

For Immediate Release July 21

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Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge will “Open Roads” July 25-26, 2009.

Mackay Island National Wildlife Refuge Manager Mike Hoff announced today that Open Roads Days will be held from 7AM to sunset on July 25 and July 26, 2009. The public will be able to drive the roads around the refuge impoundments at the end of Mackay Island Road that are routinely closed to vehicular traffic. The Refuge Headquarters/Visitor Center area will remain closed during this Open Roads event. Other activities may include hiking, bicycling, fishing, and wildlife observation and photography.

The refuge speed limit is 15mph, and visitors are asked to park in safe, suitable locations. No parking is permitted along the marked area beyond the pump house to protect the shoulder of the newly constructed roadway. The Headquarters and Open Roads are located 1 mile and 6.2 miles, respectively, south of the NC state line on Hwy. 615, Knotts Island, NC and are marked by a large refuge signs. Knotts Island may be reached by traveling south on Princess Anne Road from Virginia Beach or by taking the free ferry from Currituck, NC.

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 that encompasses more than 540 national wildlife refuges, thousands of small wetlands, and other special management areas. It also operates 70 national fish hatcheries, 64 fishery resource offices and 78 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. The agency also oversees the Federal Aid program that distributes hundreds of millions of dollars in excise taxes on fishing and hunting equipment to state fish and wildlife agencies.

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