

Cameron Prairie

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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photo: S. R. Emmons



photo: USFWS

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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1988.
- Acres: 9,621, Gibbstown Unit.
- Located in Cameron Parish, LA.
- Location: The refuge is located 25 miles southeast of Lake Charles, Louisiana on LA Highway 27, the Creole Nature Trail All American Road.
- Cameron Prairie is the Complex Headquarters for the SW LA NWR Complex established in 2004, which consists of Cameron Prairie, Lacassine, Sabine and Shell Keys Refuges.

Natural History

- Abundant migratory birds, and fresh marsh are the dominant features of the area.
- Old ricefields have been converted to moist soil management areas utilizing existing levees and pump system.
- Over 45,000 ducks and 10,000 geese at peak populations during the winter months.
- Provides excellent habitat for native wildlife including alligators, furbearers, white-tailed deer, as well as numerous migratory birds throughout the year.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Twelve-person staff.
- 28,000 visitors annually.
- FY 06 budget: \$1,748,000 (includes Cameron Prairie and Complex).

Refuge Objectives

- Provide the highest quality wintering waterfowl habitat possible.
- Provide for the needs of endangered plants and animals.

- Allow compatible public uses such as hunting, fishing, trapping, wildlife observation, and photography.
- Promote research on marsh and aquatic wildlife.

Management Tools

- Wildlife management with public hunting.
- Law enforcement.
- Moist soil management.
- Vegetation and water management.

Public Use Opportunities

- Visitor center.
- Pintail Wildlife Drive.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.
- Hunting.
- Fishing.
- Environmental education/interpretation.

Calendar of Events

January-February: snipe hunting.

March 15-October 15: fishing.

October: archery deer hunting.

November-January: youth waterfowl hunting.

January-December: migratory bird viewing, Pintail Wildlife Drive.

Open sunrise to sunset.

Questions and Answers

Where is the Wildlife Drive?

The Pintail Wildlife Drive is located approximately two miles south of the Office/Visitor Center on the east side of LA Highway 27, the Creole Nature Trail All American Road. A refuge map can be found in the refuge general brochure.

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Do you have any hiking trails?

There are not any designated hiking trails developed on the refuge, but you are welcome to walk along the refuge levees as long as you park in the designated parking areas. A refuge map can be found in the refuge general brochure.

Where can we go fishing?

Approximately two miles south of the Office/Visitor Center on the west side of LA Highway 27, the Creole Nature Trail All American Road, the Bankfishing Road is open for fishing. The refuge Outfall Canal is also available. It is accessible only by boat through the North Canal from the Gibbstown Bridge boat launch on the Intracoastal Waterway. These fishing areas are open from March 15 through October 15, sunrise to sunset. A refuge map can be found in the refuge general brochure.

Is the refuge open for hunting?

Yes, during the month of October the refuge is open for archery deer hunting. The refuge has lottery youth waterfowl hunting from November-January. Snipe hunting occurs from January-February. A refuge general brochure and refuge hunting permit can be obtained at the Office and Visitor Center.

Are there camping areas on the refuge?

No. The refuge office does have listings of camping sites located within an hour's driving distance of the refuge.