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U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge
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News Release

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Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge Updates Entrance Fees Beginning January 1, 2017

Titusville: The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service announces, beginning January 1, 2017, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge will implement an increase to the daily fee and annual fee.

The refuge daily pass will increase from \$5.00 to \$10.00. The refuge annual pass, valid for one year from the date of purchase, will increase from \$15.00 to \$25.00.

The \$25.00 Federal Duck Stamp, may also be used as an entrance pass.

According to Refuge Manager Layne Hamilton, the fee increases are necessary to offset the costs of operating and maintaining facilities and safety services on the refuge. They also mirror similar increases at the nearby Canaveral National Seashore.

Currently 80% of the revenue generated from fees stays at the Refuge and is used to fund visitor services projects. A new 30 foot concrete boat ramp and courtesy dock were recently completed at the Biolab boat launch. The new ramp has been relocated to provide direct access into the Mosquito Lagoon. The new location will reduce seagrass scaring in the local area by providing the public with direct access to the natural lagoon channel. Boaters are now able to launch larger vessels without power loading, reducing propeller dredging and siltation. This will protect vital sea grass beds which are an important lagoon habitat. It will also eliminate the need for power loading of boats onto trailers. A new kayak launching dock was also installed. The dock is fully accessible and will help anyone with mobility limitations to more easily enter and exit their kayak. The Service is excited to be able to offer this facility to visitors. It is the first of its kind in the County.

Refuge daily and annual passes may be purchased at the refuge visitor center, located 6 miles east of Titusville on route 402. The visitor center is open daily from 8AM until 4PM. Daily passes may also be purchased at self-serve kiosks at various locations around the refuge including Black Point Wildlife Drive as well as each of the 3 main boat ramps. For more information contact the visitor center at 321-861-0669.

About The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

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. For more information on our work and the people who make it happen, visit www.fws.gov.

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