

# Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex

Hunting Regulations 2023-2024  
Cameron Prairie, Lacassine and  
Sabine



## **Annual Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex Hunting Special Use Permit**

(Cameron Prairie, Lacassine and Sabine National Wildlife  
Refuges)

When signed and in your possession, this special use permit allows you to hunt on Cameron Prairie, Lacassine, and Sabine National Wildlife Refuges for the 2023-2024 season. Your signature acknowledges your compliance with the regulations associated with National Wildlife Refuges.

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Signature

Permits are not transferable. **Expires 2/29/24.**

# Southwest Louisiana Refuges Complex Regulations

## Refuge Introduction

### The Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge

**Complex** consists of Cameron Prairie, Lacassine, Sabine and Shell Keys National Wildlife Refuges. 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 or other national wildlife refuges visit the national wildlife refuge web site at [www.fws.gov/refuges/](http://www.fws.gov/refuges/).

### General Hunting Regulations for Cameron Prairie, Lacassine and Sabine NWRs

Hunting regulations are designed to protect the sportsman and wildlife populations. Hunting seasons open on the Complex are listed in this brochure. The regulations within this brochure supplement the general regulations that govern hunting on national wildlife refuges as set forth in Title 50 Volume 6 Chapter 1 Parts 18-199 Code of Federal Regulations. All hunting is in accordance with applicable state licensing and regulations, unless otherwise stated in refuge specific regulations.

Individuals using the refuges are subject to inspections of licenses, hunting equipment, daily limits, boats, vehicles and their contents by federal and state officers. Only the species listed in this brochure may be taken during the seasons indicated in this brochure.

## Requirements

### Permits

The permit located on the front of this brochure, when signed and in your possession, serves as your authorization to participate in all hunts occurring throughout the Complex, except limited lottery hunts. Permits are required for all hunters. Signing the permit acknowledges your compliance with the regulations contained herein. In addition to signing and possessing this brochure permit; youth and senior waterfowl lottery hunters are required to comply with the special conditions of the specific lottery hunt.

Youth and senior waterfowl hunt dates are published in area newspapers in September each year. Applications for the

lottery waterfowl hunts are accepted September 1 through October 1. Please contact the Complex Headquarters Office at Cameron Prairie for hunt dates and application requirements. Duplicate or incomplete applications will be discarded. Successful applicants will be notified.

Hunters selected for lottery waterfowl hunts must be able to walk to hunt blinds and manually transport hunting equipment. Lottery hunters who are unable to use their hunt day are encouraged to notify the refuge as soon as possible by calling 337/598 2216 or 337/774 5923.

### Hunting Dogs

Hunters are encouraged to use retriever dogs during waterfowl, dove and snipe hunts, but dogs must be under the control of the handler at all times.

### Access Routes

Access roads and trails may be closed at any time due to adverse conditions.

### Transportation of Firearms and Archery Equipment

When traversing the refuge by boat or vehicle, all firearms and archery equipment must be unloaded and cased. An unloaded firearm is defined as having no ammunition in the chamber, magazine, cylinder, or clip when attached to the firearm. Unloaded archery equipment is defined as having the arrow removed from the string. Crossbows must also be un-cocked.

### Harvest Data Requirements

Each hunting party is required to complete a harvest report form listing numbers and species of game taken. Forms may be placed in designated check station drop boxes after each hunt or delivered to the Refuge Complex office at Cameron Prairie NWR.

### Universal Access

Individuals with Physically challenged Hunter Permits issued by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries (LDWF) may be eligible for special access accommodations during refuge archery deer hunts. Contact Refuge Complex headquarters for more information.

### Archery Hunting

Archery hunters are encouraged to complete a certified bow hunters' education course.

## Activities Prohibited Throughout the Refuge Complex

- Parking outside designated roads and parking areas or blocking gates or roadways with vehicles.
- Possession of toxic shot.
- Hunting within 150 yards of another hunting party.
- Hunting within 50 yards of a canal, waterway, public refuge road or designated hiking trail.
- Construction of or occupying a permanent blind or stand.
- Removal of any hunting blinds or equipment owned by the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.
- Leaving waterfowl hunting-related equipment beyond each day's hunt.
- Use of air thrust boats, utility type vehicles (UTV's), and all terrain vehicles (ATV's) are prohibited unless specifically permitted.
- Use of any non-biodegradable material used as flagging or trail markers.
- Use of remote cameras.
- Hunting from a tree in which a metal object has been driven to support a hunter.
- Use of climbing spikes.
- Cutting or removing any live vegetation, limbs, etc.
- Importing *Phragmites* species (a.k.a. Roseau cane) for blind material or cover.
- Littering. All spent shells must be picked up and brought out of the hunt area along with other trash.
- Camping, vehicles, and vessels left on the refuge at night.
- Fires.
- Disturbing, collecting, injuring or attempting to disturb, collect or injure any plant, artifact, rock, specimen or animal on the refuges.
- Feeding of wildlife.
- Swimming.
- Horses.
- Animals or pets roaming at large. All pets must be kept on leashes at all times.
- Possession or distribution of bait while in the field and hunting with the aid of bait, including: any grain, salt, minerals, other feed or non-naturally occurring attractant, on the refuge.
- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while hunting.
- Target practice with any weapon.
- Commercial guiding activities.

## Signs and Boundaries

Signs are useful tools in regulating the use of a public area. The wording of the signs below apply to the areas behind the signs. Pay attention to the signs, watch for boundary corners, and check your location with the maps.

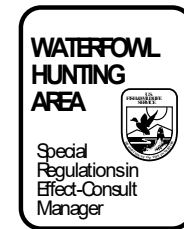
These signs apply to all refuges.



This sign marks the outer refuge boundary. Public entry is generally authorized. However, other refuges in the system may have different regulations concerning general entry. Always know the regulations before entering.



This sign means that the area is closed to all entry. Do not trespass behind this sign for any reason.



This sign marks the boundaries of the waterfowl hunting areas. This is the only area of the refuge where waterfowl hunting is allowed.



This sign marks the boundary of the waterfowl hunt area. No hunting past these signs.

# Cameron Prairie NWR

## Specific Hunting Regulations

Cameron Prairie established in 1988, is located in Cameron Parish in southwestern Louisiana. The refuge is composed of fresh marsh, impoundments and former agriculture fields. Cameron Prairie NWR consists of two separate and distinct units, East Cove Unit and Gibbstown Unit. The East Cove Unit is closed to all hunting. Prohibited Activities are listed on pages 3 and 4.

### Gibbstown Unit Waterfowl and Upland Game Hunts

Youth/senior waterfowl, snipe, dove, and big game hunts are permitted in designated areas only. Adults may supervise no more than two youths on waterfowl, snipe and dove hunts and no more than one youth for big game hunts. Youths are generally defined as those individuals 15 years of age or younger. Youths under the age of 16 may hunt without hunter education certification if they are accompanied by and under direct supervision of a person born before September 1, 1969 that has a valid hunting license; or they are accompanied by and under the direct supervision of a person who is 18 years of age or older and has proof of successful completion of a hunter education course approved by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Direct supervision means that the person being supervised is within a normal audible voice contact and in direct line of sight of the supervising person at all times while hunting. The supervising adult is responsible for ensuring that youth hunters do not engage in conduct that would constitute a violation of refuge regulations.

### Lottery Waterfowl Hunting

Special lottery hunts are held throughout the LA West zone duck and coot waterfowl season. Hunters 15 years of age and younger and adults 55 years of age and older will be allowed to apply. Additional permits are required. Permits will designate hunt day and blind number. Only ducks, geese, gallinules, and coots may be taken.

### Big Game Hunting Regulations

Archery hunting of white-tailed deer is permitted throughout the refuge, except designated closed areas, in accordance with state WMA general regulations and bag limits. Equipment use follows state approved archery equipment regulations. Deer may only be taken with archery equipment. The refuge season is open from October 1 through the Friday before the LA West zone duck and coot season starts. Hunters may not enter the

hunting area earlier than 4 am and may not remain later than two hours after sunset. Each hunter must complete and turn in a Big Game Harvest Report (FWS Form 3-2359), available from a self-clearing check station, after each hunt.

### Deer Stands

Only portable deer stands may be used. Hunters may place deer stands on the refuge 1 day before the deer archery season and must remove them from the refuge within 1 day after the season closes. Hunters may place only one deer stand on the refuge, and deer stands must have owner's name, address, and phone number clearly printed on stand. Hunters must place stands in non-hunting position at ground level when not in use.

### ATV Use

ATV use is prohibited except to physically challenged archery hunters in possession of a valid Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Physically Challenged Hunter Permit and Refuge Special Use permit. Physically Challenged Hunter ATV trails are open October 1 through the Friday before the LA West zone duck and coot waterfowl season starts. ATV's may only be used by appropriately permitted individuals on designated levees and roads.

### Snipe and Dove Hunting

Snipe hunting opens on the refuge on the day following the closure of the LA West zone duck and coot season in accordance with state regulations. Dove hunting on the refuge is open all days of the first split of the state Dove season. Both Snipe and Dove hunting is in accordance with LA hunting regulations with the exceptions that only approved non-toxic shot may be used.

### Closed Areas

Hunting is prohibited in "No Hunting Zones" located around the visitor center, maintenance shop area and the area within the Pintail Wildlife Drive (see map). Other areas closed to hunting for management purposes are designated by "Area Closed" or "No Hunting Zone" signs on the refuge.

# Lacassine NWR

## Specific Hunting Regulations

Lacassine was established in 1937 to preserve wintering habitat for waterfowl in the coastal prairie of southwestern Louisiana. Refuge habitat consists of approximately 34,878 acres of freshwater marshes and scattered uplands. The refuge is noted for its large concentrations of waterfowl and other species of wildlife.

Waterfowl and big game hunts are permitted in designated areas only. Adults may supervise no more than two youths on waterfowl hunts and no more than one youth for big game hunts. Youths are generally defined as those individuals 15 years of age or younger.

Youths may hunt without hunter education certification if they are accompanied by and under direct supervision of a person born before September 1, 1969 that has a valid hunting license; or they are accompanied by and under the direct supervision of a person who is 18 years of age or older and has proof of successful completion of a hunter education course approved by Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Direct supervision means that the person being supervised is within a normal audible voice contact and in direct line of sight of the supervising person at all times while hunting. The supervising adult is responsible for ensuring that youth hunters do not engage in conduct that would constitute a violation of refuge regulations.

### Safety

Hunters are cautioned that motorboat travel on the refuge may be hazardous due to water conditions, weather, and restricted view from vegetation.

### Waterfowl Hunting Regulations

Only ducks, geese, gallinules, and coots may be taken. See map for areas open to waterfowl hunting.

### Hunt Period

Hunting is permitted on Wednesday, Thursday, Saturday and Sunday of the LA teal and West zone duck and coot waterfowl seasons. The refuge is closed to hunting during the goose-only portion of the waterfowl seasons. Hunters can enter the refuge no earlier than 4 am and may not remain on the refuge later than 2 pm. All decoys and blinds must be removed from the refuge daily.

### Scouting

Hunters may scout refuge hunt areas during the refuge open fishing season, March 15 through October 15, and Monday through Friday during the one week prior to the opening of the LA West zone duck and coot season. Possession of blind material while scouting is prohibited.

### Walk-in Youth/Senior Hunt Area

Unit B is a youth and senior walk-in hunt area. All hunt parties must include at least one youth or senior participant. The youth must be capable of and must actively participate in such hunt by the possession and/or firing of a legal weapon during the hunt for the expressed purpose of harvesting game. Supervising adults accompanying youth on refuge hunts may participate in hunting but may not harvest more than their own daily bag limit. Hunt parties can be no larger than 4 people and all members must be within normal audible voice contact and in direct line of sight of each other. Seniors are defined as adults 55 years of age and older; youth are defined as individuals 15 years of age or younger and must be accompanied by their legal guardian. All refuge waterfowl hunt regulations apply. Parking available in designated refuge parking areas. No trailers permitted. ATV use is prohibited. Hand carried; hand launched non-motorized watercraft may be used. Blocking gates and driveways is prohibited. Litter is prohibited.

### Big Game Hunting Regulations

Archery hunting of white-tailed deer is permitted in designated refuge areas (see map) in accordance with state WMA general regulations and bag limits. Equipment use follows state approved archery equipment regulations. Deer may only be taken with archery equipment. The refuge season is open from October 1 through the Friday before the LA West zone duck and coot season starts. Each hunter must complete and turn in a Big Game Harvest Report (FWS Form 3-2359) available from a self-clearing check station, after each hunt.

### Deer Stands

Only portable deer stands may be used. Hunters may place deer stands on the refuge 1 day before the deer archery season and must remove them from the refuge within 1 day after the season closes. Hunters may place only one deer stand on the refuge, and deer stands must have owner's name, address, and phone number clearly printed on stand. Hunters must place

stands in non-hunting position at ground level when not in use. Placing of deer stand does not reserve the spot.

### **ATV Use**

ATV use is prohibited except to physically challenged archery hunters in possession of a valid Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries Physically Challenged Hunter Permit and Refuge Special Use Permit. Physically Challenged Hunter ATV trails are open October 1 through the Friday before the Louisiana West zone duck and coot waterfowl season starts. ATV's may only be used by appropriately permitted individuals on designated levees and roads with archery equipment, and .17 and .22 caliber rim-fire rifles and air rifles.

### **Prohibited Activities during Big Game Hunting or Waterfowl Hunting**

- Hunting in the headquarters area along Nature Road and along Lacassine Pool Wildlife Drive.
- Boats in Lacassine Pool and Unit D from October 16 through March 14.
- Boats with motors larger than 40 horsepower in Lacassine Pool.
- Use of motors including trolling motors is prohibited in designated wilderness areas (see map).

## **Sabine NWR Specific Hunting Regulations**

Sabine NWR was established in 1937 and is one of the primary wintering refuges for waterfowl in the Mississippi Flyway. This refuge consists of 125,000 acres of marsh with numerous ridges, bayous, ponds, lakes, manmade canals and levees, and wooded islands. The area available for hunting is approximately 34,000 acres.

Public hunting of ducks, geese, gallinules, and coots is only permitted in designated areas of Sabine NWR. Adults may supervise no more than two youths. Youths are defined as individuals 15 years of age or younger. Youths under the age of 16 may hunt without Hunter Education Certification if they are accompanied by and under the direct supervision of an adult born before September 1, 1969, who has a valid hunting license; or if they are accompanied by and under direct supervision of an adult who is 18 years of age or older and who has proof of successful completion of a Hunter Education course approved by the Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries. Direct supervision means that the youth hunter

is within normal audible voice contact and in direct line of sight of the supervising adult at all times while hunting. The supervising adult is responsible for ensuring that youth hunters do not engage in conduct that would constitute a violation of refuge regulations.

### **Scouting**

Hunters may scout refuge hunt areas during the refuge's open fishing season (March 15 – October 15) and Monday through Friday during the week immediately prior to the opening of the LA West Zone duck and coot season. Possession of blind material while scouting is prohibited.

### **Hunt Period**

Hunting is permitted only on Wednesdays, Thursdays, Saturdays, and Sundays during the LA West Zone duck and coot waterfowl seasons and September teal season. Hunters may enter the refuge and launch boats no earlier than 4 am. Hunters may not remain on the refuge after 2 pm. All decoys and blinds must be removed from the refuge daily. The refuge is closed to all hunting during the goose-only portion of the waterfowl seasons.

### **Hunter Access and Boating Regulations**

Motorized boats may enter the refuge from the southwestern West Cove Recreation Area boat launch or through Burton Canal via Black Bayou from the north (see map). Dragging boats across levees is prohibited. Outboard motors and go-devil type or air-cooled motors may be operated only in named refuge lakes, canals, bayous, and Beach Boat Trail as indicated on the map. Operation of trolling motors is permitted.

Walk-in hunters and hunters launching small boats (i.e., boats without a trailer, such as kayaks) may access Hunt Unit E from Central Canal Road. No trailers are allowed on Central Canal Road. As required by State law, all non-motorized boats must have white lights visible from all sides of the vessel.

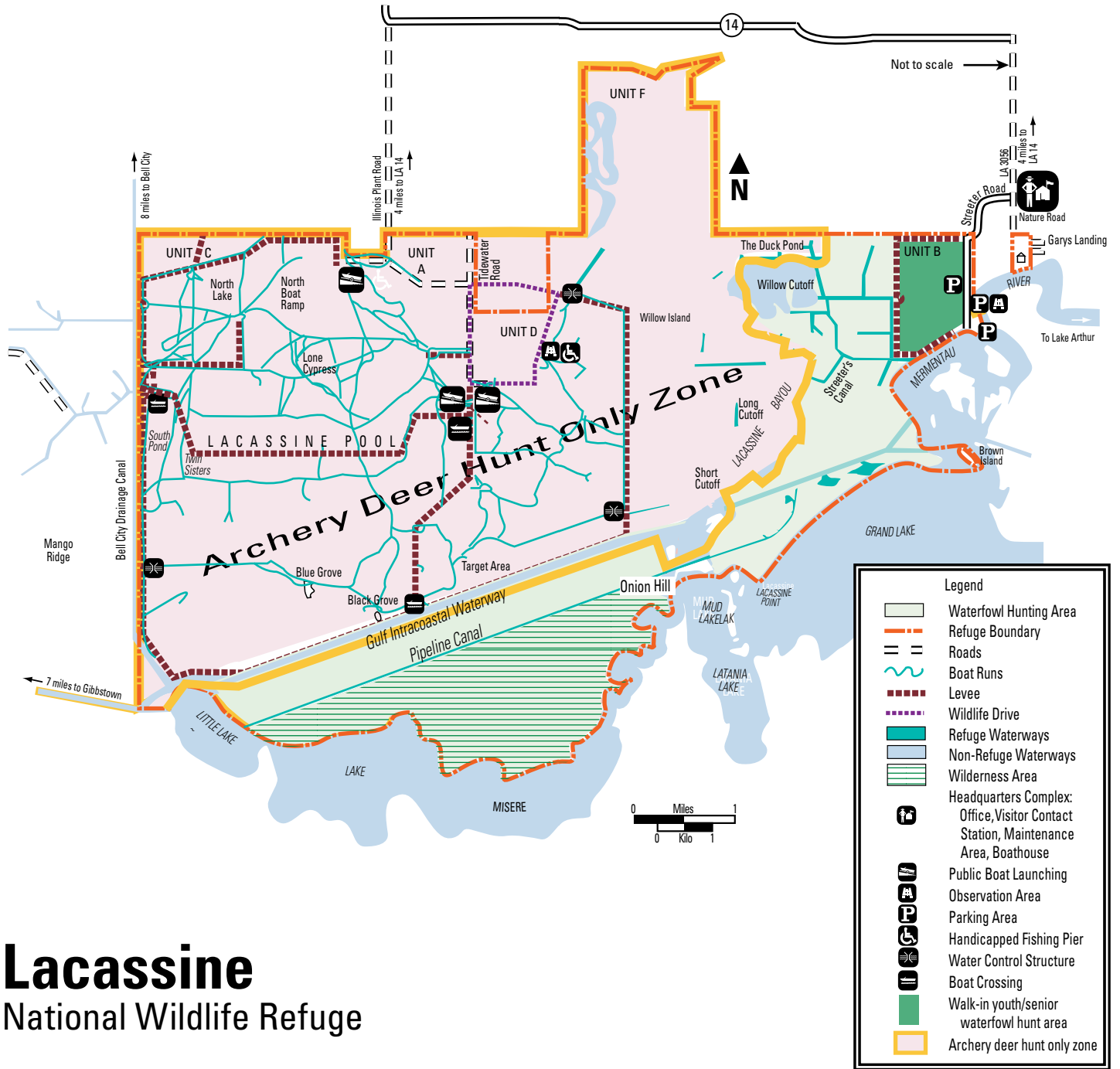
### **Safety**

Hunters are cautioned that motorboat travel on the refuge may be hazardous due to water conditions, weather, and restricted view due to vegetation. Most of the lakes are 12" to 24" in depth. It is important to know your boat and motor operational limits so you can enter and leave hunt areas safely.

# Cameron Prairie

## National Wildlife Refuge





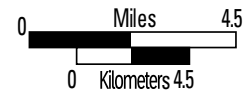
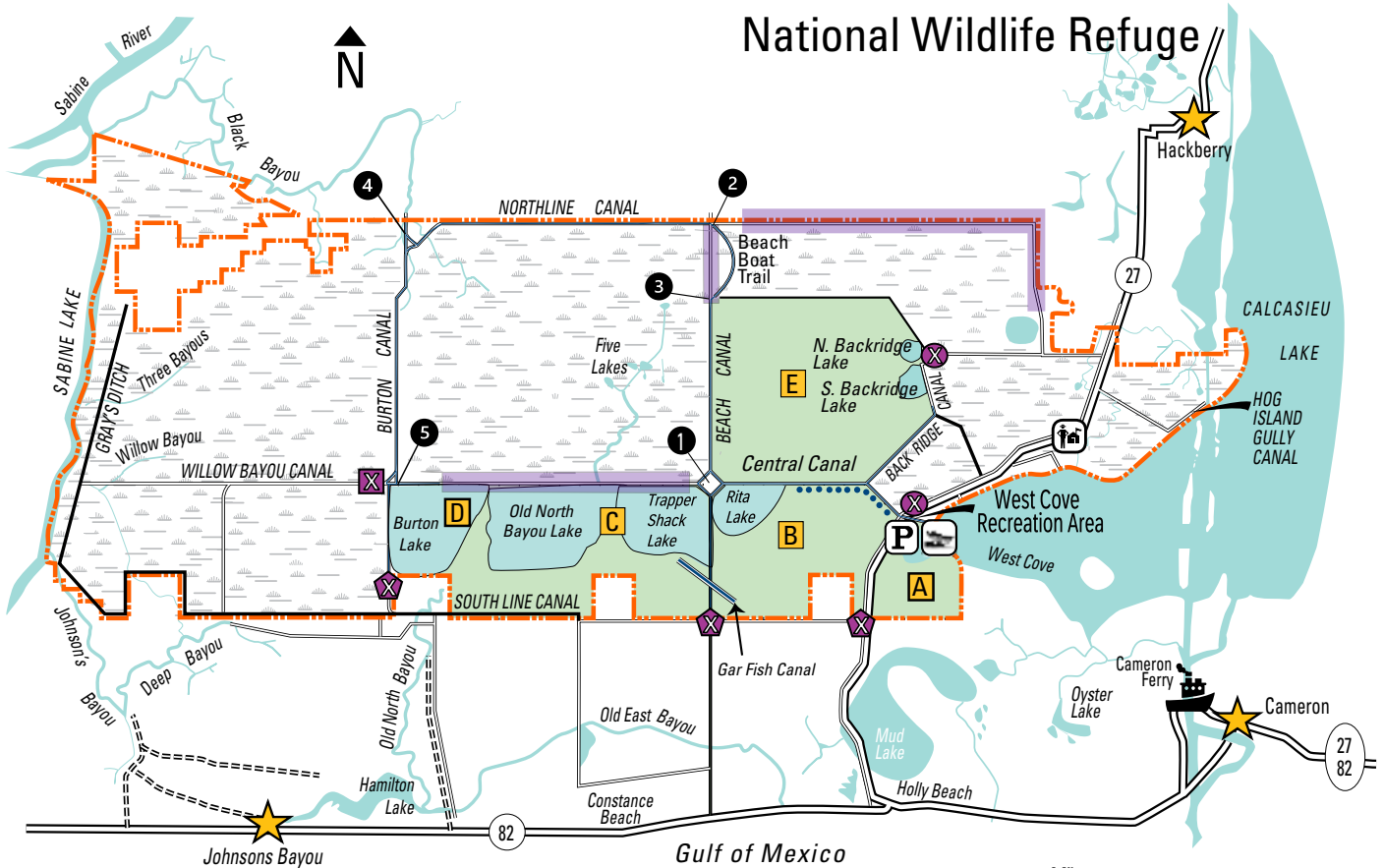
# Lacassine

## National Wildlife Refuge



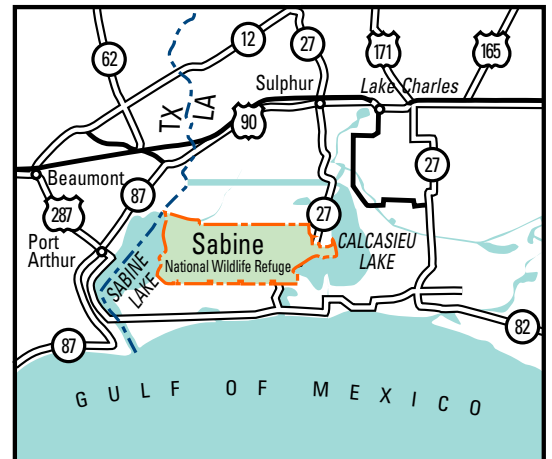
# Sabine

## National Wildlife Refuge



Legend	
	Refuge Boundary
	Hunting Area (Non-Toxic Shot Only)
	Hunt Units
	Refuge Headquarters
	Boat Launch
	Parking
	No boat access EAST beyond this point
	No boat access WEST beyond this point
	No boat access SOUTH beyond this point
	Canals
	Canals open to boat travel
	Former canal inaccessible
	Central Canal Road
	Highways
	Towns

Latitude/Longitude Coordinates		
Number/Location	North	West
1. Trapper Shack	29° 52' 42.0"	93° 31' 45.6"
2. North Entrance to Beach Boat Trail	29° 57' 46.4"	93° 31' 44.5"
3. South Entrance to Beach Boat Trail	29° 56' 34.2"	93° 31' 44.4"
4. Fork to Black Bayou or Northline Canal	29° 57' 21.8"	93° 38' 39.2"
5. North Entry/Exit from Canal to Unit D	29° 52' 43.8"	93° 38' 50.9"



## Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife Refuge Complex 2023-2024 Hunting Seasons

<b>Species</b>	<b>Cameron Prairie</b>	<b>Lacassine</b>	<b>Sabine</b>
Deer - archery (either sex)	October 1 through the Friday before the LA West zone duck and coot waterfowl season starts.  Bag limit - in accordance with state regulations.	October 1 through the Friday before the LA West zone duck and coot waterfowl season starts.  Bag limit - in accordance with state regulations.	Not available.
Waterfowl Hunt Scouting	Not available.	Entire fishing season (Mar 15-Oct 15) & Mon-Fri during the week prior to LA West zone duck and coot season starts.	Entire fishing season (Mar 15-Oct 15) & Mon-Fri during the week prior to LA West zone duck and coot season starts.
Waterfowl General Hunt	Not available.	Wed, Thu, Sat & Sun during LA West zone duck and coot season and September teal season.  Designated areas only.  Closed Friday.	Wed, Thu, Sat & Sun during LA West zone duck and coot season and September teal season.  Designated areas only.  Closed Friday.
Waterfowl Lottery Hunts (Youth: 15 years of age and younger)	Select days during the LA West zone duck and coot season. By permit only.	Not available.	Not available.
Waterfowl Lottery Hunts (Seniors: 55 - years of age and older)	Select days during the LA West zone duck and coot season.  By permit only.	Not available.	Not available.
Walk-in Youth/Senior Waterfowl Hunt  (Youth: 15 years of age and younger; Seniors: 55 years of age and older)	Not available.	Wed, Thu, Sat & Sun during LA West zone duck and coot season and September teal season.  Designated areas only.  Closed Friday.	Not available.
Snipe	Opens on the day following closure of LA West zone duck and coot season.	Not available.	Not available.
Dove	Open first split of LA dove season only.	Not available.	Not available.
Alligator Lottery Hunts	Lottery draw April 2025.	Lottery draw April 2025.	Lottery draw April 2025.

**Southwest Louisiana National Wildlife  
Refuge Complex Headquarters**

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Bell City, LA 70630**

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**<https://www.facebook.com/SouthwestLouisianaComplex>**

**July 2023**

