



News from

Congressman Ron Kind

REPRESENTING WISCONSIN'S THIRD
CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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Cong. Kind Presents \$3.5 Million to Necedah Wildlife Refuge for New Visitor's Center

Necedah, Wis. – Today, U.S. Rep. Ron Kind presented a check for \$3.518 million from the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service for the construction of a new Refuge Headquarters and Visitor's Center at the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) near Necedah, Wisconsin.

“In tight budget times, the fact that this project is being funded speaks volumes about its value to the community,” said Rep. Kind, an avid sportsman and the founder and co-chair of the National Wildlife Refuge Caucus in Washington. “Many people have worked very hard to highlight the potential of this project to bring nature to more kids and families, and today we celebrate the service this new center will provide in producing a new generation of conservationists and sportsmen and women.”

The new Headquarters and Visitor's Center will put the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge on the map as the premiere center for recreation and education, greatly improving the quality and capacity of the Refuge to engage children and adults alike in the diverse wildlife and recreation available on the 44,000-acre refuge. More than 160,000 hunters, anglers, and outdoor enthusiasts already visit the refuge each year and visitors from around the world come for the annual Whooping Crane Festival highlighting the Necedah NWR's internationally-renown whooping crane reintroduction program. Until now, the refuge has had only a small one-room reception area to greet and orient visitors.

“This refuge receives incredible support from Rep. Kind, our Friends Group, volunteers, local communities and visitors,” said Necedah National Wildlife Refuge Manager Larry Wargowsky. “All these people played an important role in helping us get a new visitor center. This will be a great addition to the refuge and a tremendous asset to the citizens of Necedah and all the communities of Juneau County.”

The new Center will seek to connect people with the Refuge through the use of exhibits, dioramas, and narratives in hopes of promoting increased exploration of the Refuge and a sense of stewardship and environmental responsibility among visitors. The increased work space will also allow the Refuge to expand its community outreach and educational programs.

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“This is a great day for the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge and the people of Juneau County,” said U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Midwest Regional Director Robyn Thorson. “This visitor center will allow the refuge to provide expanded opportunities for the American people to learn about, experience and enjoy the spectacular natural resources of central Wisconsin. The visitor center has long been a priority for the Midwest Region and I’d like to thank the entire Wisconsin Congressional Delegation, and specifically Rep. Ron Kind, for working closely with U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Director Dale Hall to keep this visitor center a priority at the national level.”

Necedah National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1939 as a Refuge for migratory waterfowl and resident wildlife, and has since expanded to meet the needs of a number of endangered species including the gray wolf, whooping crane, and the Karner Blue butterfly. Necedah National Wildlife Refuge is at the forefront of restoration for an Eastern U.S. population for migratory whooping cranes, and the new Refuge Headquarters and Visitor’s Center will help meet the intense public interest in its projects.

Rep. Kind has championed the effort to secure funding for this center, requesting appropriations for center for the last three years, and urging the Office of Management and Budget to include funding for the visitor’s center in the President’s budget as well.

Rep. Kind also acknowledged everyone involved in securing funding for this project including his colleagues in the Wisconsin Congressional delegation Rep. David Obey, Senator Herb Kohl, Senator Russ Feingold, as well as the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the Friends of the Necedah National Wildlife Refuge, the Village of Necedah, the Necedah Lions Club, and numerous other organizations that have given tremendous support to the Refuge over the years.