



**Francis Marion and Sumter National Forests
U.S. Department of Agriculture
Forest Service, Southern Region
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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

Forest Service Invites Public to Attend Sewee Shell Ring Rededication Ceremony

Today the U.S Forest Service invited the public to attend a rededication ceremony, ribbon cutting and guided walk to celebrate the improvements and additions to the interpretive trail at the Sewee Shell Ring at 11 a.m. on Saturday, September 13, 2008. An interpretive walk will immediately follow the ribbon cutting and will introduce visitors to native plants in the area and how they were used by Native Americans.

“We’re extremely proud of what we’ve accomplished at the Sewee site,” said Francis Marion National Forest District Ranger Orlando Sutton. “Damages suffered during the 2004 hurricane season presented us with the perfect opportunity to replace, rethink, rebuild and restore a rare archaeological and interpretive treasure.”

The Sewee Shell Ring is part of a cultural heritage loop based out of Sewee Visitor and Environmental Education Center on the Francis Marion National Forest. The Sewee Shell Ring is the northernmost shell midden in North America and attracts many visitors each year for recreational and educational purposes.

The trail at the shell ring traverses a maritime forest on its way to the saltwater marsh and the 4,000-year-old Native American shell ring. A portion of the trail is a reconstructed boardwalk through saltwater marsh adjacent to the shell ring. A new section of trail is located on the frontage between the maritime forest and marsh. A new kiosk and parking area also have recently been added.

Participants may meet at the Sewee Visitor and Environmental Education Center, located at 5821 Highway 17 North in Awendaw, at 10 a.m. for a 30-minute talk by Archaeologist Olga Caballero on the history of the Sewee Shell Ring. Ceremony attendees may then caravan to the site.

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The ceremony and ribbon cutting will take place in the Sewee Shell Ring trailhead, located on Salt Pond Road (Forest Service Road 243) near the intersection of Salt Pond Road and Doar Road in Awendaw.

From Charleston, follow US 17 north for approximately 18 miles and turn right (northeast) onto Doar Road (Charleston County S-10-432). Follow Doar Road as it veers to the left. Drive 2.5 miles and turn right (east) onto Salt Pond Road (Forest Service Road 243), which is one lane gravel road with a turn-around loop at the end. After ½ mile, look for a sign on the left that marks the trailhead.

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