

Department of the Interior
U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service
St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge
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News Release



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
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Release #9-11
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Will

St. Marks NWR Pools open to Boats March 15

St. Marks National Wildlife Refuge will open the pools along Lighthouse Rd. (Co. Rd. 59) to hand launch boats with electric trolling motors on Sunday March 15, 2009. The pools remain open to boats until October 15. Anglers are reminded that the daily entrance fee is \$5/car or an annual 12 months pass is available for \$15.00. Stoney Bayou Pool #1 is the first large pool on the left traveling south on Lighthouse Rd. It was damaged during Hurricane Dennis in July 2005 and left open to the tides. Recent repairs have sealed the blow out and it is a mixture of salt and freshwater, so fishing may be very spotty in this pool. When the refuge receives regular rainfall, the refuge will look into restocking some of these pools.

Gates will also be opened to access refuge road 316 in the Panacea Unit from March 15-May 15, leading to ponds in the Otter Lake vicinity. Otter Lake and lakes adjacent to Surf Rd. are open year round for boating. Outboard motors larger than 10 hp are not allowed on any lake, pond on the Panacea Unit. Fishing is allowed year 'round from the bank, according to state regulations.

The refuge staff appreciates the cooperation of our anglers to prevent the invasive exotic weed Hydrilla from spreading into refuge waters. Healthy lakes and ponds are best for fishing and for wildlife!

For more information and a copy of the fishing regulations, please call 850/925-6121 or see www.fws.gov/saintmarks/fishing.

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.

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