DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR
U.S. FISH AND WILDLIFE SERVICE
Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge
R.R. #1, Box 448
Indiahoma, OK 73552
(580) 429-3222

Backcountry Camping Information

Thank you for your inquiry concerning Backcountry Camping on the Wichita Mountains Wildlife Refuge. Backcountry camping is allowed by permit in the 5,000 acres of the Charons Garden Wilderness. The following regulations and information are established for both the enjoyment and protection of the resource and for visitor safety.

1. Permit Information

a) Permits are issued for three-day periods: Friday, Saturday, Sunday, or Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday. No permits are issued for Thursday.

b) No more than 10 people will be issued permits over any three-day period.

c) If not under reservation, permits are available on a walk-in basis at the Refuge Headquarters Monday through Friday from 8:00 a.m. to 4:30 p.m. This is very unlikely during the spring, fall and school break days.

2. Reservation Information

a) Reservations are on a first-come basis.
* NOTE CHANGE

b) *Tentative reservations may be made in writing or by telephone up to 90 days in advance.

c) A $2.00 per person administrative fee will be charged. The fee is non-refundable once a permit is issued. Payment must be received by the refuge within 10 days after notice of tentative reservation is mailed from the refuge. Check or money order should be made payable to the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service. Upon receipt of payment, the permit will be sent by return mail. (See note on fire danger or other emergencies below.)

3. Camping Regulations

a) The maximum length of stay is 3 days 2 nights beginning with sunup of the first day of the permit and ending at sunset of the third day.

b) Permittee vehicle can be parked outside the gate in the designated parking lot or inside the gate at Sunset Picnic Area. Do not leave valuables in vehicle.

c) Display bottom portion of permit on dash of vehicle and keep the top portion with you.

d) Campfires or open fires of any kind are strictly prohibited. Please exercise extreme caution if using a backpacker stove.

e) Do not trench around tent or level off tent site.

f) Do not bury garbage; pack it out with you. To dispose of human waste, select a screened spot away from any trail or water source and dig a small pit latrine five inches deep and ten inches across. Cover with soil after use.

g) Do not pollute streams by dish washing, laundering, or bathing.

4. General Information

a) It is your responsibility to know refuge regulations. A regulation and information leaflet may be obtained at refuge headquarters or at each entrance to the refuge.

b) CAUTION - You will be camping in a wildlife refuge where animals move about freely. Please be alert for buffalo and longhorn cattle that pass through the area. Should the animals approach your site, secure your food items and seek a safe location. You should not threaten or attempt to scare the animals from your site. The animals may linger in the area for a short period of time before moving. Remember - BUFFALO AND LONGHORN ARE DANGEROUS-KEEP YOUR DISTANCE.

c) Be prepared for sudden weather changes-thunderstorms; cold fronts with high wind.

d) Refuge topographic maps are offered as sales items at the visitor center.

e) Bring water with you. Do not rely on streams or ponds in the area.

f) The possession or use of any alcoholic beverage, including beer containing 3.2% (or less) alcoholic content by weight, is prohibited.

We hope you enjoy your visit and we ask that you observe refuge regulations.

Sincerely,
Refuge Manager

*During periods of high fire danger, permits will not be issued in the interest of public safety and resource protection. In those instances or other emergency situations where permits are temporarily suspended, reservation money will be refunded.

(Over)

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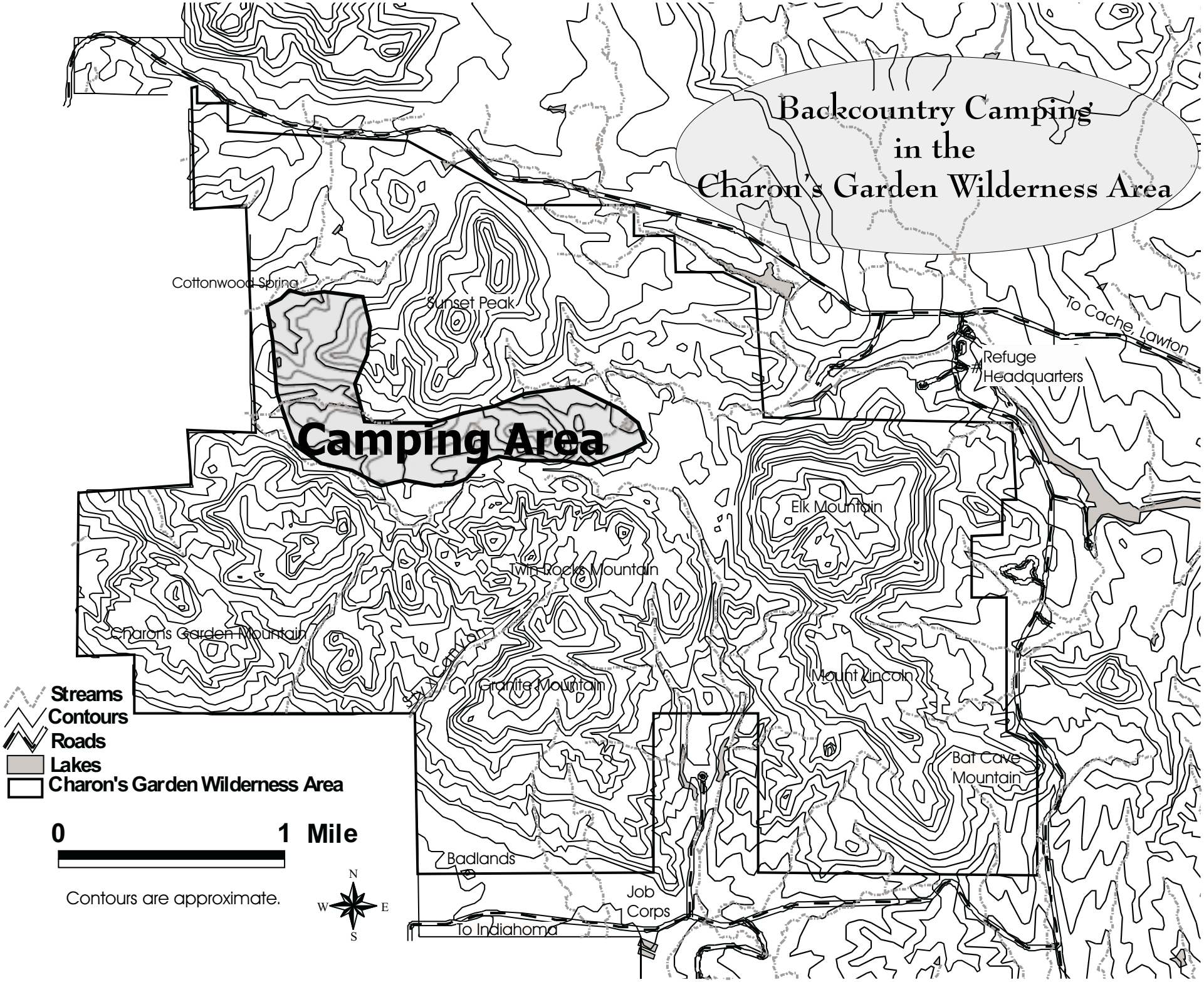
Backcountry Camping
in the
Charon's Garden Wilderness Area
Cottonwood Spring
Sunset Peak
Camping Area
To Cache, Lawton
Refuge
Headquarters
Elk Mountain
Twin Rocks Mountain
Charons Garden Mountain
Sky Canyon
Granite Mountain
Mount Lincoln
Bat Cave
Mountain
Badlands
Job
Corps
To Indiahoma
Streams
Contours
Roads
Lakes
Charon's Garden Wilderness Area
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Contours are approximate.
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