

Information Bulletin

A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge

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www.fws.gov/refuge/arm_loxahatchee/

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Prescribed Fire Activity at Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge

Boynton Beach, FL. Fire management officials at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) are planning to conduct a prescribed burn for hazardous fuel reduction. Current weather conditions look favorable to complete an approximately 15,000 acre burn in the southeast portion of the refuge on Tuesday, June 23, 2020. This date may be adjusted as weather conditions dictate. The fire will be ignited primarily from a helicopter with assistance from ground crews. Please see accompanying map. Smoke will be readily visible from areas in western Palm Beach County, western Boca Raton, northern Broward County, and Parkland. Wind direction is predicted to be from the southeast and will carry smoke away from populated areas.

Prescribed fire is the burning of vegetation based on a prescription that takes into consideration fuel type, fuel moisture, relative humidity, air temperature, wind speed, wind direction, and other atmospheric conditions to ensure a safe and successful burn. According to Brian Pippin, Fire Operations, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, South Florida and Caribbean Zone, "All prescribed fires must have approved plans and meet set criteria authorized by agency fire experts." The prescribed burn will also comply with all State of Florida open burning regulations. Refuge fire management staff will conduct the burns with assistance from fire staff at other refuges located throughout south Florida and in cooperation with Florida Division of Forestry and Palm Beach County Fire and Rescue.

The objectives of the A.R.M. Loxahatchee Fire Management Program are 1) to provide protection to private property and human lives against uncontrolled wildfires that may result from un-managed fire-maintained vegetative communities through vegetative fuel reduction, 2) to provide protection to both natural and constructed refuge resources from catastrophic wildfires through fuel reduction, 3) to maintain biological diversity in fire-maintained plant communities by prescribed fire and 4) to maintain habitat for Service trust resources, including endangered and threatened plant and animal species through prescribed fire.

The refuge is located off U.S. 441/SR 7, two miles south of SR 804 (Boynton Beach Blvd.) and three miles north of SR 806 (Delray Beach's Atlantic Avenue). The Headquarters Area (including the A, B, and C Impoundments), outdoor facilities, grounds, boat ramp, and trails are open daily from 5 am to 10 pm. Night use is strictly prohibited. The remainder of the refuge is open 24 hours. The Visitor Center hours are 9:00 a.m. to 4:00 p.m., seven days a week. An entrance fee of \$10.00 per vehicle is charged. A variety of annual passes, including a \$25.00 refuge specific annual pass, are available. Due to COVID-19 the visitor center remains closed and entrance fees are temporarily suspended. Please visit the refuge website at http://www.fws.gov/refuge/arm_loxahatchee or call the Administration Office at (561) 732-3684.

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The Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge was established under a License Agreement with the South Florida Water Management District in 1951 as an inviolate sanctuary for migratory birds. The vision of the refuge is to serve as an outstanding showcase for ecosystem management that restores, protects, and enhances a portion of the unique north Everglades biological community. This public asset provides for the enjoyment and enhanced quality of life for present and future generations. To learn more about the refuge visit: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/arm_loxahatchee/. Connect with our Facebook page at <https://www.facebook.com/ARMLoxahatcheeNWR/>

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.





U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

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Boynton Beach, Florida

