

AUGUST 31, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H.R. 3620 -- the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge for Virginia and North Carolina.

The bill establishes the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia, and authorizes appropriations of not more than \$7,000,000 for land acquisition over a 3-year period ending in fiscal year 1977.

The Great Dismal Swamp and the Dismal Swamp Canal straddle the border between Virginia and North Carolina at its easterly extreme covering an area of some 385,000 acres. The swamp is an environment of water, plant communities, and wildlife. The Dismal Swamp Canal is now administered by the Corps of Engineers as a part of the Intracoastal Waterway. Under provisions of P. L. 92-478, the Secretary of the Interior was charged with studying the feasibility and desirability of preserving the resource values of the Great Dismal Swamp and the Dismal Swamp Canal.

H. R. 3620 establishes the Great Dismal Swamp National Wildlife Refuge in Virginia to be administered by the Secretary of the Interior. The refuge will **consist** of the 49,097 acre Union Camp Corporation tract, and until the remaining 60 percent interest is donated to Interior, the Secretary will be required to lease such remaining interest on the terms and conditions he deems appropriate. The Secretary will be authorized to acquire additional lands and waters in Virginia and North Carolina by donation, purchase, or exchange.

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