About the Refuge

Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge was established on September 12, 1938 as a refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife. The refuge provides resting, feeding, and nesting habitat for waterfowl and other migratory birds. Montezuma is situated in the middle of one of the most active flight lanes in the Atlantic Flyway.

Montezuma is one of more than 500 Refuges in the National Wildlife Refuge System administered by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The National Wildlife Refuge system is a network of lands and water managed specifically for the protection of wildlife and wildlife habitats and represents one of the most comprehensive wildlife management programs in the world. Units in the system stretch across the United States from Northern Alaska to the Florida Keys and include small islands in the Caribbean and South Pacific. The character of the Refuges is as diverse as the nation itself.

The Service also manages National Fish Hatcheries, and provides Federal leadership in habitat protection, fish and wildlife research, technical assistance and the conservation and protection of migratory birds, certain marine mammals and threatened and endangered species.

Montezuma National Wildlife Refuge is located at the north end of Cayuga Lake in the Finger Lakes Region of New York State. The Refuge contains 2,860 hectares (7,068 acres) and is situated in Seneca, Wayne, and Cayuga Counties. The Refuge is 35 miles (56 km) west of Syracuse, 40 miles (64 km) north of Ithaca, and 45 miles (72 km) east of Rochester. Land was initially acquired under Executive Order 7971, dated September 12, 1938. The purpose of the acquisition was: "...as a Refuge and breeding ground for migratory birds and other wildlife...". For other lands acquired under the Migratory Bird Conservation Act (16 U.S.C. 715-715r), as amended, the purpose of acquisition was: "...for use as an inviolate sanctuary, or for any other management purpose, for migratory birds".

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