

**Southwest  
Louisiana  
National  
Wildlife Refuge  
Complex Fishing  
Regulations**

*Cameron Prairie,  
Lacassine, and  
Sabine*

*The Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex consists of Cameron Prairie, Lacassine, Sabine and Shell Keys National Wildlife Refuges (NWR). The headquarters office is located at Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge. The Complex provides a wide variety of wildlife dependent public uses such as hunting, fishing, wildlife photography, environmental education, wildlife interpretation and observation.*

*For more information about these refuges visit our web site at <http://www.fws.gov/swlarefugecomplex>*

## **General Fishing Regulations for the Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex**

Fishing regulations are designed to protect the fisherman and wildlife populations. Fishing seasons and activities on the Complex are listed within this brochure. The regulations within this brochure supplement the general regulations that govern fishing on National Wildlife Refuges as set forth in the Title 50 Volume 6 Chapter 1 Parts 18-199 Code of Federal Regulations <http://www.gpoaccess.gov/ecfr>.

**All fishing, crabbing, and cast netting on refuges are in accordance with applicable State licensing.**

Individuals utilizing the refuges are subject to inspections of licenses, fishing equipment, daily limits, boats, vehicles and their contents by federal and state officers.

### **Requirements**

#### *Fishing*

All recreational anglers must possess a valid basic Louisiana fishing license; additionally all recreational anglers fishing south of the state designated “**saltwater line**” for saltwater species must have in their possession a Louisiana saltwater angler’s license **in addition to** their basic Louisiana fishing license. To review additional information, the Louisiana Recreational Fishing Regulations may be found at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov).

Fishing is permitted with rod and reel or pole and line only on Cameron Prairie and Lacassine NWR’s. Sabine NWR permits jug fishing in designated areas in addition to rod and reel and pole and line fishing. See refuge specific regulations.

Anglers seeking freshwater fishing opportunities should try Lacassine, Cameron Prairie’s Gibbstown Unit and the fresher interior waters of Sabine NWR. Those anglers seeking saltwater fishes should try fishing at Cameron Prairie’s East Cove Unit and Sabine NWR’s roadside recreation area wharfs and tidal marshes throughout the refuge. Freshwater species include largemouth bass, catfish, crappie, sunfish, and bowfin. Saltwater species include flounder, redfish, speckled trout, and black drum.

#### *Crabbing*

No license is required to recreationally crab with a crab net and/or hand line. See refuge specific regulations for crabbing opportunities.

#### *Cast netting*

Each person is required to have valid basic **and** saltwater licenses to cast net for shrimp. Cast nets must be less than 8.5 feet in radius. Recreational cast netting for shrimp is only permitted during the Louisiana inshore

water shrimp season. See refuge specific regulations for additional information.

### *Possession Limits*

Daily fish limits are the same as Louisiana's Sport Fishing Limits. The daily crab limit is five dozen (60) per day per vehicle or boat. The daily shrimp limit during the Louisiana inshore shrimp season is five gallons of heads-on shrimp per day, per vehicle or boat. The daily **bait** shrimp limit is one gallon per day per boat.

### *Universal Access*

Several universally accessible fishing docks are available at Lacassine and Sabine NWRs. For further assistance contact our Refuge Complex office at 337/598 2216.

### *Boat, Motor and Operation Limits*

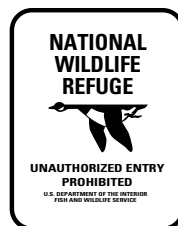
Outboard motors and go-devil type or air cooled motors may be operated in designated refuge canals, bayous, and boat trails only. Operation of any outboard or air cooled motor in refuge marshes is prohibited. The operation of trolling motors is permitted, unless specifically prohibited.

### **Activities Prohibited throughout the SW Louisiana Refuge Complex**

- Leaving boats on refuge property overnight.
- Dragging, jumping or rolling boats over levees.
- Use of air thrust boats, all terrain vehicles (ATV's), or jet skis.
- Taking or possession of any wildlife including alligators, turtles, frogs, snakes, crawfish.
- The sale, offer for sale, of any fish, crab, shrimp or other wildlife resource taken from the refuge.
- Feeding or approaching wildlife.
- Possession of glass containers.
- Littering.
- Fires.
- Swimming or wading.
- Blocking gates or roadways with vehicles.
- Driving nails or other objects into boardwalks and other refuge structures.

- Marking trails with tape, ribbons, paper, paint, flagging, reflective tacks, etc.
- Removal of any object or equipment owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service
- Cutting or removing any live vegetation, limbs, etc.
- Camping and/or overnight parking
- Disturbing, collecting, injuring, or attempting to disturb, collect, or injure any plant, artifact, rock, or animal on any refuge.
- Pets roaming at large. All pets must be leashed at all times.

### **Signs Protect Visitors and Resources**



#### *National Wildlife Refuge*

This sign marks the boundary of the refuge. Consult the refuge manager for authorized activities.



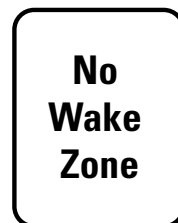
#### *Area Closed*

Certain areas of the refuge are closed to visitors for safety and management purposes. Unauthorized entry beyond this sign is prohibited.



#### *No Vehicles*

Unauthorized motor vehicles are not allowed beyond this sign. This applies to all cars, trucks, jeeps, ATV's, and motorcycles. Walking and non-motorized bicycles are allowed. Please do not block access through refuge gates.



#### *No Wake Zone*

Boat speeds are managed to improve public safety and to reduce bank erosion.

## Cameron Prairie NWR Specific Fishing Regulations

Cameron Prairie National Wildlife Refuge, established in 1988, is located in Cameron Parish in southwestern Louisiana. Cameron Prairie NWR consists of two separate and distinct units, East Cove Unit and Gibbstown Unit.

### East Cove Unit of Cameron Prairie NWR

The East Cove Unit consists of 14,927 acres of intermediate and brackish marshes. It is bordered on the west by Calcasieu Lake and on the north, south and east by privately owned marshes. It is part of a 64,000 acre marsh restoration program known as the Cameron Creole Watershed Project. Five water control structures and a protection levee improve marsh conditions and stop marsh erosion by controlling salt water intrusion.

**Closed Areas:** Areas designated by **No Fishing** or **Area Closed** signs are closed for safety or management purposes.

**Season:** Public access into East Cove Unit is open year round, except during the Louisiana west zone waterfowl hunting season or when Grand Bayou boat bay is closed.

**When Grand Bayou boat bay is closed, the East Cove Unit is closed to ALL public use.**

**Hours:** Boat admittance into the refuge is permitted from one hour before legal sunrise until one hour after legal sunset; however, recreational fishing, crabbing, and cast netting activities are prohibited until legal sunrise and after legal sunset.

**Access:** All State boating regulations must be followed. Outboard motors and go-devil type or air cooled motors may be operated in refuge canals, bayous and lakes. Trolling motors may be operated in refuge marshes. There are no horsepower restrictions on boat motors; however, the Grand Bayou boat bay passage into the Unit is only 10 feet wide. Boat passage through Grand Bayou water control structure is permitted only when the boat bay is completely open. Public use within this unit is restricted to boat use only. Walking, wading, and/or climbing in or on the marsh, levees, or structures is prohibited.

### Permitted Activities, Gear, and Possession Limits

**Fishing:** Fishing is permitted with rod and reel or pole and line only. The use or possession of any other type of fishing gear including: limb, trot, or jug lines and gill, trammel, or hoop nets is prohibited in all refuge waters. The daily fish limits are the same as Louisiana's Sport Fishing limits.

**Crabbing:** Crabs may be taken with hand lines or drop nets. Only cotton line and drop nets up to 24" outside diameter may be used. Floats on crab lines are prohibited. All hand lines, drop nets, and bait must be removed from the refuge upon leaving. The daily crab limit is 5 dozen (60) crabs per day, per vehicle or boat.

**Cast netting:** Recreational cast netting for shrimp is permitted during the Louisiana inshore waters shrimp season only. Cast nets must be less than 8.5 feet in radius. The daily shrimp limit is five gallons of heads-on shrimp per day, per vehicle or boat. Cast netting for bait is permitted year round. The shrimp limit, when cast netting for bait outside the Louisiana inshore waters shrimp season, is one gallon per day per vehicle or boat. Cast netters must maintain actual custody of shrimp while on the refuge.

**Sportfishing guides:** A Special Use Permit is required to operate as a sportfishing guide within the East Cove unit. Call 337/598 2216 for details.

**Safety Warning:** Use extreme caution when entering or exiting the Grand Bayou boat bay. If two boats are motoring to enter the boat bay, the boat traveling with the current has the right-of-way and the boat traveling against the current must give way to the oncoming boat. Boaters are urged to wear their life jackets whenever under power.

### Gibbstown Unit of Cameron Prairie NWR

The Gibbstown Unit contains 9,621 acres of fresh marsh, coastal prairie, and old rice fields. It is managed primarily to provide habitat for wintering waterfowl and other water birds.

**Closed Areas:** Areas designated by **No Fishing** or **Area Closed** signs are closed for safety or management purposes.

**Season/Hours:** Bank fishing and cast netting for bait are permitted year round, sunrise to sunset, along Bank Fishing Road. Boat admittance into the refuge is permitted from March 15 - October 15, from one hour before legal sunrise until one hour after legal sunset; however, fishing and cast netting activities are prohibited until legal sunrise and after legal sunset.

**Access:** Fishing and cast netting for bait are permitted along Bank Fishing Road, located opposite the Pintail Wildlife Drive on the west side of Highway 27 and a two-mile stretch of Outfall Canal. Motorized boats with no horsepower restriction are permitted in the Outfall canal. Only non-motorized boats may be used in the Bank Fishing Road waterways. All State boating regulations must be followed.

Outfall Canal runs east-west and is located 1.5 miles north of the Gulf Intracoastal Waterway (GIWW) off of North Canal, which runs north-south. Outfall Canal can only be accessed by boat. To access the Outfall canal, boats can be launched at the public launch under the Gibbstown Bridge on Highway 27. Proceed east in the GIWW for about 2 miles and take the first left (north) into North canal. Travel approximately 1.5 miles and Outfall Canal will be on the left.

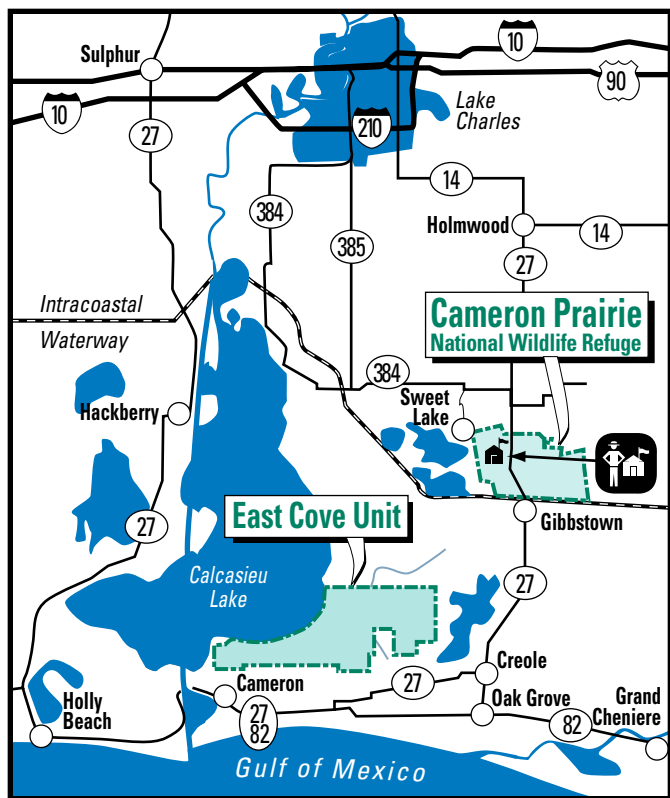
## Permitted Activities, Gear, and Possession Limits

### Fishing

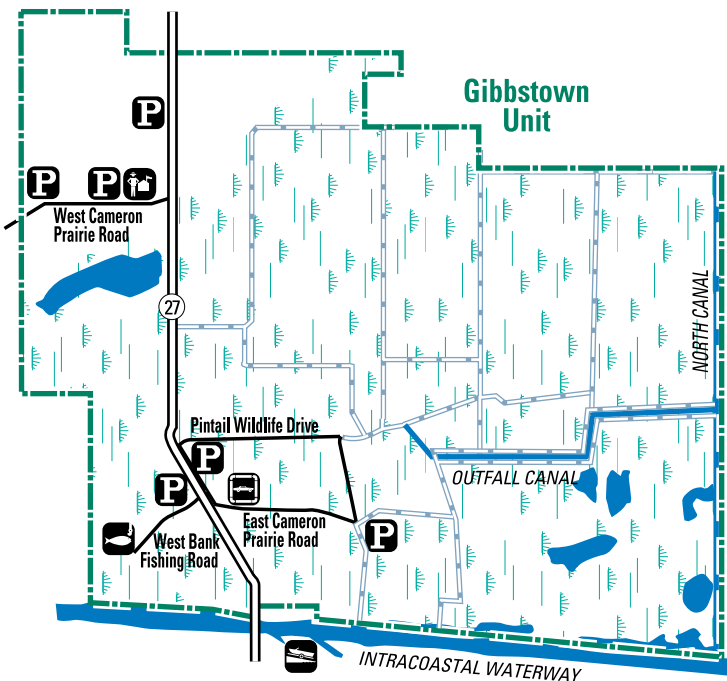
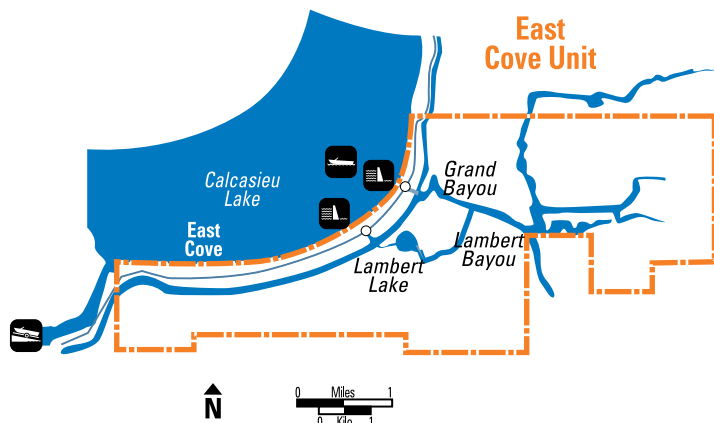
Fishing is permitted with rod and reel or pole and line only. The use or possession of any other type of fishing gear including: limb, trot, or jug lines and gill, trammel, or hoop nets is prohibited in all refuge waters. The daily fish limits are the same as Louisiana's Sport Fishing limits.

### Cast netting:

Cast netting for bait is permitted in accordance with state regulations and when units are open for fishing only. The shrimp limit, when cast netting for bait outside the Louisiana inshore waters shrimp season, is one gallon per day per vehicle or boat. Cast nets must be emptied directly into a container. Cast netters must maintain actual custody of shrimp while on the refuge.



## Cameron Prairie Fishing Maps



	Refuge Office and Visitor Center		Boat Launching
	Parking		Fishing
	Refuge Boundary		Pintail Wildlife Drive
	Paved Road		Water Control Structure
	Unpaved Road		Boat Access—Grand Bayou Control Structure
	Canals		Water
	Levees		Marsh



## Lacassine NWR Specific Fishing Regulations

Lacassine National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1937 to preserve wintering habitat for waterfowl in the coastal prairie of southwestern Louisiana. Refuge scattered uplands. The dominant feature of the refuge is Lacassine Pool which was created by enclosing a 16,000-acre marsh with a low levee. The refuge is noted for its large concentrations of waterfowl and other fish and wildlife species, including several game species. Fishes present include largemouth bass, crappie, sunfish, catfish, and bowfin (Choupique).

Certain State waterways that flow through the refuge are not subject to special refuge fishing regulations. These waterways include Lacassine Bayou, Bayou Misere, Mermentau River and Mud Lake (see map). Anglers should consult the State regulations for special restrictions in these waterways. **All side canals, coves, bays, marshes and ponds off these waterways are subject to refuge fishing regulations.**



*A family heads out to do some afternoon fishing in Lacassine Pool.*

### Closed Areas

Fishing is prohibited in the headquarters display pond and bank fishing is prohibited on the Lacassine Pool Wildlife Drive. Other areas may be closed to fishing or boating for safety or management purposes as designated by **No Fishing** or **Area Closed** signs.

### Season/Hours

Boat and bank fishing in Lacassine Pool, Streeter's Area, and refuge waters are permitted March 15 through October 15. Streeter Road Fishing Pier is open to bank fishing year round. Boat admittance into the refuge is permitted from one hour before legal sunrise until one

hour after legal sunset; however, fishing activities are prohibited until legal sunrise and after legal sunset.

### Permitted Activities, Gear, and Possession Limits

**Fishing:** Only fishing with rod and reel or pole and line is permitted in refuge waters. The use or possession of any other type of fishing gear including limb, trot and jug lines and gill, trammel, and hoop nets is prohibited in all refuge waters.

**Crabbing:** Crabs may be taken with hand lines or drop nets. Only cotton line and drop nets up to 24" outside diameter may be used. Floats on crab lines are prohibited. All hand lines, drop nets, and bait must be removed from the refuge upon leaving. The daily crab limit is five dozen (60) crabs per day, per vehicle or boat.

**Access:** Follow speed limits on refuge roads to reduce vehicle-caused wildlife mortality.

**Lacassine Pool:** Only boats with motors of 40 horsepower or less may be used in Lacassine Pool. Boaters are encouraged to reduce travel speeds at boat run intersections. Trailered boats may only be launched into Lacassine Pool at public boat launches with cement boat ramps.

**Units A & C:** Boats are prohibited in Lacassine Units A and C.

**Unit D:** Only boats with electric trolling motors or without motors are permitted within Lacassine Unit D. Boats may be hand launched from Tidewater Road.

**Canals and Bayous outside Lacassine Pool:** Motorized boats may be used in canals and bayous outside Lacassine Pool unless posted by Area Closed signs. Horsepower is not restricted for motors used in these canals and bayous.

**Marshes:** Access into refuge marshes and ponds outside Lacassine Pool is restricted to walking, poling, paddling, rowing or trolling motors. Motors may not be used in refuge marshes.

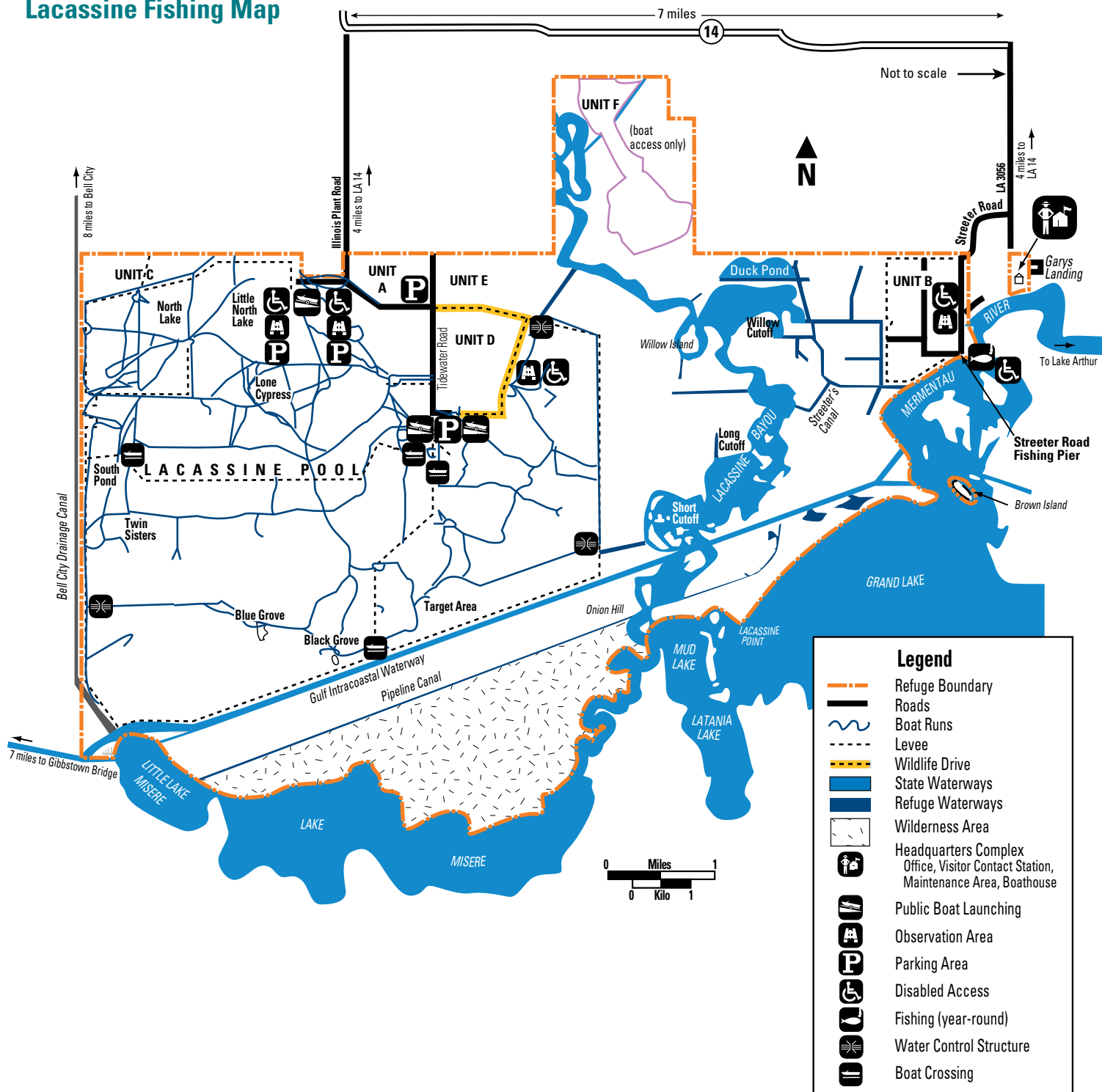
### Safety Warning

Motorboat travel on the refuge may be hazardous due to narrow boat runs, rough water, limited visibility, fog, vegetation, and swells from towboats, barges and crew boats. Please look for and obey posted **No Wake Zones**. These areas are posted to keep visitors safe and to protect nesting birds and/ or their habitat.

### Tournaments

Individuals or representatives of organizations seeking to sponsor or participate in fishing tournaments on the refuge should contact the refuge manager for special restrictions.

# Lacassine Fishing Map





## Sabine NWR Specific Fishing Regulations

Sabine National Wildlife Refuge was established in 1937 to preserve a large area of coastal wetlands for wintering and migrating waterfowl from the Mississippi and Central Flyways. This 124,511 acre refuge also serves as a major nursery for many estuarine-dependent marine species and is home to numerous alligators, other reptiles, mammals, amphibians, and migrating and nesting birds.

### Closed Areas

No crabbing, fishing, or cast netting are permitted from the Blue Goose Trail or the Wetland Walkway, including associated entrance bridges, drives, parking areas, walking trails, and surrounding areas. Areas closed to boats for fishing, crabbing and/or cast netting include under the bridges to the water control structures at Hog Island Gully and West Cove Recreation Areas, the canal on both sides of the entrance bridge to the Wetland Walkway, and the canal adjacent to the Blue Goose Trail parking lot and walking path.

Additional areas designated by **No Fishing, crabbing or cast netting** or **Area Closed** signs are also closed to fishing, crabbing or cast netting for safety and/or management purposes.

### Seasons/Hours

Fishing, crabbing, and cast netting for bait from a boat are permitted March 15 through October 15 throughout the refuge. Boat admittance into the refuge is permitted from one hour before legal sunrise until one hour after legal sunset; however, fishing, crabbing, and cast netting for bait are prohibited until legal sunrise and after legal sunset.

Bank fishing and crabbing are open year round from legal sunrise until legal sunset at North line, Hog Island Gully, Blue Crab, and West Cove Recreation Areas.

### Boat, Motor and Operation Limits

Outboard motors and go-devil type or air cooled motors may be operated only in designated refuge canals, bayous, and boat trails. Operation of any outboard or air cooled motor in the refuge marshes is prohibited. The operation of trolling motors is permitted.

*Public Boat Launches:* There is one improved boat launch at Northline Recreation Area; it is open March 15 through October 15 and allows boat access into the western interior of the refuge. There are two improved boat launches accessible from the south parking lot of the Hog Island Gully Recreation Area; both launches are open from March 15 through October 15. The first or

western most launch allows boat access into the western interior of the refuge, the second or eastern most launch allows access into the eastern portion of the refuge and into Calcasieu Lake.

There is an improved saltwater boat launch at the North parking lot of West Cove recreation area which is open year-round for fishing access into Calcasieu Lake. West Cove canal is closed to fishing from October 16 through March 14, and is only open for boat passage during this time.

There are two improved boat launches accessible from the south parking lot of West Cove recreation area open from March 15 through October 15. These launches allow boat access into the western interior of the refuge.

There are two unimproved boat launches at Blue Crab recreation area available for hand launching non-motorized boats into Units 1A and 1B.

*Units 1A and 1B:* Only non-motorized boats are permitted within Units 1A and 1B. These boats may be hand launched from the Blue Crab recreation area.

*Unit 3:* The only boat access into Unit 3 is through a designated bay in the Northwest Spillway. Only boats less than 59 inches wide with motors of 40 horsepower or less are permitted. There are no boat carts available to enter this unit.

*Designated named waterways:* Outboard motors (no horsepower restrictions) may only be operated in the designated named waterways shown on the Sabine Refuge Fishing Map.

*Marshes, ponds, and lakes:* Access into refuge marshes, ponds, and lakes beyond designated named waterways (see map) is restricted to movement by push poling, paddling, or trolling motors only.

*Roadside (Highway 27) Recreation Areas:* Northline, Hog Island Gully, and West Cove Recreation Areas all provide universal accessible docks for visitors to safely fish and/or crab. Blue Crab Recreation Area (formerly 1A/1B recreation area) has limited parking and no improved docks, however, visitors are welcome to bank fish and crab here.

### Notice

Due to the limited amount of dock space available for visitors to enjoy recreational fishing and crabbing, all visitors are asked to share the space available and welcome new visitors. No person is permitted to reserve a place or save a space for themselves or others by placing

unattended equipment in these areas. All persons are prohibited from interfering with other persons engaged in recreational activities on the refuge including boat launching and loading.

### Permitted Activities, Gear, and Possession Limits

**Fishing:** Recreational fishing with rod and reel, pole and line, and/ or jug lines only is permitted. **Jug line fishing** is permitted in designated waterways open to fishing. It is prohibited inside Units 1A, 1B and 3. Jugs are limited



*Sabine fishing wharfs provide accessible fishing for everyone year round.*

to 10 per boat and must be attended at all times. All jugs must be marked with the attendant's fishing license number and must be removed from the refuge daily. The use or possession of any other type of fishing gear including: limb and trot lines, and gill, trammel, and hoop nets are prohibited in all refuge waters. The daily fish limits are the same as Louisiana's Sport Fishing limits.

**Crabbing:** Crabs may be taken with hand lines or drop nets. Only cotton line and drop nets up to 24" outside diameter may be used. Floats on crab lines are prohibited. All hand lines, drop nets, and bait must be removed from the refuge upon leaving. The daily crab limit is five dozen (60) crabs per day, per vehicle or boat.

**Cast netting for shrimp:** Cast netting for shrimp is permitted from boats only. Cast netting is permitted during the Louisiana inshore shrimp seasons from legal sunrise to legal sunset in all refuge canals, unless posted as Closed. This activity must follow all state and refuge regulations. The daily shrimp limit is five gallons of heads-on shrimp per day, per vehicle or boat. All by-catch must be immediately returned to the water before cast netting can continue.

Cast netters must maintain actual custody of shrimp while on the refuge. This means the transfer of shrimp to another individual, boat, or vehicle or the placement of shrimp at a location outside of the cast netters immediate custody is prohibited. Cast netting is prohibited at all recreation areas including Northline, Hog Island Gully, Blue Goose Trail, Blue Crab, West Cove, and the Wetland Walkway.

**Cast netting for bait:** Cast netting for bait is permitted from boats only, March 15 through October 15, from legal sunrise to legal sunset. The shrimp limit when cast netting for bait outside the Louisiana inshore shrimp season is one gallon.



*Cast netting for shrimp is permitted from boats only.*

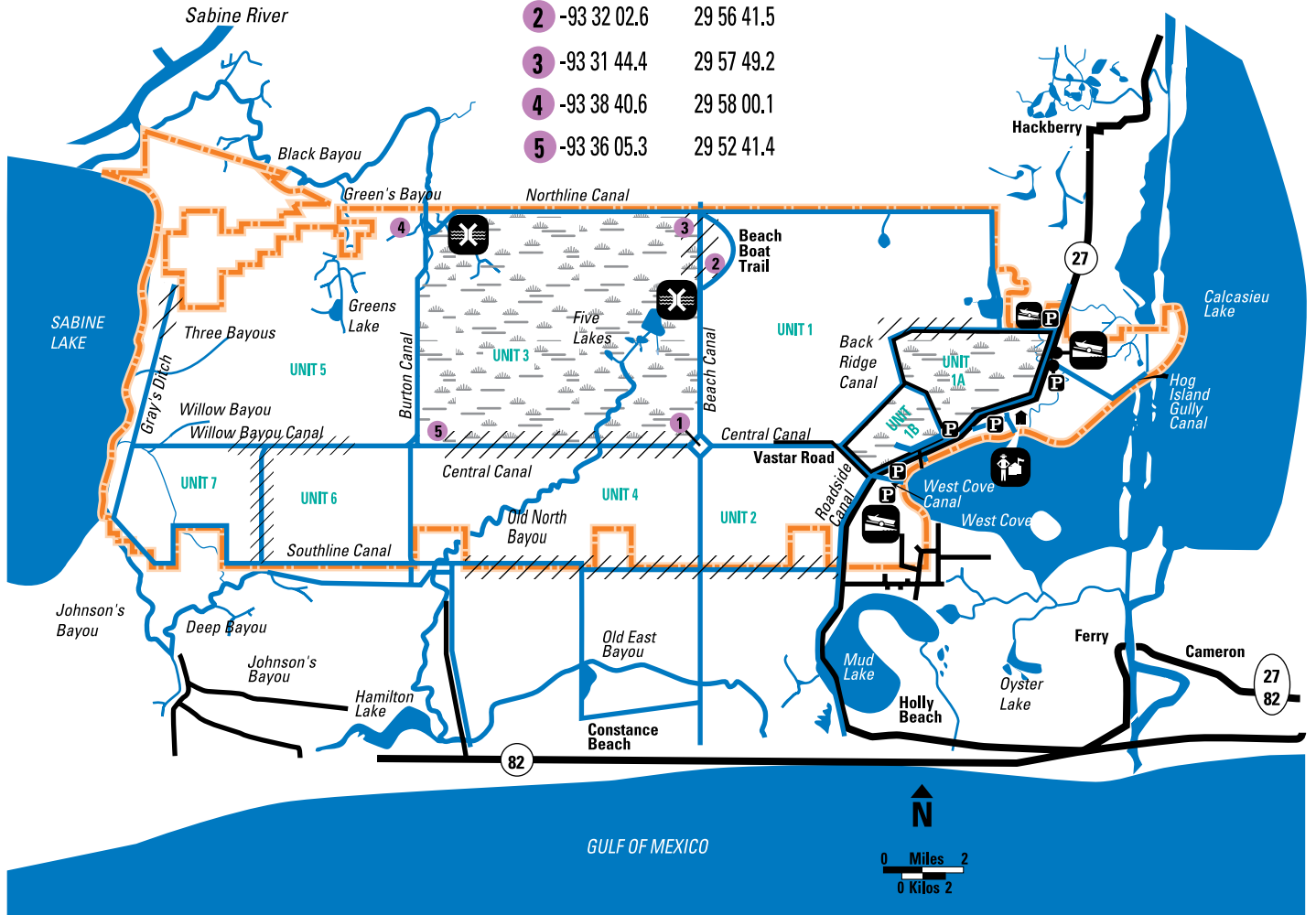
### Safety Warning

Motorboat travel on the refuge may be hazardous due to narrow boat runs, rough water, limited visibility, fog, vegetation, blind crossings, and swells or wakes from other boats, barges or crew boats. Please look for and obey all posted **No Wake Zones**. These areas are posted to keep visitors safe and to protect nesting birds and/ or their habitat.

# Sabine NWR Fishing Map

## Latitude/Longitude Coordinates

- 1 -93 31 44.4    29 52 45.5
- 2 -93 32 02.6    29 56 41.5
- 3 -93 31 44.4    29 57 49.2
- 4 -93 38 40.6    29 58 00.1
- 5 -93 36 05.3    29 52 41.4



Refuge Boundary

Boat Access Routes  
(Canals and Bayous)

Canals Closed  
to the Public

Freshwater Marsh

Headquarters Site













Boat Launching Ramp

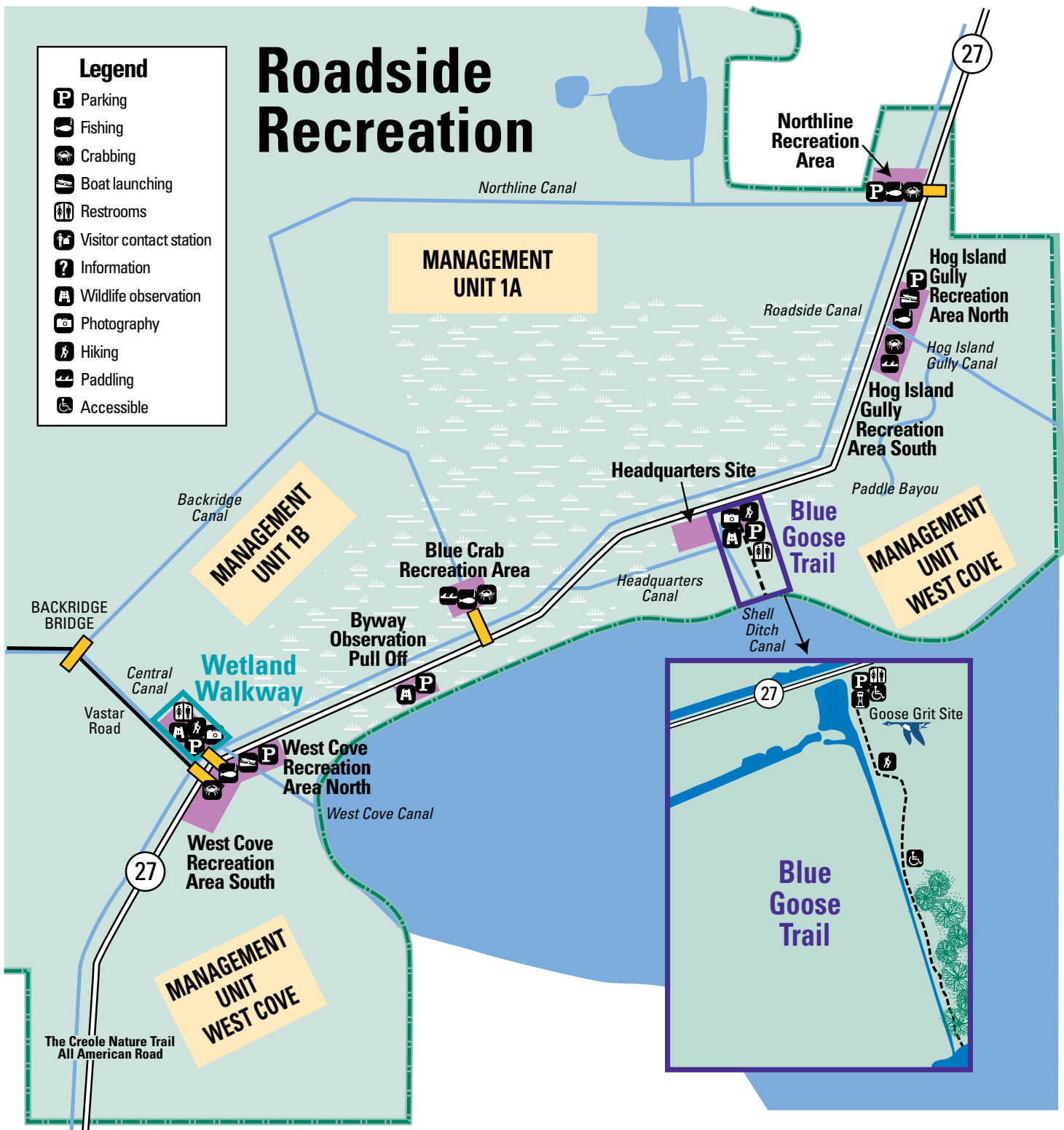
Water Spillway

Parking Lot

# Roadside Recreation

## Legend

-  Parking
-  Fishing
-  Crabbing
-  Boat launching
-  Restrooms
-  Visitor contact station
-  Information
-  Wildlife observation
-  Photography
-  Hiking
-  Paddling
-  Accessible

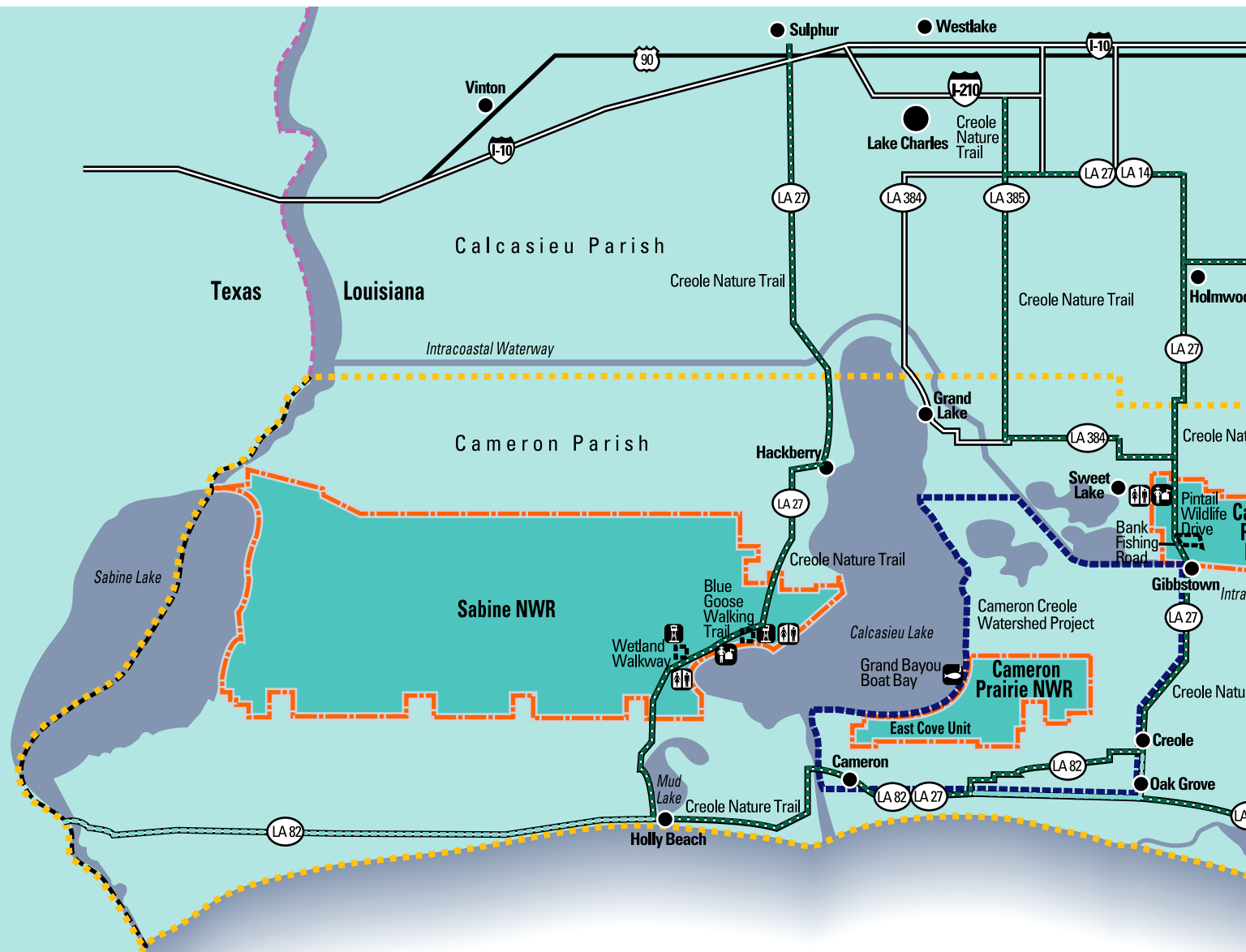


## Sabine NWR Recreation Opportunities

Recreation Area	Permitted Activities
Northline	Fishing, crabbing
Northline	Boat launching-access to interior marshes
Hog Island Gully	Fishing, crabbing
Hog Island Gully	Boat launching and kayak, canoe, and pirogue access to interior refuge marshes and Calcasieu Lake
Hog Island Gully	Non-motorized kayak, canoe, pirogue launching into Hog Island Gully Canal east of water control structure for recreational paddling only
Blue Goose Trail	Restrooms, hiking, photography, wildlife observation, interpretation, environmental education
Blue Crab	Fishing, crabbing
Blue Crab	Non-motorized boat launching into Units 1A and 1B for paddling, wildlife observation, photography and fishing
Blue Crab	Non-motorized boat launching into Units 1A and 1B for paddling, wildlife observation, and photography
Byway Pull Off	Wildlife observation and photography
West Cove	Fishing, crabbing
West Cove	Boat launching to access interior refuge marshes and Calcasieu Lake
West Cove	Boat launching for boat passage to Calcasieu Lake and vicinity only
Wetland Walkway	Restrooms, hiking, wildlife observation photography, interpretation, environmental education
Interior canals, bayous & ponds	Boat access and travel
Interior canals, bayous & ponds	Fishing, crabbing
Interior canals, bayous & ponds	Cast netting for shrimp from a boat
Interior canals, bayous & ponds	Cast netting for bait from a boat. Bait shrimp limit outside LA inshore shrimp season is one gallon.

## Sabine NWR Recreation Opportunities

Open Season/Time
Year round, sunrise to sunset
March 15 - October 15, one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset
Year round, sunrise to sunset
March 15 - October 15, one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset
October 16 - March 14, one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset
Year round, sunrise to sunset
Year round, sunrise to sunset
March 15 - October 15, one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset
October 16 - March 14, one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset
Year round, sunrise to sunset
Year round, sunrise to sunset
March 15 - October 15, one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset
October 16 - March 14, one hour before sunrise to one hour after sunset
Year round, sunrise to sunset
March 15 - October 15, one hour before sunrise to one hour before sunset
March 15 - October 15, sunrise to sunset
Louisiana Inshore Shrimp season, sunrise - sunset
March 15 - October 15, sunrise to sunset



**Legend**

- Refuge boundaries
- Parish boundary
- Cameron Creole Watershed Project
- Creole Nature Trail (CNT)
- All American Road
- City
- Intracoastal Waterway
- State boundary
- Refuge Office
- Restrooms

Gulf of Mexico



**Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge  
Complex Headquarters  
1428 Highway 27  
Bell City, LA 70630  
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Fax: 337/598 2492  
email: [fw4rwcameronprairie@fws.gov](mailto:fw4rwcameronprairie@fws.gov)  
Office hours: 7:30 am - 4 pm Monday-Friday**

**Website: <http://www.fws.gov/swlarefugecomplex>**

**February 2012**

