



News from

# Congressman Ron Kind

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CONGRESSIONAL DISTRICT

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## Rep. Kind Applauds Increased Funding for Wildlife Refuges

**Washington, D.C.** – Representative Ron Kind today lauded the funding bill approved by the Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies Appropriations subcommittee. The measure, which will fund federal programs related to the environment in coming year, provides badly needed increases over what the President requested and above what previous Congresses have provided.

In particular, the subcommittee provides the National Wildlife Refuge System with an infusion of \$56 million more than the Administration's request, which will represent the largest increase in the system's history. The total amount of \$451 million is the same amount requested in a letter sent by Kind and 79 other members of the Congressional Wildlife Refuge Caucus to the Appropriations Committee.

"This is a great day for our nation's National Wildlife Refuges," Kind said. "After years of neglect, Congress has taken the first step toward making a lasting commitment to our sensitive wildlife resources and the millions of people who enjoy them each year.

"As founder and Co-Chair of the Congressional National Wildlife Refuge Caucus," Kind continued, "I am especially pleased that my colleagues and I have been able to raise awareness here in Congress of the dire situation of our refuges and effectively advocate on their behalf. I thank Interior Subcommittee Chairman Dicks for understanding the needs of our Refuge System and providing it the funding it needs to get back on track."

The extra money provided by the House Appropriations Subcommittee for Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies will be used to prevent staff losses, maintain critical biological and visitor services, and address a growing maintenance backlog.

In addition to Wildlife Refuges, the subcommittee would provide the following:

- \$130 million above the President's request for the Fish and Wildlife Service
- \$148 million over the amount requested for the National Park Service (\$223 million more than the current year's funding)
- \$887 million more than requested for the Environmental Protection Agency
- \$16 million more than requested for State and Tribal Wildlife Grants

The subcommittee's version of the bill was approved unanimously on May 23, 2007, and will be voted on by the full Appropriations Committee in the coming weeks.