

An Urban Wildlife Refuge Along the Rio Grande

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service News Release, January 11, 2012



Sandhill cranes forage on former dairy farmland along the Rio Grande. The land was authorized in September 2011 by Interior Secretary Ken Salazar to become an urban national wildlife refuge. Photo: Bill O'Brian / USFWS

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has big plans for America's most recently authorized national wildlife refuge, a 570-acre flatland that hugs a fish and wildlife habitat-rich stretch of the Rio Grande outside Albuquerque, New Mexico.

One goal is to provide "a valuable showcase for the public as they come on the property to see those restoration activities, participate in them and

witness the evolution of the property as those things are restored," says regional refuge supervisor Tom Harvey. Read the full story in the January-February issue of [Refuge Update](#), Page 5.

http://www.fws.gov/refuges/RefugeUpdate/pdfs/refUp_JanFeb_2012.pdf

TPWD Amends Nuisance Alligator Permit Process

TPWD News Release, Jan. 30, 2012

AUSTIN – Landowners will be able to contract directly with nuisance alligator hunters under new rules adopted by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Commission.

Over the past 20 years, once imperiled alligator population in Texas has rebounded spectacularly. Increased suburban, exurban, an industrial development in an adjacent to coastal counties, particularly along the mid- and upper coast, has resulted in increasing number of nuisance alligator complaints, especially in areas biologically characterized by diminishing or little to no habitat.

The new protocol will authorize a permitted control hunter to contract directly with landowner or landowner's agent (including a political subdivision, governmental entity, or property owner's association) for a fee or other compensation for the removal of nuisance alligators

The new protocol requires that each nuisance control hunter complete a certification process that includes an application to TPWD, a department-administered course and a test on nuisance control.

Reporting requirements will ensure that only bona fide nuisance alligators are taken by permitted control hunters. An annual permit fee is also required.

Prior to the new rules, the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department had contracted with qualified individuals for the removal of nuisance alligators. Each hunter bid for the privilege to conduct nuisance control activities in a specific territory, agreeing to pay a per foot price to the department for every alligator removed. In return, the control hunter was allowed to keep the alligator and could sell the skin and meat. All removals were authorized on a case by case basis by the department.

Persons interested in the nuisance alligator control program should contact Amos Cooper at 409-736-3625 (office) or 409-293-2836 (cell). Prospective permittees can also request the information by email at amos.cooper@tpwd.state.tx.us.