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News Release



For Immediate Release
Date: March 17, 2011

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Construction at Corn Creek Impacts Public Access

New Visitor Center and Maintenance Facility Being Built for Desert NWR

LAS VEGAS – The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (FWS) is advising visitors to the Desert National Wildlife Refuge (Desert NWR) that construction activities will impact access to trails at Corn Creek. Major work on the upper pond begins on Monday, March 21, 2011, as part of ongoing preparations for construction of a new visitor center and a maintenance building.

According to Desert NWR Manager Amy Sprunger, a construction crew will begin reconfiguring the pond to support the fire-suppression and heating and cooling systems for the new facilities. The existing foot trail and the recently-completed Birdsong Loop Trail might not be accessible, because of their proximity to the pond.

“The contractor indicated that crews will make every attempt to confine their work to the west of the main foot trail that leads from the parking lot,” said Sprunger. “In any case, public access to the area will be allowed only if it is deemed safe.” The project is scheduled for completion by the first week in June.

Sprunger encourages everyone planning to visit Corn Creek to contact the wildlife refuge at 702-879-6110 for the latest information.

All roads on the Desert NWR remain open. Visitors are reminded to be cautious of changing conditions, follow all signs and directions, and be especially aware of heavy equipment and construction personnel.

Groundbreaking for the visitor center is planned for late this summer, and construction is expected to take approximately 15 months. The new 11,000-square-foot facility will include visitor services and exhibits, as well as administrative offices.

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The Desert NWR (www.fws.gov/desertcomplex/desertrange) is approximately 23 miles north of Las Vegas on U.S. Highway 95. A sign on the east side of the highway marks the turnoff to the 4-mile gravel road leading to Corn Creek. The wildlife refuge was established May 20, 1936, for the conservation and development of wildlife resources, including the desert bighorn sheep. At 1.5 million acres, it is the largest national wildlife refuge in the continental United States.

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 www.fws.gov.