

DENR inaugurates wetland park in southern Metro Manila

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MANILA – The Las Piñas-Parañaque Wetland Park was inaugurated on Saturday, signaling the opening of a new ecotourism attraction in Metro Manila.

The park seeks to educate the public about “the interaction between people and wildlife... including responsible travel to natural areas... to conserve the environment and improve the well-being of local people,” the Department of Environment and Natural Resources (DENR) said in a statement.

“When we have projects like these, it becomes something physical that they begin to understand the very complex system of our environment,” DENR Secretary Maria Antonia Yulo-Loyzaga told reporters.

“The problem is complex so dapat po solutions natin ay dapat multidimensional.”

The inauguration coincides with the celebration of World Migratory Bird Day, an “annual awareness-raising campaign that underscores the need to protect and conserve not just migratory birds but also their habitats and pitstops,” the DENR added.

The department said the attraction includes a visitor center, several trails, a museum, a science hub, and a cultural heritage center.

Restaurants, laboratories, view towers, bird hides and board walks are among the “positive enhancements” that are expected to be added soon, the agency said.

“We will make it an ecotourism area so it will be attractive to people... Marami kaming mga benefactor na magtatayo ng facilities dito,” said Sen. Cynthia Villar, who heads the Villar SIPAG Foundation Inc., one of the stakeholders behind the new Wetland Park.

“It’s (Wetland Park) very important kasi it’s really a struggle. It started pa before noong 2000, but it seems we’re winning so we’re very happy,” Villar said on the sidelines of the inauguration.

“I hope the German government will push through with their marine laboratory and the French government has built a work of art there in our bamboo center.

“I guess we have to attract investors to give something to our wetland park,” she said.