



News Release

Wichita Mountains
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For Release: December 15, 2017
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Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge Improves Visitor Safety at Mt. Scott *Refuge Announces Changes to Hours and Operations to Popular Spot*

Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge would like to inform visitors of recent changes to the hours and operations for access to Mt. Scott, a popular visitor destination.

The narrow and curvy 3- mile scenic road to the summit of Mt. Scott was completed by the Works Progress Association and Civilian Conservation Corps in 1938. The road twists and turns as it climbs roughly 1,000 feet to the mountain summit. Though it has been repaved several times, it remains a narrow two lane road with no shoulders. The Refuge's popularity has grown exponentially since the road was constructed almost 80 years ago. Over 2.2 million visitors a year now visit the scenic Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge and Mt Scott remains one of the Refuge's most heavily visited attractions. The Mt. Scott Road not only receives heavy and increasing motorized vehicle traffic, it has become an increasingly popular place for pedestrians and bicyclists.

To protect visitors and to reduce safety hazards associated with pedestrian/bicyclist users and motor vehicles on the narrow two lane road, the following changes have been implemented: The Mt. Scott Road will be open to foot-traffic only (pedestrians/bicyclists) from 6:00 a.m. to 9:30 a.m. Group size is restricted to 8 persons or less and users must remain on pavement until sunrise. From 9:30 a.m. to sunset, the road will open for motorized traffic. To maintain safety, pedestrians and bicyclists will not be permitted to walk/bike the road after it is open for motorized traffic.

While this new safety protocol may cause temporary inconvenience, it is expected to provide a positive solution in reducing risks of serious or possibly fatal conflicts involving pedestrians/bicyclists and motorized vehicles. Information about the change in hours can be found on the Refuge website at www.fws.gov/refuge/wichita_mountains or by contacting the Visitor Center at 580-429-2197.

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.