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News Release



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LAUREL HILL WILDLIFE DRIVE AT SAVANNAH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE REOPENS FOLLOWING HURRICANE IRMA

Effective October 12, 2017, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service will reopen the Laurel Hill Wildlife Drive and adjacent trails at Savannah National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) following damage repairs and clean-up efforts in the wake of Hurricane Irma. The refuge was closed on Thursday, September 7, and a damage assessment was conducted on Tuesday, September 12, at which time it was determined that portions of the Refuge were unsafe to reopen. Levees protecting the freshwater impoundments were breached, and significant damage was found to the roadway of the wildlife drive.

Refuge staff has repaired the damage to the wildlife drive, allowing public access to resume. However, the Diversion Canal Structure near the Fife Plantation, which spurs off of the wildlife drive, received significant damage during the storm. That area will remain closed until further notice, pending planning and resources in coordination with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers. Normal hours of operation for the remainder of the Refuge will now be in effect which are daily from sunrise to sunset.

Savannah NWR is one of over 560 national wildlife refuges located throughout the United States. The 31,551-acre refuge is home to bald eagles, neo-tropical migratory songbirds, large concentrations of wading birds and wintering ducks, and American alligators. The Savannah NWR Visitor Center is open Monday – Saturday, from 9am-4pm; closed Sundays and all federal holidays. The Laurel Hill Wildlife Drive is open daily from sunrise to sunset. Visit <https://www.fws.gov/refuge/savannah/> for more information.

National Wildlife Refuges...Where Wildlife Comes Naturally!