

## Merritt Island Hunt Impoundment Conditions

November 1, 2024

- As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, Merritt Island National Wildlife Refuge is in the process of recovering from back-to-back hurricanes. The refuge staff are working diligently to repair levees that provide access to impoundments for waterfowl hunting. All hunt impoundments should have some access by opening weekend, but hunters should expect heavy impacts to roads, boat launches and perimeter ditches. All impoundments were inundated with heavy rain and surging lagoon levels. Water levels in the impoundments are still receding and the impact to submerged aquatic vegetation is unclear. With an abundance of water across the Florida landscape waterfowl will have ample choices and will likely be spread out more than usual. Check the Merritt Island NWR website for the most up to date road closures.

The following is a summary of conditions within individual impoundments open to waterfowl hunting. Water levels and salinity for November 2023 are included for comparison.

- Biolab (T-27A) - Current water level = 2.3, salinity 5 ppt, (1.7, 1 ppt 11/2023). The levee has some damage but was not breached. As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, Biolab road is closed but repairs should be completed soon.
- Max Hoeck Creek (T-27B) - Current water level = 2.3, salinity 5 ppt (1.7, 1 ppt 11/2023). The levee has some damage but was not breached. As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, Biolab road is closed but repairs should be completed soon.
- Eddy Creek Impoundment (T-38) - Current water level = 1.8, salinity 5 ppt (1.7, 11 ppt 11/2023). Canaveral National Seashore was heavily impacted by Hurricane Milton. As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, Eddy Creek Boat Ramp is closed but repairs should be completed soon. Check the Canaveral National Seashore website for the most up to date information on boat ramp closures.

- East Gator Creek (T-24B) - Current water level = 2.0, salinity 3 ppt (1.9, 10 ppt 11/2023). Road repairs have been completed but the road is narrow in places. Use caution when parking. The access road is now one way with traffic entering from the second (middle) Gator Creek Road.
- Catfish Creek (T-24C) - Current water level = 1.9, salinity 0 ppt (1.9, 11 ppt 11/2023). As of November 1<sup>st</sup>, the loop road is currently closed. Until repairs are completed access will be limited to eastern portion of the impoundment. Check the Merritt Island NWR website for the most up to date road closures.
- Peacock's Pocket (T-24D) - Current water level = 2.1, salinity 0 ppt (1.9, 8 ppt 11/2023). The levee witheld the storm without any over washing or breaches. Both the East and West boat launches will be fully accessible for waterfowl hunters.
- Gator Creek - Current water level = 2.0, salinity 0 ppt (1.9, 6 ppt 11/2023). Gator Creek Impoundment was not heavily affected by the storms and is fully accessible for waterfowl hunters.
- Shiloh 5 - Current water level = 1.8, salinity 10 ppt (1.9, 4 ppt 11/2023). The levee has significate damage and while there was substantial over washing, the levee was not breached. The boat launch on Sawmill Dike Road has been cleared and is accessible for waterfowl hunters.
- Shiloh 3 - Current water level = 1.6, salinity 8 ppt (1.8, 5 ppt 11/2023). The levee has significate damage and while there was substantial over washing, the levee was not breached. The boat launch on Shiloh 3 Road has been cleared and is accessible for waterfowl hunters.
- Shiloh 2 - Current water level = 1.7, salinity 6 ppt (1.9, 5 ppt 11/2023). The levee has significate damage and while there was substantial over washing, the levee was not breached. The boat launches on Weather Tower Road and Pattillo Creek Road have been cleared and are accessible for waterfowl hunters.

- Shiloh 1 - Current water level = 1.7, salinity 15 ppt (2.0, 6 ppt, 11/2023). The levee has significant damage and while there was substantial over washing, the levee was not breached. The boat launches on Pattillo Creek Road and Live Oak Road have been cleared and are accessible for waterfowl hunters.
- M Pond - Current water level = 2.0, salinity 1 ppt (1.8, 9 ppt 11/2023). M Pond was not as affected by the storms as L Pond or the other impoundments. The boat launch on L Pond Road from SR3 has been cleared and is accessible for waterfowl hunters.
- L Pond - Current water level = 2.0, salinity 5 ppt (1.8, 20 ppt 11/2023). The levee has significant damage and while there was substantial over washing, the levee was not breached. The boat launch on L Pond Road from the Wildlife Drive has been cleared and is accessible for waterfowl hunters.