

**United States**  
**Department of the Interior**  
**FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE**  
**BLACKWATER NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE**  
2145 Key Wallace Drive  
Cambridge, MD 21613

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
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**Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge's Marsh Edge Trail**  
**Closed Due To Nesting Bald Eagle Activity**

Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge (NWR) staff announced today that the Marsh Edge Trail and associated facilities, located along the refuge's Wildlife Drive, will be closed to public access until further notice. Refuge staff recently discovered a pair of bald eagles engaged in nest construction activities immediately adjacent to the trail. In an attempt to minimize the threat of nest abandonment at this newly established nest site, human induced disturbance to the area is being kept to a minimum during this critical time. Due to the potential for increased disturbance at this location, the trail will be closed during the critical periods of nest construction, egg incubation, and the initial stages of chick development. The Marsh Edge Trail is expected to reopen as the chicks mature and the weather becomes mild in April.

Despite being removed from the endangered species list in 2007, efforts continue to protect bald eagle nest sites and communal roost sites at the refuge. The bald eagle is still a federally protected species under the Migratory Bird Act and the Bald Eagle Protection Act.

Good opportunities to view eagles and other wildlife exist along the remaining portions of Blackwater NWR's Wildlife Drive, which will remain open for access. The Woods Trail, accessible from the Wildlife Drive, will also remain open, as well as the refuge's newer walking trails, the Key Wallace Trail and the Tubman Road Trail. Additional quality eagle viewing opportunities exist along the lower reaches of Maple

Dam Road between the intersection of Key Wallace Drive and Shorter's Wharf. As always, visitors are reminded to obey closed area boundary signs and adhere to refuge regulations. For further information, please contact the Visitor Center at 410-228-2677. The Visitor Center is open every day except Thanksgiving Day and Christmas Day from 8:00 am - 4:00 pm week days and 9:00 am - 5:00 pm weekends. Blackwater National Wildlife Refuge is located about 10 miles south of U.S. Route 50 in Cambridge at 2145 Key Wallace Drive, Cambridge, Maryland.

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](http://www.fws.gov).

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