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News Release



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Trails on Three National Wildlife Refuges and Hatcheries in Oregon and Washington Receive National Trail Recognition

Secretary of the Interior Gale Norton announced the designation of three new National Recreation Trails (NRT) on National Wildlife Refuge and National Fish Hatchery lands in Oregon and Washington. These three trails join 15 other new NRT designations on U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service lands, raising the number of NRTs administered by the Service to 35.

The Woodpecker Loop Trail on William L. Finley National Wildlife Refuge, Corvallis, Oregon, the Icicle Creek Nature Trail on Leavenworth National Fish Hatchery, Leavenworth, Washington, and the Oaks to Wetlands Trail on Ridgefield National Wildlife Refuge, Ridgefield, Washington, are the three new designations in the Pacific Northwest.

“These trails lead hikers through some of America’s most beautiful deserts, wetlands and prairies that make up our National Wildlife Refuge System and National Fish Hatcheries,” said Secretary Norton. “The National Recreation Trails designation will help more people discover the many recreational opportunities available on refuges and at hatcheries.”

National Recreation Trails are designated by the Secretary of the Interior or the Secretary of Agriculture and recognize exemplary trails of local and regional significance in response to an application from the trail's managing agency or organization. These trails are now recognized as part of America's national system of trails and join over 900 other trails nationwide.

The refuge and hatchery trails will benefit from the prestige and increased visibility of being a part of the National Trail System. New designations are announced annually by the Secretary of the Interior as part of the nationwide celebration of National Trails Day the first Saturday in June, and recognized at the biannual National Trails Symposium.

National Recreation Trails provide for numerous outdoor recreation activities in a variety of urban, rural and remote areas, ranging from less than a mile to 485 miles in length on federal, state, municipal, and privately owned lands.

The **Woodpecker Loop Trail** runs a little over a mile and takes visitors through a variety of natural settings. Beginning in an oak woodland habitat, the trail climbs slightly to an overlook that affords exceptional views of the Willamette Valley and Cascade Range, and then continues down into forests of Douglas-fir and mature maples. With interpretive signage as a guide, this scenic trail is a prime location for wildlife observation and offers users a chance to see five species of woodpeckers.

The **Icicle Creek Nature Trail** is a one-mile interpretive trail winding along a beautiful historic stream channel. This trail, which is accessible to people of all abilities, meanders through a spectacularly scenic meadow and leads to quiet areas with wildlife viewing blinds and views of salmon habitat. In addition to its scenic features, trail users enjoy outdoor activities such as biking and cross country skiing. This is one of the most popular walking trails in the Wenatchee Valley.

The **Oaks to Wetlands Trail** offers six miles of natural haven for residents of the nearby Portland-Vancouver metropolitan area. A major feature of the trail is the nationally recognized archaeological site of the Chinookan town of Cathlapotle, part of the Lewis and Clark National Historic Trail, and the replica Cathlapotle Plankhouse. Features include wetlands, native plants, and waterfowl, and visitors can use the trail to access fishing opportunities in Lake River and refuge lakes. This trail offers a place for area residents to keep in touch with their “wild” neighbors and appreciate the beauty of the type of natural areas once common along the lower Columbia River.

For more information on the National Recreation Trails program, visit the American Trails website at <http://www.americantrails.org/nationalrecreationtrails/>.

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The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resources offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign and Native American tribal governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.