



**US Army Corps  
of Engineers**  
New Orleans District

# Indian Bayou

HUNTING · HIKING · PADDLING

## Contact Information

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project Office  
112 Speck Lane, Port Barre, LA 70577  
(337) 585-0853

Ranger Station (manned during gun hunts  
for deer only)  
(337) 228-1313

Visit the project site online at:  
[mvn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Atchafalaya-Basin/](http://mvn.usace.army.mil/Missions/Recreation/Atchafalaya-Basin/)

St. Landry Parish Sheriff: (337) 948-6516

St. Martin Parish Sheriff: (337) 394-3071

LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries  
Operation Game Thief: (800) 442-2511

All Other Emergencies 911

*Photography by Lane Lefort*



# WELCOME TO INDIAN BAYOU

Indian Bayou is a 28,500 acre public access area located in the heart of the Atchafalaya Basin. The bottomland hardwood forests, cypress swamps and lazy bayous offer stunning views of unspoiled Louisiana wilderness. Recreational opportunities abound, complemented by careful development that facilitates public access without harming the basin's habitat.

Owned and managed by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Indian Bayou is part of the Atchafalaya Basin Floodway System (ABFS) project. The ABFS encompasses more than half a million acres of forested wetlands and swamplands in south Louisiana and was developed as part of the federal government's response to the historic 1927 Mississippi River flood. This project protects South Louisiana from Mississippi River floods by diverting up to half of the Mississippi River's flood flow down the Atchafalaya River to the Gulf of Mexico, at a flow rate of up to 1.5 million cubic feet per second.

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## **Natural and Cultural Resource Management**

Working in partnership with state, local and other federal agencies, Indian Bayou is managed by the Corps to provide public access to the basin's natural resources. Throughout the ABFS, the Corps allows continued development of agricultural, mineral and timber resources so long as it does not interfere with the area's flood control purposes or harm the ecosystem.

To maintain a healthy population of white-tailed deer and provide better hunting opportunities, the Corps established a Quality Deer Management Program on Indian Bayou. Indian Bayou was the first public land in Louisiana to enforce antler restrictions on buck harvests.

Cultural resource sites on the area are protected. If any artifacts or remains are located, please contact the Project Office.

## Environmental Restoration

The Corps has reforested over 2,500 acres of cleared agricultural land with bald cypress, persimmon, green ash, bitter pecan and several species of oak. These areas provide food, cover, breeding and brooding habitat, for a wide range of wildlife, including songbirds, raptors, turkeys, woodcock, deer, raccoons, rabbits, opossums, armadillos, squirrels, snakes, lizards, turtles, frogs and toads.

Invasive aquatic species such as: water hyacinth, hydrilla and salvinia, interfere with the natural flow of water and sediment. These plants can quickly choke off waterways. When this occurs, the Corps, Louisiana Department of Wildlife and Fisheries, and St. Martin Parish Government work together to utilize herbicides and manage water levels in Lake Henderson to aid in control.

## Safety Tips

Observe all posted rules, regulations and safety guidelines. Make sure to read notices posted on bulletin boards throughout the Corps public access areas.

Pay attention to your surroundings. Whether hiking, biking, canoeing or riding an ATV, keep an eye out for stumps, rocks, fallen logs, and other obstacles. Be alert to dangers posed by insects, snakes, alligators and poisonous plants.

Be sure someone knows where you're going and when you expect to return in case you need help.

Regardless of your activities, be aware that Indian Bayou is a popular hunting area. Wear appropriate gear while in the area. During open gun and primitive weapon seasons, all hunters (except for waterfowl hunters) are required to wear a hunter orange hat and vest while in the field. We recommend that other users (hiking, birding, fishing, etc.) wear a hunter orange hat and vest while in the field. Wear a life jacket at all times while on the water.

## RECREATIONAL OPPORTUNITIES

### Hunting

Some of the South's best bottomland forest hunting is found on Indian Bayou. The area's small game includes squirrel, rabbit, woodcock and snipe. White-tailed deer and wild turkey are the only big game species.

The area's location in the center of the Mississippi Flyway, is an important route

for migratory birds and can produce superb waterfowl hunting. The area is also the first public land in the state to feature a 350-acre tract specifically for wheelchair-bound hunters. Hunting seasons vary from year to year. For information on specific hunting seasons, please see the Hunting Guide to Indian Bayou brochure which is updated annually and is available at the project office, website, and information kiosks (See contact information).

### Fishing

The area's lakes, sloughs and bayous are home to abundant recreational and commercial fisheries.

Popular sport-fish include:

Striped, yellow and largemouth bass, sunfish, crappie (sac-a-lait), catfish, buffalo fish and freshwater drum are fished recreationally and commercially in the area, as are crawfish. A permit is needed for crawfishing, which can be obtained at the project office (See contact information.)

### Hiking, Biking and Horseback Riding

Hikers, mountain bikers and horseback riders can access Indian Bayou through 35 miles of trails, 13 of which are designated specifically for hiking. A general map of Indian Bayou trails is provided in this brochure and on the project web site. (see contact information)

### Birding and Nature Watching

Indian Bayou provides excellent opportunities to observe birds and other wildlife. The area's wetlands and shallow lakes are prime habitat for several species of wading birds. Over 125 wood duck boxes have been installed throughout the property to provide nesting shelter for more than 700 birds annually. Part of the America's Wetland Birding Trail, Indian Bayou features a myriad of songbird, raptor and water-bird species.





### **Boating and Paddling**

Touring Indian Bayou by canoe, kayak or boat offers a close-up perspective on one of the nation's last great river swamps and its wildlife. A 24-mile network of paddling trails allows visitors to navigate the area's streams and bayous without a guide. Mapped by the Corps in partnership with Atchafalaya Paddling Trails, the State of Louisiana and volunteers, these trails feature reflective blue and white buoys. The map in this brochure shows these paddling trails starting at Bayou Courtableau and terminating at the Atchafalaya Landing.

### **ATV**

Riders can access Indian Bayou along 8 miles of ATV all-weather trails. Additionally, individuals with a LDWF-issued mobility impaired card or those over 60 may access an additional 4 miles of Physically Challenged ATV Trails. Off-trail

operation is strictly forbidden. These ATV trails are open from 4:00 a.m. until two hours after sunset.

### **Events in Indian Bayou**

Communities of the Atchafalaya Basin host a variety of cultural and outdoor events throughout the year. Visit [www.louisianatravel.com](http://www.louisianatravel.com) for information about planned events in the basin.

### **What licenses are required to hunt and fish at Indian Bayou?**

A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit is required to hunt and to crawfish in Indian Bayou. These permits are free of charge and available at the project office, website, and information kiosks. (See contact information).

State licenses are required to hunt and fish in Indian Bayou. Information about hunting and fishing licenses is available at [www.wlf.louisiana.gov](http://www.wlf.louisiana.gov).



## FOR YOUR SAFETY, FOLLOWING ACTIVITIES ARE PROHIBITED:

- The use or possession of alcohol while operating motorized vehicles and before or while hunting
- Discharging firearms for target practice and skeet
- Utilizing non-season-specific firearms
- Littering
- The use of air boats
- Parking in undesignated areas
- Operating motorized vehicles off authorized trails or roads
- Camping and overnight parking
- Mooring boats overnight
- Leaving personal property
- Cutting vegetation without permit
- Destruction/defacement of any public property
- Possessing firearms except when hunting
- The use or possession of fireworks and other explosive devices
- Burning or open fires
- Commercial activities
- Feeding or harassing wildlife, including alligators



Did you know, one third of boating-related fatalities occur of a slip or fall overboard? 84% of water related deaths occur when no life jacket is worn. If you won't wear a life jacket for yourself, please wear it for those who love you.

Boaters should be alert to underwater hazards like submerged logs, stumps, and pilings that may be exposed or present just below the water surface.

This is a remote location — make sure someone knows where you are going and when you expect to be back.

### INDIAN BAYOU AREA MAP


\* NOTE: All trails may be used by Hikers and Cyclists

### TRAIL MAP

No Hunting Area

\*NOTE: All trails may be used by hikers and cyclists.

Indian Bayou 5.5 Miles from Welcome Center

Atchafalaya Trail 2 Miles

Aligator Trail 1.5 Miles

Indian Bayou Loop 3.25 Miles

White Shell Trail 1.4 Miles

Oxbow

White Shell

ST LANDRY PARISH

ST MARTIN PARISH

**Inset Map: Indian Bayou Trail Map**

**Keep Atchafalaya Beautiful**

**pack it in pack it out**

Help Keep Our Public Lands Clean  
Please Pack Out All Your Trash

Littering is a Crime  
Offenders can be fined up to \$500 for littering on US Army Corps of Engineers property. If you Pack-It-In, Pack-It-Out! Receptacles available at most locations.

Atchafalaya Landing

Atchafalaya Welcome Center

INDIAN BAYOU MAP

Scan QR code for Recreation Map.

