

Southeast Region

Final Hurricane Katrina/Rita Report

September 29-October 10, 2005



Hurricane Katrina

The Wildlife Inspection Office at the Designated Port of New Orleans re-opened on October 3 and will be operating on an intermittent schedule until October 16 when normal operations are expected to resume.

The Katrina Incident Command Team demobilized operations at Big Branch Marsh NWR in Lacombe, Louisiana on September 28. During this operation, Service crews cleared more than 300 driveways, 14.5 miles of road, four parking lots, seven and a half miles of drainage ditches and 11 miles of fire breaks. At the Lacombe facility, more than 20,000 meals were served, 3,600 showers taken and 1,990 loads of laundry processed for various volunteers and personnel involved in the hurricane rescue and recovery efforts.

Hurricane Rita

The Rita Incident Command Team located at Southland Field Airport in Sulphur, Louisiana demobilized on October 8. Service crews have cleared more than 85 driveways and 21 miles of roads throughout the local communities. They also assisted Service employees whose homes were damaged by placing tarps on roofs and securing trailers for temporary housing.

Cameron Prairie NWR is providing facilities for the Cameron Parish 911 Operation Center until the Cameron Parish Courthouse reopens.

Cameron Prairie NWR is also the coordination site for three Army helicopters working in conjunction with numerous cattle ranchers and concerned citizens to provide food and clean water to cattle stranded out on refuge marshlands, levees and berms. The helicopters are transporting enough clean water to fill four water troughs per flight. Flights are from 10 am until sunset each day. The refuge is the primary recovery site for recovered cattle removed from the marshland.

The Bayou Teche NWR, Lafayette Ecological Services office, and the Louisiana Department of Transportation

USFWS/Bud Oliveira



Sabine National Wildlife Refuge damaged by Hurricane Rita

USFWS/Bud Oliveira



Cameron Prairie as Cameron Parish 911 Operation Center

worked cooperatively to place lighted signs along a roadside in a high risk area for the Endangered Louisiana Black Bear warning motorists of possible animal crossings. Unfortunately, one adult female bear was hit and killed before the signs were in place.

Mandalay and Bayou Teche NWR reported an extensive fish kill from the storm surge that deposited a large amount of salt water into freshwater waterways.

The Sabine NWR is providing EPA with three roadside parking areas to serve as community collection sites for hazardous materials, hazardous waste and white appliances, such as refrigerators,

washers and dryers. As part of the agreement, EPA will restore these areas to their natural state.

Louisiana and Mississippi residents displaced by the hurricanes will be allowed to participate as "residents" in the State of Arkansas' 2005 hunting season. The Service anticipates that many displaced hunters will take part in this unique opportunity, which will significantly increase the number of hunting visits to public lands including national wildlife refuges.

Additional Information

Media contact coordination is being handled by the Regional Office of External Affairs 404/679 7287.