

East Cove

National Wildlife Refuge



photo: USFWS



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East Cove
National Wildlife Refuge
Currently administered by
Cameron Prairie
National Wildlife Refuge
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Refuge Facts

- Established: 1937.
- Acres: 14,927.
- Located in Cameron Parish, LA.
- Location: the refuge is located south of Lake Charles, Louisiana along the southeast shore of Calcasieu Lake. It is accessible only by boat.

Natural History

- The habitat is an estuarine marsh in the heart of the Cameron Creole Watershed.
- Nineteen miles of lake shore levee and five water control structures are used to control water and salinity levels in this very productive 64,000-acre wetland.
- Abundant fishery resources such as fish, shrimp, and crabs as well as migratory birds and alligators are found in the area.

Financial Impact of Refuge

- Managed by Cameron Prairie NWR staff.
- 4,000 visitors annually.
- Current budget (see Cameron Prairie NWR).

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

- Environmental monitoring.

- Water control structures and levees.
- Law enforcement.
- Partnerships.

Public Use Opportunities

- Fishing.
- Wildlife observation.
- Photography.

Calendar of Events

February-October: Fishing, wildlife observation.

Questions and Answers:

How do you get to the East Cove Unit?
The East Cove Unit is only accessible by boat. The entrance is located through the Grand Bayou Boat Bay at the southeast corner of Calcasieu Lake. A map of the refuge can be obtained from the Visitor Center at Cameron Prairie NWR.

How can I get a castnetting permit?
The permits can be picked up at the Cameron Prairie Visitor Center and through the mail.

Is a fishing license needed to go crabbing?

If you are using bait on a string and a dip net then a Louisiana license is not required but other forms of taking crabs such as liftnets and traps require the possession of a state fish license.

What is the limit on shrimp?
The limit is listed within the refuge permit. It is a five gallon bucket per boat per day. A refuge castnetting permit is needed.

Is the Grand Bayou Boat Bay open?
That information is accessible 24 hours a day by calling the East Cove Hotline 337/598 4235. When the boat bay is closed the refuge is closed to all public use.