



# News Release

**Department of the Interior / U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service**  
**Southeast Louisiana Refuges**  
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For Immediate Release

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## **Reopening of Ridge Trail Boardwalk at Bayou Sauvage is Announced**

The Ridge Trail boardwalk, a popular 2/3 mile nature walk at Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge, has been reopened to the public. The boardwalk suffered major damage during Hurricane Katrina, and was completely rebuilt following the storm. The boardwalk entrance and parking area are located on the north side of U.S. 90 (Chef Menteur Highway), 3.8 miles east of I-510.

The Ridge Trail is the primary hiking access point on Bayou Sauvage, and also is the site of the refuge's environmental education programs for local schools, which will resume this fall. The site features a pavilion with tables, and public restrooms. Interpretive signs at the parking area and along the boardwalk provide information about the habitat and wildlife that visitors may see while at the refuge.

The boardwalk traverses a section of the forested "ridge" that runs parallel to the Bayou Sauvage waterway and Chef Highway. While most of the refuge consists of marsh habitat, this small, slightly more elevated strip features one of the few wooded zones on the refuge. The boardwalk also features an overlook with a view of the interior marsh area of the refuge, which is not readily seen from the highway.

Katrina caused a loss of as much as 80% of the forest canopy in this area, and visitors will notice much more sun along the boardwalk as compared to conditions before the storm. Habitat restoration work is continuing at the site and elsewhere along the forested ridge, and includes control of invasive Chinese tallow trees and mulching of dead trees and other vegetation in preparation for reforestation. Tree planting will take place this winter, with species such as live oaks, cypress, sweetgum, green ash, and hackberry being planted to aid in the forest's recovery.

Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge is open 7 days per week during daylight hours only, from sunrise until sunset. Other available access points for the refuge are along U.S. 90 and on U.S. Highway 11, where a launch provides access for boaters with outboard motors of up to 25 hp. For more information please phone 985-882-2000.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service is the principal Federal agency responsible for conserving, protecting and enhancing fish, wildlife and plants and their habitats for the continuing benefit of the American people. The Service manages the 95-million-acre National Wildlife Refuge System, which encompasses 544 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands and other special management areas. It also operates 69 national fish hatcheries, 63 Fish and Wildlife Management offices and 81 ecological services field stations. The agency enforces federal wildlife laws, administers the Endangered Species Act, manages migratory bird populations, restores nationally significant fisheries, conserves and restores wildlife habitat such as wetlands, and helps foreign governments with their conservation efforts. It also oversees the Federal Assistance program, which distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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