Recreational Opportunities

Hunting
Some of the South's best bottomland forest hunting is found in Indian Bayou. The area's small game includes squirrel, rabbit, woodcock and snipe. White-tailed deer and wild turkey are the big game species. The area's location in the center of the Mississippi Flyway, an important route for migratory birds can provide 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 website. (See Contact Information)

Fishing
The area's lakes, sloughs and bayous are home to abundant commercial and recreational fisheries. Popular sport-fish include:
- Bluegill (bream)
- Warmouth
- Red Ear Sunfish
- White and black Crappie (Sac-a-Lait)
- Striped, Yellow and Largemouth Bass,
- 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).

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 shorebirds. 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 contains a variety of songbird, raptor and water-bird species. Indian Bayou is also home to several endangered, threatened, and special-concern species such as: the Louisiana Black Bear, Bald Eagle, American Alligator, Bachman's Warbler, and Pallid Sturgeon.

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 lary bayous offers stunning views of unspoiled Louisiana wilderness. Recreational opportunities abound, complemented by minimal 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 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 East 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.

Natural Resource Management
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.

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 directional signs at major turning points. The map in this brochure shows these paddling trails and provides coordinates approximated at a time interval.

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.

Events in Indian Bayou
Each September, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers hosts a National Public Lands Day (NPLD) event in the Atchafalaya Basin. As part of this nationwide event, volunteers enhance their public lands by planting trees, building trails, and removing trash and invasive plants. Learn more at www.publiclandsday.org, or contact our project office for information on volunteering.

ATV
Riders can access Indian Bayou along 8 miles of ATV all-weather trails. Additionally, for individuals with a LDWF-issued mobility impaired card or those over 60 may access an additional 4 miles of Physically Challenged ATV Trails. Off road operation is strictly forbidden. These ATV trails are open from 4:00 a.m. until two hours after sunset.

What if I find Native American Artifacts?
Contact Information
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Project Office
112 Speck Lane, Port Barre, LA 70577
(337) 585-0853
LA Department of Wildlife and Fisheries
Operation Game Thief (800) 442-2511
All Other Emergencies 911

What licenses are required to hunt and fish in Indian Bayou?
Information about hunting and fishing licenses is available at wlf.louisiana.gov.

State licenses are required to hunt and fish in Indian Bayou. Information about hunting and fishing licenses is available at wlf.louisiana.gov.

A U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permit is required to hunt and to collect in Indian Bayou. These permits are free of charge and are available at the ABFS Project Office. For more information please visit or call the project office at 112 Speck Lane, Port Barre, LA 70577 (337) 585-0853. Office hours are from 8 a.m. to 5 p.m., Monday thru Friday.

In addition, communities of the Atchafalaya Basin host a variety of cultural and outdoor events throughout the year. Visit www.louisianatravel.com for information about planned events in the basin.

Recreational areas like Indian Bayou are developed by the Corps, working in partnership with state, local and other Federal agencies, to provide public access to the basin's natural resources.

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

Controlling Nuisance Vegetation
Invasive aquatic species such as: water hyacinth, hydella and salvinia, interfere with the natural flow of water and sediment. These plants can quickly choke off waterways. Where this occurs, the Corps and LDWF sprays with herbicides to aid in control.

Quality Deer Management Program
To maintain a healthy population of white-tailed deer and to 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.

Safety Tips
Indian Bayou is a multi-use area. The Corps of Engineers encourages visitors to exercise caution. Prior to your trip, visit our web page at: www.mvn.usace.army.mil, click “Missions” then “Recreation” then “Atchafalaya Basin”. Hunting safety guidelines are available through this site, as are maps for public access to the floodway. While in the basin, observe all posted rules, regulations and safety guidelines, and read notices posted on bulletin boards throughout the Corps public access areas.

Be alert to dangers posed by insects, snakes, alligators and poisonous plants. If you see a snake, remain a safe distance—at least the length of the snake’s body. Alligators fear humans and seldom attack, but may if protecting their offspring.

If you see an alligator, stay at least 30 feet away; keeping in mind that alligators can cross short distances very quickly. Do not feed an alligator as this may cause the animal to lose its fear of people and become dangerous.

Pay attention to your surroundings. Whether hiking, biking, canoeing or riding an ATV, to avoid possible injury, keep an eye out for stumps, rocks, fallen logs, and other obstacles.

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.

Protection of Cultural and Archaeological Resources
The Corps has completed some archaeological surveys and has plans to further investigate the area. If any artifacts are found please contact the Project Office, so that the artifacts or remains can be properly protected and preserved.

What if I find Native American Artifacts?
Visitors may not disturb or take Native American artifacts or remains found in the Indian Bayou area. The Corps is working to report all acts of artifact theft or vandalism.

If found on federal lands, report all acts of artifact theft or vandalism. The Corps has completed some archaeological surveys and has plans to further investigate the area. If any artifacts are found please contact the Project Office, so that the artifacts or remains can be properly protected and preserved.

Indian Bayou

[Image of Indian Bayou]

[Map of Indian Bayou]

[List of activities available at Indian Bayou]

[Contact Information for Indian Bayou]

[License requirements for hunting and fishing in Indian Bayou]

[What licenses are required to hunt and fish in Indian Bayou?]

[What if I find Native American Artifacts?]
Paddle Trail GPS Points

1  N 30º 31.2361  W 91º 51.1097
2  N 30º 30.3713  W 91º 51.0022
3  N 30º 29.5229  W 91º 50.7871
4  N 30º 28.6919  W 91º 50.4828
5  N 30º 27.9909  W 91º 50.0587
6  N 30º 27.3684  W 91º 49.6360
7  N 30º 26.8155  W 91º 49.0936
8  N 30º 26.3172  W 91º 48.4741
9  N 30º 25.6558  W 91º 48.1487
10 N 30º 25.1038  W 91º 47.6457
11 N 30º 24.3466  W 91º 47.2928
12 N 30º 24.1153  W 91º 46.6283
13 N 30º 23.7410  W 91º 45.9901
14 N 30º 23.0488  W 91º 45.9698
15 N 30º 22.4162  W 91º 44.6040
16 N 30º 21.8200  W 91º 44.0400
17 N 30º 20.9875  W 91º 44.7160
18 N 30º 20.2441  W 91º 44.4900
A N 30º 23.6336  W 91º 47.5034
B N 30º 23.3497  W 91º 47.0140
C N 30º 23.1062  W 91º 46.4367

Prohibited Activities

- The use or possession of alcoholic beverages while on ATVs
- Camping/overnight parking
- Overnight mooring of any boats including houseboats, staying overnight in any boat to hold hunting area
- Leaving any personal property on the area overnight
- Possession of firearms during non-hunting seasons
- Target practice and skeet shooting
- Fireworks
- Use of airboats
- Use or possession of any type of trail markers (paint, flagging, bright eyes)
- Feeding / harassing wildlife, including alligators
- Dumping of household trash, appliances, or other litter on government property
- Parking in undesignated areas
- ATV operation off authorized trails
- Mud riding
- Open camp fires
- Cutting trees, limbs, brush without a special use permit
- Destruction or defacement of public property
- All commercial activities

Legend

- Parking Area
- Restroom and Parking Area
- Boat Launch
- Welcome Center
- Boundary Line
- Physically Challenged ATV / Foot Trail
- Foot Trail
- Primitive Walking Trail
- Paddling Trail
- No Hunting
- Private Property
- Wheel Chair Bound Hunting Area

Indian Bayou!  Life Jackets Save Lives!