

Bayou Sauvage

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1990. Authorized under the Emergency Wetland Act in 1986 by President Ronald Reagan.
- Acres: 24,293.
- Location: The refuge is located in New Orleans East, about 20 minutes from downtown. It is entirely within the city limits of New Orleans and is considered the nation's largest urban refuge. Bayou Sauvage can be accessed from I-10, U.S. 90, and U.S. 11.

Natural History

- The Refuge was formed by the abandoned St. Bernard delta of the Mississippi River and consists of silt and sediments deposited by the River.
- The Refuge provides habitat for an abundance of ducks, raptors, wading birds and shorebirds.
- Includes approximately 13,000 acres of freshwater marsh contained within hurricane and flood-protection levees, 11,000 acres of brackish marsh, and 200 acres of forested lands on low ridges.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Approximately 12,000 visitors in fiscal 2009.

Refuge Purposes

- To enhance the population of migratory, shore and wading birds.
- To encourage natural diversity of fish and wildlife species.
- To protect endangered and threatened plants and animals.
- To fulfill the international treaty obligations of the nation with respect to fish and wildlife.
- To protect archaeological resources.
- To provide for scientific research and environmental education with emphasis on wetlands.

- To provide opportunities for fish and wildlife-oriented recreation in an urban setting.

Management Tools

- Water management is conducted through gravity flow structures and water pumps. This type of management benefits waterfowl, wading birds and shorebirds; it is also used for marsh restoration and noxious plant control.
- Prescribed fire.
- Trapping of exotic wildlife, feral hog and nutria.
- Environmental education.
- Law enforcement.
- Partnerships.
- Moist soil management.

Public Use Opportunities

- Interpretive trails and boardwalks.
- Fishing.
- Bird watching.
- Canoeing.
- Photography.
- Crawfishing and crabbing.
- Wildlife observation.
- Boating and launch.

Questions and Answers

When is the refuge open to fishing?
Bank fishing along US Highway 90, US Highway 11 and in the borrow pits adjacent to I-10 is permitted year round. The other areas of Bayou Sauvage are closed from November 1 through January 31st.

Can you hunt on Bayou Sauvage National Wildlife Refuge?
No! Hunting is not permitted on Bayou Sauvage NWR.

Can you crab and crawfish on the refuge?
Yes! Recreational crawfishing and crabbing are allowed on the refuge.

U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service

There is a 100 pound per person limit on the crawfish. Commercial crabbing is not allowed.

Can you come to my school and conduct an environmental education program or can I bring a school group to the refuge?

The answer to both parts of this question is yes. The staff at the refuge is ready to conduct programs in the schools or welcome the schools to the refuge.

For further details consult the refuge Fishing and Public Use Regulations brochure. To schedule a school program at Bayou Sauvage phone toll free 866/554 6319.