

**LAUREL, MD** - Secretary of the Interior Ken Salazar, Senator Benjamin Cardin and House Majority Leader Steny Hoyer and Congressman John Sarbanes today visited Patuxent Research Refuge and Wildlife Research Center in Maryland to highlight the job creation and conservation benefits of President Obama's economic recovery plan, which is currently before Congress.

The investments in the Department of the Interior that are included in the President's plan would create an estimated 100,000 jobs over the next two years. Both the House and Senate versions of the bill include over \$4 billion in investments in conservation projects, water infrastructure, roads, Native American schools, and other ready-to-go projects.

Secretary Salazar and Members of Congress highlighted \$15 million in modernization projects that are ready to go at the Patuxent Refuge under President Obama's recovery and reinvestment plan, including a new state-of-the-art laboratory that will allow biologists to continue the facility's distinguished history of ground-breaking wildlife research. The investments at Patuxent would create an estimated 500 jobs.

The research refuge, located between Washington and Baltimore, gained national renown when researchers discovered the link between the pesticide DDT and the decline of many bird species, leading to a ban of the chemical. The site, which is jointly occupied by the Department's U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the U.S. Geological Survey, also played a pivotal role in the recovery of bald eagle populations. It currently is home to a captive breeding population of whooping cranes, which are used for research and restoration of this endangered species.

"As job losses continue to climb, the need to swiftly pass the President's recovery and reinvestment plan only grows," said Secretary Salazar. "But with wise investments in shovel-ready conservation projects across the country, we can immediately put people back to work, create 100,000 jobs, and restore our national wildlife refuges, national parks and other public lands to a condition of which we can be proud."

"Patuxent is our nation's premier wildlife research facility, but it is in need of upgrading and modernization," said Senator Cardin, a member of the Senate Environment and Public Works Committee. "Our nation is a world leader in habitat preservation and protection and Patuxent is at the forefront of that effort. Improvements to Patuxent will provide jobs for Marylanders and ensure that Patuxent remains at the forefront of efforts to carry out that important mission."

"The proposed projects will provide jobs for Maryland while supporting the work of an historic research facility that has been instrumental in the recovery of bald eagles, whooping cranes and other species," Hoyer said. "Maryland and this country need this economic recovery and reinvestment, and our goal is to have it passed and sent to the President's desk by the end of the week."

"Investing in Patuxent facilities and infrastructure would create approximately 500 jobs and preserve Maryland's natural resources," said Congressman Sarbanes. "Ideally,

stimulus spending should meet short-term and long-term objectives, and these projects accomplish both.&quot;

The new laboratory at Patuxent will provide for state-of-the-art wildlife management, monitoring, and research to occur on the refuge and at the Wildlife Research Center. In addition, the recovery and reinvestment plan could lead to construction of a new administrative building, rehabilitation of several historic buildings that are currently boarded up, and rehabilitation of U.S. Geological Survey animal research facilities on the site, Salazar said.

Rachel Carson, a former U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service biologist, based much of her seminal work, *Silent Spring*, on research done at Patuxent Research Refuge, which was established in 1936 as the nation's only national wildlife refuge to support wildlife research.

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