

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service



News Release

Midwest Region

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Endangered Whooping Crane, Prominent in Species Recovery Success Story, Found Shot Near Cayuga, Indiana

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service Offers \$2,500 Reward for Information on Shooting

Wildlife law enforcement agents with the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) and the Indiana Department of Natural Resources are investigating the shooting of an endangered whooping crane near the town of Cayuga in central Vermillion County, Indiana.

The crane was shot sometime between Saturday, Nov. 28, when it was observed by an International Crane Foundation staff member, and Tuesday, Dec. 1, 2009, when an ICF volunteer found the carcass along West County Road 310 North, just west of North County Road 225 West.

The crane was identified by a leg band, and determined to be the seven-year old mother of "Wild-1," the only whooping crane chick successfully hatched (in 2006) and migrated from captivity.

There are approximately 500 whooping cranes left in the world. The crane and its mate were among 19 whooping cranes migrating from their summer grounds in Wisconsin to their wintering grounds in Florida.

"To kill and abandon one of 500 remaining members of species shows a lack of reverence for life and an absence of simple common sense," said John Christian, FWS Assistant Regional Director for Migratory Birds. "It is inconceivable that someone would have such little regard for conservation."

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Indiana Department of Natural Resources conservation officers and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service special agents are conducting a joint investigation into the incident. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is offering a minimum reward of \$2,500 to the person or people who provide information leading to a conviction.

Anyone with information should call the Indiana Department of Natural Resources 24-hour hotline at: 1-800 TIP IDNR (800-847-4367), or the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service at 317-346-7016. Callers can remain anonymous.

In addition to the Endangered Species Act, whooping cranes are protected by state laws and the federal Migratory Bird Treaty Act.

The Indiana DNR is the guardian of the state's fish and wildlife resources and their habitats. More information about the Indiana DNR is available at:
<http://www.in.gov/dnr>.

The mission of the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is working with others to conserve, protect and enhance fish, wildlife, plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. We are both a leader and trusted partner in fish and wildlife conservation, known for our scientific excellence, stewardship of lands and natural resources, dedicated professionals and commitment to public service. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit <http://www.fws.gov>.