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Big Thicket National Preserve

News Release

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For Immediate Release
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Big Thicket National Preserve Visitor Center Re-Opens after Hurricane Gustav

With Hurricane Gustav's passing, Big Thicket National Preserve staff are conducting damage assessments today. The Preserve Visitor Center has re-opened and the Preserve's trails and public use areas are expected to re-open soon. Administrative functions will resume on Wednesday, September 3, with the return of the Preserve's management team from San Antonio. The Central Incident Management Team that arrived in San Antonio to assist Big Thicket staff is available for redeployment and is working with the Intermountain Regional Office to determine where the greatest need is currently.

Preserve visitors are advised to use caution whenever they are in the Preserve, but especially after events such as Hurricane Gustav. Extreme weather can weaken trees, making them prone to falling in high winds that occur well after the storm has passed. Downed trees can also make access to backcountry areas more difficult. High water can damage trail beds, potentially causing erosion and soft spots on trails. Higher than normal water levels can make boating more hazardous. Swimmers should follow standard safety procedures, since eddies, steep drop-offs, and swift currents may be present. Personal flotation devices (PFDs) should always be worn.

Preserve Visitor Center staff will have the latest information on the status of Preserve facilities, roads and trails, and developed areas. For more information, call Big Thicket National Preserve at (409) 951-6701, or visit us at www.nps.gov/bith.

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