



FAIRFAX COUNTY PARK AUTHORITY



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For Immediate Release

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Huntley Meadows Restoration Completed

Ceremony Slated to Celebrate Restored Wetland in Alexandria

After 22 years of planning, 60 public meetings, and a cutting-edge design and construction process, the wetland at Huntley Meadows Park in Alexandria, Va., has been restored. The Fairfax County Park Authority invites the public to attend the grand opening on Saturday, May 10, 2014 from 10 a.m. to noon. A ribbon cutting ceremony will be held on the boardwalk at 10:30 a.m. County officials, people involved with the project, and park naturalists will discuss why everyone is so excited about the diversity of locally rare wildlife returning to the park and the rejuvenated experience for visitors. Guided, behind the scenes walking tours begin at 11:15 a.m. to explore the restored wetland.

Restoring the central wetland at Huntley Meadows was necessary because it had been filling in with silt and debris associated with suburban development upstream. The silt reduced the water depth and negatively affected wildlife habitat for which the park is known. To restore the wetland to its 1980s condition and provide long-term habitat for a community of locally rare plants and animals, the Fairfax County Park Authority decided to engage in wetland restoration. Construction started in April 2013 and was completed last month. The total cost of design, permitting and construction was \$3 million. This was funded by park bonds and grants and managed by Fairfax County Park Authority staff. Park staff and volunteers are now responsible for monitoring, management and maintenance of the restored wetland.

The five primary aspects of the project are:

- 1) An earthen berm to hold back and raise water
- 2) A water control structure to manage seasonally fluctuating water levels
- 3) Expansion of the wetland into the surrounding forest
- 4) Five deeper habitat pools to provide year-round aquatic wildlife habitat
- 5) Numerous brush shelters and basking logs to provide additional wildlife habitat.

Huntley Meadows Park is located at 3701 Lockheed Blvd in Alexandria, Va. Details about the project can be found at www.fairfaxcounty.gov/parks/huntley-meadows-park/restorationproject.htm. For more information about the event, contact the Public Information Office at 703-324-8662.

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If accommodations and/or alternative formats are needed, please call (703) 324-8563, at least 10 working days in advance of the registration deadline or event. TTY (703) 803-3354.