

Black Bayou Lake

National Wildlife Refuge

photo: USFWS



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1997.
- Acres: approximately 4,200 (6,000 acres in approved acquisition boundary).
- Refuge established by a unique, free, 99-year lease with City of Monroe.
- Located in Ouachita Parish, LA.
- Office currently located on D'Arbonne National Wildlife Refuge, 10 miles north of West Monroe, LA on LA Highway 143.

Natural History

- The existing refuge consists of pristine wetlands associated with a shallow cypress studded lake, riparian areas and farm fields in the watershed that will be reforested.
- The area provides excellent habitat for wetland dependent fish and wildlife such as waterfowl, wading birds, neotropical migrants, and game fish.
- Several endangered red-cockaded woodpecker clusters are found on the refuge.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- North Louisiana Refuge Complex 17-person staff.
- D'Arbonne, Handy Brake, Red River, Upper Ouachita, Black Bayou NWR's and Louisiana Wetlands Management District are administered under the North Louisiana Refuges Complex with a total budget for FY02 of \$883,700.
- Black Bayou receives 7,000 visitors annually.

Refuge Objectives

- Protect and enhance habitat for endangered species, waterfowl, neotropical migrants, and resident wildlife.
- Provide environmental education/interpretation in a semi-urban setting.
- Provide high quality recreational fishing opportunities.
- Protect the long-term water quality of Black Bayou Lake.

Management Tools

- Forest management including reforestation.
- Public education/interpretation.
- Public fishing.
- Law enforcement.
- Partnerships and volunteer program.
- Control of noxious weeds.

Public Use Opportunities

- Sport fishing.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.
- Canoeing/boating.
- Interpretive boardwalk.
- Environmental education center (pending).
- Arboretum (pending).
- Nature trails (pending).

Calendar of Events

Year round: fishing, wildlife observation, photography, canoeing, and boating.

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Questions and Answers

When is the refuge open for public use?

The office is open year round during daylight hours for permitted uses.

Are there fees to use the refuge?

There are no entrance fees. There is a \$2 boat launch fee (\$1 for Golden Age Passport holders).

What is "Friends of Black Bayou, Inc."?

This is a refuge support group consisting of volunteers from all walks of life. New members are welcome and needed. Contact the refuge office for details.

What facilities are planned for this new refuge?

An environmental education center managed by volunteers, a native plant arboretum, nature trails, canoe trails, and new boat launches are on the drawing board or in various stages of development.