

Cedar Lake Plantation Trail Improvement and Extension

The Friends of Brazoria Wildlife Refuges (FOBWR) are raising funds to enable the improvement of the Cedar Lake Plantation Trail on the San Bernard National Wildlife Refuge. This trail is currently one-half mile of mowed grass that follows the east bank of Cacklebur Slough, which dissects the approximately 933-acre Stringfellow Unit of the refuge at the intersection of FM 2611 and CR 316.

The unit adjoins the property of the John McCroskey house. Build of hand hued cedar logs from nearby Cedar Lake in 1824, it is the oldest surviving structure in Brazoria County. Begun as a farm, the land was acquired in 1852 by C. K. Reese 1852 and turned it into a working cotton plantation that he named "Cedar Lake". Mr. Reese made improvements that form the basic structure of today's building, two log cabins connected by an enclosed dog trot, a loft, a porch and a lean-to addition. The land, including the Stringfellow Unit, was purchased by Major Asa Stratton in 1861 and renamed Woodlawn Plantation. It was cleared for growing cotton and sugar cane and the construction of a cotton gin and sugar mill. After much of the land had been parceled and sold off, Nannie M. Stringfellow purchased the house in 1945 as well as numerous adjoining parcels and established a working ranch that covered more than 5,000 acres in southern Brazoria County. The McCroskey Cedar House is currently owned by the Beacraft Foundation, which restored the cabin to its appearance as a prosperous mid-nineteenth century plantation house. The Stringfellow property was divided and a portion sold in 1997 to establish the Nannie M. Stringfellow Wildlife Management Area and a portion sold in 2004 to the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service as the Stringfellow Unit of the San Bernard NWR. The Cedar Lake Plantation Trail is dedicated to Nannie M. Stringfellow.

Elements of our project include the construction of a parking lot with a solar-activated gate, building two crossings of the slough, extending the trail to a length of 1.1 miles with a section on the west side of the slough, surfacing the path with granite fines, and installing benches and signs explaining natural and historical elements of the trail. The north section of the trail will pass by the McCroskey house. The estimated cost of this project is \$73,000, with expected completion in the fall of 2018.

Woodlawn Plantation Trail

- Legend**
- Refuge
 - Private Land
 - Refuge Boundary
 - Road
 - Interpretive Trail
 - Refuge Headquarters
 - Bench

