PRESENTED TO STAFF MEMBERS OF CONGRESSIONAL REPRESENTATIVES VISITING THE SAVANNAH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE BY REQUEST OF FRIENDS OF THE SAVANNAH COASTAL WILDLIFE REFUGES, INC.

THE VIEWS EXPRESSED WITHIN DO NOT NECESSARILY REFLECT, NOR ARE PROVIDED BY, FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE STAFF OR REPRESENTATIVES.
96 YEARS AND COUNTING...

APRIL 6TH 1927 - THE SAVANNAH RIVER BIRD REFUGE IS ESTABLISHED AS A PRESERVE AND BREEDING GROUNDS FOR NATIVE BIRDS.

JULY 25TH 1940 - RENAMED SAVANNAH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE

NATURE’S FURY

SEPTEMBER 10TH 2017 - CATEGORY 4 HURRICANE IRMA MAKES U.S. LANDFALL IN FLORIDA. THE RESULTING STORM WASHES OUT IMPOUNDMENT CONTROLS AT THE SAVANNAH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE AND COMPROMISES THE ABILITY OF FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE STAFF TO REGULATE WATER FLOW AND PREVENT SALTWATER INTRUSION.

3 YEARS & 18 MILLION DOLLARS LATER

SINCE 2020 WORK HAS CONTINUOUSLY OCCURED, RAISING THE LAUREL HILL WILDLIFE DRIVE AND THE SURROUNDING LEVEES. FOR OVER 950 DAYS THE WILDLIFE DRIVE, A POPULAR LOCAL ESCAPE INTO NATURE, HAS BEEN CLOSED.

THE PROJECT WILL BE COMPLETED IN Q4 OF 2023 AND TOP OUT AT OVER 18 MILLION DOLLARS.

THE VERY REAL COSTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE ARE UPON US, AS WELL AS CONFLICTING DEVELOPMENT NEARBY. THIS DOCUMENT OUTLINES THREE MAJOR REASONS WHY WE HAVE LABELED THE NEXT FOUR YEARS AS “SAVANNAH’S CROSSROADS”.

WHAT WILL THE 2027 CENTENNIAL CELEBRATION OF OUR REFUGE LOOK LIKE?
SAVANNAH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE IS BEING SURROUNDED BY INCOMPATIBLE DEVELOPMENT

- CURRENT HEAVY & LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- FUTURE LIGHT INDUSTRIAL
- PROPOSED JASPER OCEAN TERMINAL
A Savannah without wetlands is a Savannah without dry lands.

One acre of wetlands can store up to 1.5 million gallons of floodwaters.¹

When wetlands are removed, critical infrastructure is jeopardized by tides, storms & floodwaters.

Potential flooding impacts:
Port of Savannah, River Street, canals, waterfront properties...

Fast Fact

1.5 million gallons is equivalent to three Olympic sized swimming pools.

= 1 billion gallons

SAVANNAH NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE HAS APPROXIMATELY 30,000 ACRES OF WETLANDS WHICH COULD STORE 45 BILLION GALLONS OF FLOODWATERS OR 90,000 OLYMPIC SIZED SWIMMING POOLS.

THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE SYSTEM IS WOEFULLY UNDERFUNDED

INFORMATION BELOW PROVIDED BY THE NATIONAL WILDLIFE REFUGE ASSOCIATION

OVERALL, INCREASED FUNDING NEEDS, PAIRED WITH A STAGNANT BUDGET, HAS LED TO A REFUGE SYSTEM THAT IS QUICKLY ERODING IN HABITAT MANAGEMENT AND AN ABILITY TO EVEN KEEP REFUGES OPEN.

THE $503 MILLION APPROPRIATED TO THE REFUGE SYSTEM IN FY2010 IS WORTH APPROXIMATELY $689 MILLION TODAY, YET ACTUAL FUNDING SITS AT A MERE $541 MILLION.

THE REFUGE SYSTEM NEEDS AT LEAST $1.5 BILLION TO EFFECTIVELY FULFILL ITS CONSERVATION MISSION, PROVIDE OPPORTUNITIES FOR WILDLIFE DEPENDENT RECREATION AND CONNECT COMMUNITIES TO NATURE.
WE NEED YOUR HELP
TO TAKE OUR MESSAGE TO CONGRESS
TO HELP ALLOCATE MORE FUNDS
TO BE A WILDLIFE CHAMPION

WE WILL CONTINUE TO PRESERVE, PROTECT AND
PROMOTE OUR AMAZING NATIONAL WILDLIFE
REFUGES AND LOOK FORWARD TO WORKING HAND
IN HAND WITH OUR ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES.

THANK YOU!

ALWAYS FEEL FREE TO REACH OUT!
COASTALREFUGES.ORG