

# Bayou Cocodrie

## National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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### Refuge Facts

- Established: 1992.
- Located in Concordia Parish, LA.
- Location: The refuge is located 3.5 miles south of Ferriday, 10 miles southwest of Vidalia and 50 miles northeast of Alexandria, LA.

### Natural History

- The Nature Conservancy purchased an 11,255.51-acre core tract from the Fisher Lumber Company, a subsidiary of General Motors Corporation. The Conservancy then sold the land to the USFWS over a span of 5 years.
- Cocodrie Bayou is designated as a state scenic river.
- The bottomland hardwoods at Bayou Cocodrie NWR have been noted as some of the last remaining, least disturbed timber in the Mississippi River Delta.

### Financial Impact of Refuge

- Seven people on staff.
- 5,000 visitors annually.
- Current budget FY 05 \$654,000.

### Refuge Objectives

- To protect some of the last remaining, least disturbed bottomland hardwoods in the Mississippi River Delta.
- To provide wintering habitat for migratory waterfowl.
- To provide habitat for a natural diversity of wildlife.
- To provide habitat for non-game migratory birds.
- To provide opportunities for environmental education, research, interpretation, and wildlife-oriented recreation.

### Management Tools

- Law enforcement.
- Partnerships.
- Wildlife management with public hunting.
- Timber management.
- Private lands programs.

### Public Use Opportunities

- Hunting.
- Fishing.
- Hiking.
- Environmental education and interpretation.
- Photography.
- Bird watching.

### Calendar of Events

**January:** general gun—woodcock hunting.

**March:** arrival of songbirds.

**October:** annual National Wildlife Refuge Week.

**October, November, January and February:** general gun—rabbit and squirrel hunting.

**November:** youth hunt and muzzleloader—deer either sex hunting.

**November - January:** archery—deer either sex hunting.

### Questions and Answers

*Why did you implement a deer gun hunt on the refuge?*

Hunting is one of the “big six” priority public uses on the refuge system. It is the responsibility of each refuge to offer as many opportunities for as many people as possible without interfering with the system’s wildlife first mission. As such a limited deer gun hunt was deemed appropriate on Bayou Cocodrie to offer deer hunting opportunities to those who do not bow hunt or muzzleloader hunt.

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### *Does the refuge allow camping?*

The only camping permitted on the refuge is related to environmental education programs conducted by the local scout troops. General camping is not permitted in an effort to avoid direct competition with the nearby private campgrounds.

### *Will you all ever pave Poole Road?*

Poole Road is maintained by the Concordia Parish Police Jury. The public frequently asks this question because of the numerous flat tires they experience when traveling this refuge entry road. The road is a graveled-over railroad tram. Railroad spikes surface during road maintenance and are the primary causes of tire damage. The refuge has assisted the Police Jury with applying for TEA-21 funds that would improve Poole Road by paving or re-graveling.

### *When are they (USFWS) going to get you all some more help?*

The current refuge staff consists of six positions, a Refuge Manager, Deputy Project Leader, Private Lands Biologist, Office Assistant, Maintenance Worker and Engineering Equipment Operator. The current staffing plan also includes a forester position that will be filled in the near future. Additional staffing needs have been identified in the ongoing CCP process. Outdoor Recreational Planner and Refuge Biologist were the positions specified to assist implementation of the CCP.