

News Release

A.R.M. Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Public Invited to Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge Public Scoping Meeting

Boynton Beach, FL. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (Service) is inviting the public to attend a scoping meeting to help shape future management of the Visitor Services Program at the Arthur R. Marshall Loxahatchee National Wildlife Refuge (Refuge) in Palm Beach County, Florida. This invitation is a notice of the Service's intent to prepare a Visitor Services Plan (VSP) and accompanying environmental analysis, which will amend our 2000 Comprehensive Conservation Plan, for the Refuge. A VSP will outline goals, objectives, and strategies for implementing and managing existing, new, and expanded wildlife-dependent recreational opportunities to meet the purpose of the refuge and the mission of the National Wildlife Refuge System as a whole.

This meeting provides members of the community an opportunity to play a significant role in the development of this long-term plan. The draft VSP/Environmental Assessment will include detailed information about the planning process and will outline a range of management alternatives based on public input received. Once finalized, the VSP will outline visitor services program management for the Refuge.

Subject matter presented is intended to be identical during these meetings.
Information about the two meetings are as follows:

Date: Saturday, May 19, 2018

Time: 10:00 am to 2:00 pm (brief presentation at 11 am)

Location: Palm Beach County Extension

Address: 559 North Military Trail, West Palm Beach, FL 33415

Date: Tuesday, May 22, 2018

Time: 5:00 pm to 8:00 pm (brief presentation at 6 pm)

Location: South County Civic Center

Address: 16700 Jog Road, Delray Beach, FL 33446

The meetings will follow an informal open-house format. Brief presentations will be given at the meetings, but attendees are invited to arrive anytime during the meeting to meet with Service personnel, learn more about the VSP process, and provide input. Comment cards will be provided along with mailing list sign-up sheets. The Service invites the public to provide comments about issues they believe should be addressed in the VSP. Participation by you and other interested groups and individuals is critical to the success of this planning process.

Comments from interested parties will be accepted until August 3, 2018. Comments may be submitted during public meetings, mailed to A.R.M. Loxahatchee VSP, P.O. Box 924, Freeport, FL 32439, or sent by e-mail to armloxvsp@fws.gov. Federal government mailing lists must be released to the public upon request in accordance with the Freedom of Information Act of 1974.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is committed to providing access to this meeting for all participants. Please direct all requests for sign language interpreting services, close captioning, or other accommodation needs to Ms. Laura Housh at 912-816-8113 or laura_housh@fws.gov by close of business May 4, 2018.

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.

