission jointly implemented a restoration project. A total of 1,276 young pelicans were captured at sites in Florida and released at three sites in southeastern Louisiana during the 13 years of the project.

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LDWF Administration

Robert Barham, *Secretary*
Janice Lansing, *Undersecretary*
Randy Pausina, *Asst. Sec., Fisheries*
Jimmy Anthony, *Asst. Sec., Wildlife*

Division Administrators

Gary Tilyou, *Inland Fisheries*
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Vacant, *Wildlife*
Phil Bowman, *Fur & Refuge*
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Wildlife & Fisheries Commission

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Robert Samanie, III Henry Mouton
Earl P. King, Jr. Stephen J. Oats
Frederic Miller Stephen W. Sagrera





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"The mechanism put in place to protect these birds and the dedicated biologists on the ground who brought them back from the brink of extinction demonstrate how ecosystem protection does make a difference," said Robert Barham, secretary of the Louisiana Dept. of Wildlife and Fisheries. "Over 350,000 brown pelicans have been produced in Louisiana since 1971."

Efforts to protect the brown pelican led to the birth of the National Wildlife Refuge System more than a century ago in central Florida, where a German immigrant named Paul Kroegel became appalled by the indiscriminate slaughter of pelicans for their feathers. His impassioned pleas to President Theodore Roosevelt led Roosevelt to create the first National Wildlife Refuge at Pelican Island in 1903 and name Kroegel its first refuge manager. More than a century later, there are 548 national wildlife refuges, many of which have played key roles in the brown pelican's recovery.

In the southwest, Texas Parks and Wildlife Department, The Nature Conservancy and numerous other conservation organizations helped purchase important nesting sites and develop monitoring programs to ensure pelican rookeries were thriving. Other habitat protection and restoration efforts within the U.S., Mexico, and some Central and South American countries have also contributed to the pelican's recovery.

"Exactly 24 years ago this week, we celebrated the recovery of brown pelicans on the Atlantic coast," said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director H. Dale Hall. "The legal protections provided by the Endangered Species Act, coupled with the banning of DDT in 1972, provided the means for the service and its partners to accelerate the pelican's recovery. State wildlife agencies, universities, private ornithological groups and individuals participated in reintroduction efforts and helped protect nest sites during the breeding season."

If the brown pelican is removed from the list of threatened and endangered species, federal agencies would not be required to consult with the service to ensure that any action they authorize, fund, or carry out will avoid or minimize harm to the species. Other federal laws, such as the Migratory Bird Treaty Act and the Lacey Act, would con-

tinue to protect the brown pelican, its nests and its eggs from harm should the bird be removed from Endangered Species Act protection.

Further, the service is working with state natural resource agencies where the brown pelican occurs to develop cooperative management agreements to ensure that the species continues to be monitored and protected should it be removed from the endangered species list. The Endangered Species Act also requires the service to work with the state natural resource agencies to monitor the population and threats to the species for a minimum of five years after it is delisted. Should the population numbers decrease or the threats to pelicans change, brown pelicans can be relisted under the Endangered Species Act.

The brown pelican was first declared endangered in 1970 under the Endangered Species Conservation Act, a precursor to the current Endangered Species Act. The brown pelican in Alabama, Georgia, Florida, and northward along the Atlantic Coast states was removed from the list of endangered species in 1985. There are now more than 620,000 brown pelicans found across Florida and the Gulf and Pacific Coasts of our nation, as well as the Caribbean and Latin America. Today's proposal would remove Endangered Species Act protection from all remaining protected populations of brown pelicans.

The proposal to remove the bird from the list of threatened and endangered species will be published in the Federal Register. The service will seek comments on the proposal for 60 days following publication. Comments may be submitted by hand-delivery or mail to the Public Comments Processing, Attn: RIN 1018-AV28, Division of Policy and Directives Management, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, 4401 N. Fairfax Drive, Suite 222, Arlington, VA 22203. Comments may also be submitted electronically on the Federal eRulemaking portal at <http://www.regulations.gov>.

For more information contact: Chris Paolino, Press Secretary, U.S. Dept. of the Interior, ph. 202-208-6416; Tom MacKenzie, Chief of Media Relations, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, Southeast Region, ph. 404-679-7291; or Bo Boehringer, Press Secretary, La. Dept. of Wildlife & Fisheries, ph. 225-765-5115.



JOINT ENFORCEMENT EFFORT SUCCESSFUL ON LAKE BORGNE

Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) Enforcement Division Agents and St. Bernard Parish Sheriff's Office (SBPSO) deputies assigned to the Special Investigations Division collaborated on a joint enforcement effort in the waters of St. Bernard Parish On Jan. 23,

The patrol area was focused in the southern portion of Lake Borgne, where a large amount of commercial oyster fishing vessels had been taking oysters from the Louisiana State Public Seed Grounds.

The LDWF Region 8 office received numerous complaints regarding oyster violations, the use of illegal narcotics and undocumented workers in the area. When LDWF and SBPSO patrol vessels responded, the agents and deputies observed approximately 50 oyster fishing vessels in the area of Lake Borgne near Petit Pass and Half Moon Island. During the patrol, numerous citations were issued for alleged oyster violations and arrests were made on alleged drug charges and court ordered warrants.

Louisiana law mandates that the minimum size limit on oysters taken from the public seed grounds be 3 inches in length. Commercial oyster fishermen are allowed a 15 percent tolerance of undersized oysters and are also required to complete a logbook stating the area the oysters were taken from and the date taken.

Lawrence Nicosia, 44, of Violet, David Frazier, 44, of St. Bernard, and Manuel Garcia, 68, of New Orleans were all arrested and incarcerated for taking undersized oysters from a natural reef, illegal possession of hydrocodone and marijuana, and possession of drug paraphernalia. Nicosia was also arrested on court ordered warrants for previous oyster violations, and Frazier for previous simple battery charges.

Mark Phillips Jr., 24, of Belle Chasse, Chad Phillips, 25, of Marrero, Todd Sylve, 25, of Harvey, Jose Perez, 47, and Gustavo Duran, 30, of Bacliff, Texas, and J. Luis Rivas,



39, and Jose Cervantes, 26, of Houston, Texas were all cited for taking undersized oysters from a natural reef. Because of their undeclared status, Cosme Gonzales, 46, and Ruben Martinez, 20, of Mexico were arrested for the offense and incarcerated. Mark Phillips Jr. was also found to have active court ordered warrants from St. Bernard Parish and was arrested and incarcerated.

Emile Evans, 63, of St. Bernard, Jonathan Phillips, 31, of Marrero, and Emile Serigne, 43, of St. Bernard were

all cited for violating sanitation codes regarding logbooks. Phillips was also cited for taking undersized oysters and Serigne for commercial license violations.

Rodney Bass, 39, of Bay St. Louis, Mississippi and Glenn Mankin, 31, of Braithwaite were arrested and incarcerated for illegal possession of marijuana and drug paraphernalia. Bass was also a fugitive from Plaquemines Parish for failure to appear in court.

A total of 18 criminal citations were issued and two arrests made on oyster violations, five arrests were made on illegal drug charges, and four arrests were made on court ordered warrants. In addition, 437 sacks of oysters were seized and returned to the Public Seed Grounds.

The oyster violations carry penalties ranging from \$100 to \$950 or jail for not more than 60 to 120 days or both, plus court costs. The logbook violations carry a penalty of \$25 or not more than 10 days in jail, or both. The illegal drug violations range from fines to imprisonment of not less than five years.

Involved in the cases were LDWF agents from Region 8 Oyster Strike Force Statewide Strike Force and deputies from the St Bernard Parish Sheriff's Office Special Investigations Division.

For further information, contact Lt. Col. Keith LaCaze at 225-765-2988 or klacaze@wlf.louisiana.gov.



L.D.W.F. SETS 2008 PUBLIC MEETING SCHEDULE FOR THE 2008-09 HUNTING SEASON REVIEW AND COMMENT

The Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries has announced meeting dates and locations for public review and comment on the 2008-10 Resident Small Game and Deer Hunting Seasons and Regulations and Wildlife Management Areas Seasons and Regulations.

Hunters are encouraged to attend these public meetings and express their views concerning upcoming hunting season dates and regulations.

March 10 at 7 p.m.
Winnsboro, Winnsboro City Court Bldg.
1308 Cornell St.

March 11 at 6 p.m.
Monroe, ULM Campus

Hemphill Aviation & Computer Science Bldg., Room 134

March 11 at 6 p.m.
New Iberia, Sliman Center
129 E. Main St.

March 11 at 6 p.m.
Ponchatoula, Ponchatoula High School Auditorium
19452 Highway 22 East

March 12 at 6 p.m.
Alexandria, Alexandria City Hall Convention Center
Located at the intersection of Third and Murray streets.

March 12 at 6 p.m.
Opelousas, Yambilee Hall
Directions: Go through Opelousas on Hwy 190 west. When the two lane

opens up to a four lane on Hwy. 190 west, the Yambilee building will be on the left.

March 13 at 6 p.m.
Baton Rouge, LDWF HQ, Louisiana Room
2000 Quail Dr.

March 13 at 6 p.m.
Bossier City, Bossier Civic Center
620 Benton Road in Bossier City

March 13 at 6:30 p.m.
Lake Charles, LSU AgCenter
7101 Gulf Highway in Lake Charles, next to the Burton Coliseum

For more information, contact Kenny Ribbeck at 225-765-2942 or kribbeck@wlf.louisiana.gov.

FERAL HOG POPULATION ASSESSMENT SURVEY AVAILABLE

A Feral Hog Population Assessment Survey is available on the LSU AgCenter's Web site to collect and analyze data to help determine the scope of the feral hog problem in Louisiana. To participate in the survey follow this link: www.lsuagcenter.com/NR/rdonlyres/20A89D5F-52DC-4CE7-806E-925B7EA5126D/43001/FeralHogsSurvey1.pdf.

The survey was developed jointly by the LSU AgCenter and the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) to document the damage caused by feral hogs and also guide research needs to address the problem. The survey deadline is March 1.

“We want to encourage all landowners to please respond to this survey. The survey consists of 17 straightforward

questions, and should only take a short time to complete,” said Nan Huff, LDWF wildlife disease coordinator. “The information from these surveys will help us design wildlife programs to help control the feral hog population and the problems they create.”

The LSU AgCenter will compile the data and summarize the results in an upcoming issue of Louisiana Wildlife News.

Respondents may download, print and mail the completed survey to Dr. Michael Kaller, School of Renewable Natural Resources, Louisiana State University, Baton Rouge, La. 70803, or the survey may be completed on-line at www.zoomerang.com/survey.zgi?p=WEB227D3TF6Y75.