



News Release

**Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee
National Wildlife Refuge**
10216 Lee Road
Boynton Beach, FL 33473
Phone: 561.734.8303
Fax: 561.369.7190
https://www.fws.gov/refuge/arm_loxahatchee/

Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge
13640 SE Federal Hwy
Hobe Sound, FL 33455
Phone: 772.546.6141
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https://www.fws.gov/refuge/hobe_sound/

**FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
January 7, 2019**

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Contact: Christine Eastwick 772.546.6141**

PUBLIC MEETING REFUGE ENTRANCE FEES TO INCREASE

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is hosting a Public Meeting and accepting public comments on the proposed changes to the Recreational Pass fee structure on Arthur R. Marshall National Wildlife Refuge Complex which is comprised of the Arthur R. Marshall National Wildlife Refuge and the Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge.

There will be a public meeting for each individual Refuge. The A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge will be holding a Public Meeting on January 22, 2019 at 10am at the visitor center auditorium located at 10216 Lee Road, Boynton Beach, FL 33473. The Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge will be holding a Public Meeting on January 24, 2019 at 10am at the visitor center located at 13640 SE Federal Hwy, Hobe Sound, FL 33455.

The Recreational Passes at these two Refuges have not increased in price in over two decades. At both Refuges, the Annual Pass will be increased from \$12 to \$25 for 12 months of access and the \$1 Daily Pedestrian/Bicycle Recreation fee will be removed allowing free daily access for public that is either walking or bicycling onto the Refuge. A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge will also increase daily Recreational Passes from \$5 to \$10 and the Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge will remain at \$5 for daily access.

Since 1981, the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service has had authority to collect recreation fees. Since 1997, the Service has been able to retain fees collected at the station, first under the Recreation

Fee Demonstration Program and then, in 2004, under the authority of Federal Lands Recreation Enhancement Act (FLREA). The Refuges currently retain nearly 100% of fees collected which are used for recreation program improvements at the Refuge. Typical projects paid for by recreation fee funds include education programming, road and parking lot maintenance, brochures, passes and envelopes, trail improvements, interpretive signage and boardwalk maintenance.

We are interested in hearing from you regarding the proposed Recreation Fee changes and are requesting public comments beginning now through February 28, 2019. Please submit any comments to armloxahatchee@fws.gov or by mail to 10216 Lee Road, Boynton Beach, FL 33473. Comments will also be accepted during the Public Meetings. All comments will be reviewed and considered before a final decision is made on the implementation of the fee changes.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to these meetings for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, close captioning, or other accommodation needs to Serena Rinker, Park Ranger (serena_rinker@fws.gov, 561-735-6029), TTY 800-877-8339 by close of business January 15, 2019.

The table below represents proposed fee changes:

<i>Refuge</i>	<i>Type</i>	<i>Current</i>	<i>Proposed</i>
A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge	Daily Recreation Pass	\$5.00	\$10.00
A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge	Annual Recreation Pass	\$12.00	\$25.00
A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge	Daily Pedestrian/Bicycle Recreation Pass	\$1.00	FREE
Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge	Daily Recreation Pass	\$5.00	No Change
Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge	Annual Recreation Pass	\$12.00	\$25.00
Hobe Sound National Wildlife Refuge	Daily Pedestrian/Bicycle Recreation Pass	FREE	No Change

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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. Connect with our Facebook page at www.facebook.com/HobeSoundNWR/. For more information about the Refuge visit: https://www.fws.gov/refuge/hobe_sound/