

December 4, 1974

Office of the White House Press Secretary

NOTICE TO THE PRESS

The President has signed H. R. 17434 - Transfers of Wildlife Refuge Rights-of-Way which requires the payment of fair market value for rights-of-way which the Secretary of the Interior may grant upon National Wildlife Refuge System lands.

The bill will require the Secretary of the Interior to obtain the fair market value (as a lump sum of rental payment) for all rights-of-way granted through any area within the National Wildlife Refuge System. In cases where units of Federal, State, or local government are exempted from such payment by any other provision of Federal law, compensation would be by any other means agreeable to the Secretary, including land exchange or the loan of personnel or equipment. These non-monetary forms of compensation can be waived by the Secretary if he finds them impracticable or unnecessary.

H. R. 17434 will also require that any surplus revenues obtained in administering the National Wildlife Refuge System be transferred to the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund for refuge land acquisition purposes. These funds -- which totalled about \$1,300,000 in fiscal year 1974 -- have previously been used for refuge system management and enforcement purposes.

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