

[From Spring 2003]

New Visitor Center Nears Completion

The Herbert H. Bateman Educational and Administrative Center is now two-thirds complete and is scheduled to be finished late spring to early summer.

The new administrative building, which includes a wet lab, Geographic Information System room (equipment that maps refuge habitat and wildlife in layers), conference area, and offices for staff, should be finished in May. After working out of trailers for nearly one year, all of the employees are looking forward to moving into the new building some time in June.



The visitor center is tracking nearly three weeks behind the administrative building and is scheduled to be completed in late May or early June.

In addition to the exhibit area, the visitor center will feature a 125-seat auditorium, a teacher resource room, and a combination classroom/wet lab.

The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service signed a contract with a world renowned exhibit firm, Design and Production, Incorporated (D&P), in February, replacing Showtime Exhibit Builders (whose contract was terminated for default in January). D&P, located in Lorton, Virginia has a 60-year history of fabricating and installing world-class, museum-quality exhibits.

Examples of their past projects include: Patuxent National Wildlife and Research Refuge, Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, National Gem Collection (at the Smithsonian Institute), and some of the interactive exhibits that were featured at the 1996 Olympics in Atlanta, Georgia. D&P has already begun to fabricate the exhibits which include an array of static and interactive areas complete with audio, video and tactile design components.

The exhibits are scheduled to be completed by September 15. Staff is currently planning for a grand opening during National Wildlife Refuge Week - in October. Once completed, the Herbert H. Bateman Educational and Administrative Center will instantly become the most- visited facility in the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

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