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On Birthday of *Silent Spring* Author, Wildlife Again in Danger
Brown Pelicans and Other Species on the Brink as Oil Inundates Coastal Refuges

Washington, DC—When Rachel Carson published *Silent Spring* in 1962, brown pelicans and other birds were among those in danger of extinction from the effects of pesticides like DDT. Carson, whose birthday is celebrated today, spurred public outrage and launched a new era of strong government protection for air, land, water and wildlife. As the Gulf oil disaster continues unabated, the brown pelican again hangs on to survival by a slim thread. Only recently removed from the Endangered Species list, brown pelicans, which nest at the Breton and Delta National Wildlife Refuges on the Louisiana coast, are threatened by the toxic aftermath of millions of gallons of oil released from the Deepwater Horizon catastrophe. Some 30 National Wildlife Refuges along the Texas, Louisiana, Mississippi, Alabama, and Florida coasts are in imminent danger from the flood of oil—along with the birds, mammals, fish, crustaceans and plant life they protect.

“Rachel Carson reminded us that all life is connected, and that breaking the threads that make up the web of life can have tragic consequences,” said Evan Hirsche, President of the National Wildlife Refuge Association. “The BP disaster puts not only the human communities of the Gulf coast at great risk, but also the natural communities on which all human life depends. Our coastal National Wildlife Refuges are crucial ecosystems that play a key role in protecting the livelihoods and health of Gulf coast residents.”

Hirsche commended President Obama and Interior Secretary Ken Salazar for their leadership in announcing a six-month moratorium on all new offshore drilling, including a proposed new project in the Arctic Ocean offshore from the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge. “As the tragedy in the Gulf of Mexico makes clear, spilled oil is a deadly toxin for wildlife. We cannot afford to risk another oil disaster in a place that has been called ‘America’s Serengeti.’ Just as Rachel Carson spurred strong government regulation of air and water pollution, we hope that the Gulf oil disaster will launch a new era of strong government oversight of our precious natural resources.”

The mission of the National Wildlife Refuge Association is to conserve American wildlife for future generations by protecting, enhancing, and expanding the National Wildlife Refuge System and the wildlife habitats beyond its boundaries that secure its ecological integrity.

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