

# News Release

**Department of the Interior / U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service  
Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex  
Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge  
1428 Highway 27  
Bell City LA 70630-9618**

## **For Immediate Release**

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## **Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge Will Burn off Oiled Vegetation resulting from Hurricane Rita**

Fire management officials at the Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex plan to burn off 483 acres of vegetation containing 150 acres of oiled vegetation that resulted from a release during Hurricane Rita. The oiled vegetation is located within the East Cove Unit of Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, east of Calcasieu Lake within Cameron Parish. The burn will take place tomorrow morning, October 3, 2005, when the predicted winds will carry the smoke out over the Gulf of Mexico.

Following Hurricane Rita when the oil release was discovered, scare cannons, devices that make noise to scare off birds and other wildlife, were placed around the oil release site to prevent wildlife from utilizing the area until the oil could be removed. Fire management officials have received the government approvals, including a burn ban exemption from Cameron Parish, necessary to complete the oil release burn. Following the burn, oil will no longer be a threat to wildlife within this area of the refuge.

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 that encompasses more than 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 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 governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.