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Proclamation 6932—National Wildlife Refuge Week, 1996

October 7, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

As we prepare to meet the challenges of the 21st century, protecting the environment remains our sacred responsibility. Our National Wildlife Refuge System is a network of special places set aside to conserve the natural habitat of our fish and wildlife. My Administration is dedicated to strengthening this invaluable network of refuges that truly enhance the lives of all Americans.

President Theodore Roosevelt established the first National Wildlife Refuge in 1903, and his vision remains the guiding force for the Refuge System today: ''. . . keeping for our children's children, as a priceless heritage, all the delicate beauty of the lesser and all the burly majesty of the mightier forms of wild life . . . . Wild beasts and birds are by right not the property merely of the people alive today, but the property of the unborn generations whose belongings we have no right to squander.''

What began 93 years ago with a small island in Florida has grown into a system of more than 500 refuges spanning all 50 States and several trust territories. It is home to resident and migratory wildlife and includes lands of breathtaking beauty and diversity, from the tropical mangroves of Florida's Key Deer National Wildlife Refuge to the majestic peaks of the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge in Alaska. This mosaic of magnificent places provides Americans a wide range of opportunities—both educational and recreational—to learn about our environment and our country's heritage, to observe and photograph, and to hunt and fish. Our national wildlife refuges are among our most treasured areas, and we must reaffirm our commitment to preserving these precious resources for our children, for our communities, and for future generations. Working together, we can ensure the health and vitality of our wildlife and our Nation.

Now, Therefore, I, William J. Clinton, President of the United States of America, by virtue of the authority vested in me by the Constitution and laws of the United States, do hereby proclaim October 6 through October 12, 1996, as National Wildlife Refuge Week. I invite all Americans to learn about, appreciate, and celebrate this magnificent collection of lands that we as a people have set aside for wildlife and for the enjoyment of future generations. I also ask all to join me in a renewed commitment to responsible stewardship of our country's irreplaceable natural resources.

In Witness Whereof, I have hereunto set my hand this seventh day of October, in the year of our Lord nineteen hundred and ninety-six, and of the Independence of the United States of America the two hundred and twenty-first.

William J. Clinton

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NOTE: This proclamation was published in the *Federal Register* on October 10.

Proclamation 6933—Child Health Day, 1996

October 7, 1996

By the President of the United States of America

A Proclamation

The health of our children is part of our heritage as a Nation, passed from one generation to the next. It is also our hope for the future. Our children embody our dreams and are the vessel through which we seek an ever deeper understanding of the full reach of human promise. Their physical, mental, and social well-being is the fulfillment of that potential.

For previous generations, diseases were a deadly shadow hovering over every new birth. Thanks in large part to medical advances and improved public health practices, most of today's children are no longer threatened by these afflictions. Childhood immunizations alone have saved countless American lives in the past decade, and today we are increasing our efforts to identify and immunize children who need this protection.