

Tallahatchie to continue without change.

Following a best-case scenario, if the refuges establishing new fishing and hunting programs were a pure addition

to the current supply of such activities, it would mean a consumer surplus of approximately \$200,000 annually and an estimated increase of 1,000 user days of hunting and 2,082 user days of

fishing (Table 1). Consequently, this rule will have a small, measurable, beneficial economic impact on the U.S. economy.

TABLE 1.—ESTIMATED CHANGES IN CONSUMER SURPLUS FROM ADDITIONAL FISHING AND HUNTING OPPORTUNITIES IN 2003

Refuge	Current visitation days (FY02)	Additional fishing days	Additional hunting days	Additional fishing and hunting combined
Wapanocca	844	.....	70	70
Grand Cote	2,500	.....	1,000	1,000
Northern Tallgrass Prairie .....	.....	.....	300	300
Boyer Chute	3,147	.....	175	175
DeSoto	14,967	.....	25	25
Big Branch Marsh	5,975	.....	500	500
North Platte .....	.....	.....	12	12
Bandon Marsh	100	.....	.....	0
Coldwater .....	.....	.....	.....	0
Rappahannock River	45	1,000	.....	1,000
Total Days per Year	27,578	1,000	2,082	3,082
Consumer Surplus per Day .....	.....	\$62.16	\$66.02	.....
Change in Total Consumer Surplus .....	.....	\$62,160	\$137,454	\$199,614

Note: All estimates are stated in 2002 real dollars.

b. This proposed rule will not create inconsistencies with other agencies' actions. This action pertains solely to the management of the System. The fishing and hunting activities located on national wildlife refuges account for approximately 1 percent of the available supply in the United States. Any small, incremental change in the supply of fishing and hunting opportunities will not measurably impact any other agency's existing programs.

c. This proposed rule will not materially affect entitlements, grants, user fees, loan programs, or the rights and obligations of their recipients. This proposed rule does not affect entitlement programs. There are no grants or other Federal assistance programs associated with public use of national wildlife refuges.

d. This proposed rule will not raise novel legal or policy issues. This proposed rule opens seven additional refuges for fishing and hunting activities and increases the activities available at three other refuges. This proposed rule continues the practice of allowing

recreational public use of national wildlife refuges. Many refuges in the System currently have opportunities for the public to hunt and fish on refuge lands.

Regulatory Flexibility Act

We certify that this rule will not have a significant economic effect on a substantial number of small entities as defined under the Regulatory Flexibility Act (5 U.S.C. 601 *et seq.*). A Regulatory Flexibility Analysis is not required. Accordingly, a Small Entity Compliance Guide is not required.

This proposed rule does not increase the number of recreation types allowed in the System but establishes new or additional hunting and/or fishing programs on 10 refuges. As a result, opportunities for wildlife-dependent recreation on national wildlife refuges will increase. The changes in the amount of permitted use are likely to increase visitor activity on these national wildlife refuges.

For purposes of analysis, we will assume that any increase in refuge

visitation is a pure addition to the supply of the available activity. This will result in a best-case scenario, and we expect to overstate the benefits to local businesses. The latest information on the distances traveled for fishing and hunting activities indicates that more than 80 percent of the participants travel less than 100 miles from home to engage in the activity. This indicates that participants will spend travel-related expenditures in their local economies. Since participation is scattered across the country, many small businesses benefit. The 2001 National Survey of Fishing, Hunting, and Wildlife Associated Recreation identifies expenditures for food and lodging, transportation, and other incidental expenses. Using the average expenditures for these categories with the expected maximum additional participation on the System as a result of this proposed rule yields the following estimates (Table 2) compared to total business activity for these sectors.

TABLE 2.—ESTIMATION OF THE ADDITIONAL EXPENDITURES WITH AN INCREASE OF ACTIVITIES IN THREE REFUGES AND THE OPENING OF SEVEN REFUGES TO FISHING AND/OR HUNTING FOR 2003–2004

	U.S. total expenditures in 2001	Average expend. per day	Current refuge expenditures w/o duplication (FY2002)	Possible additional refuge expenditures
Anglers				
Total Days Spent	557 Mil .....	.....	5.9 Mil	1,000
Total Expenditures	\$36.2 Bil	\$65	\$386.3 Mil	\$64,937