Welcome to the Ray Roberts Lake State Park Complex! Whether you're a first-time visitor, or a long-time friend of the parks, we hope you take this opportunity to relax and enjoy the many outdoor opportunities at YOUR beautiful state park.

Like our agency’s motto, we truly believe that life’s better outside. We have been a great destination for millions of visitors since the early 1990s. We offer over 6,600 acres of state park lands, nearly 30,000 surface acres of clear water, and approximately 14,000 acres of public hunting lands, which means plenty of outdoor recreation opportunities. Take a hike, ride a bike, or ride a horse on some of our 65 miles of developed trails. Reserve a favorite campsite out of over 300 options to spend a memorable weekend under the stars with your family. No matter what your style, we offer plenty of ways to connect with the outdoors and to make life-long memories.

YOUR parks have experienced significant challenges again in 2020 due to flooding and the COVID pandemic. We have implemented additional facility cleaning protocols, reduced activities, capacity numbers, and encouraged social distancing throughout the parks. We encourage you to wear masks while near visitors and staff and be considerate of the space others while in the parks. We have worked hard on flood repair projects to restore and enhance your parks to the high quality that our guests have come to know and expect. These are your park lands and we hope that you will be a good steward of these special places.

With your assistance and care, we can keep our parks clean, safe and protected for future generations to enjoy, love, and make memories.

Please let us know if we can assist you during your visit to any of your parks. A friendly ranger can be found at our headquarters buildings or working throughout the parks. We'd be happy to answer your questions and assist you in any way possible. Again, welcome to the lake and thank you for visiting. We hope that you and your family enjoy your time with us and that you will come back for years to come!

Sincerely,

Chris A. True
Park Superintendent
Ray Roberts Lake State Park Complex

To manage and conserve the natural and cultural resources of Texas and to provide hunting, fishing and outdoor recreation opportunities for the use and enjoyment of present and future generations.
Open for visitors

Ray Roberts Lake State Park welcomes visitors daily

By Abigail Allen
Managing Editor

Taking a trip to the Ray Roberts Lake State Park takes a bit more planning this year, park staff said.

COVID-19 pandemic precautions mean visitors should register for spots to make sure they can enter the park before making the drive out.

“We’ve been reaching our capacity almost every day,” Isle du Bois Unit Park Superintendent Mark Stewart said. “Many days of the week, three to four days out of the week, the capacity is being reached a day or two beforehand, and then other days we’re reaching the capacity at noon or 1, midday-ish.”

That’s causing park staff to pivot on how it usually takes care of the park, he said, such as mowing at 6 a.m. to be done before the majority of visitors hit the park. Cleaning is happening more, too, and during slower times in the day.

The registration system also has been working out well, Stewart said. “Even in the future, once the capacities all go back to normal, those day use reservations will still be available,” he said. “And, I would encourage folks to make those, especially holiday weekends, so that if they came out on the Fourth of July, they’ll know they have a spot regardless of how busy the park is.

“It doesn’t guarantee a table, it doesn’t guarantee anything in particular, but at least it allows you access to the park.”

Having so many visitors get used to coming out to Ray Roberts Lake might have a lasting impact on park attendance going forward.

“Even as we raise the capacity, as busy as we’ve been, we still anticipate hitting that capacity as we move through 50%, 75%,” Stewart said. “... We used to only hit closure on major holidays—Memorial Day, Fourth of July. It seems we may start reaching our capacity more often as the parks become more and more popular.”

Holiday weekends, like for July Fourth and Labor Day, book up well in advance, Stewart said. And weekends usually fill up by Thursday.

The Ray Roberts Lake State Park is reaching capacity basically every day with the COVID-19 restrictions in place.

“If they’re trying to make reservations three or four days in advance, they can normally get in,” Stewart said.

Stewart estimated that Isle du Bois is in the Top 10 state parks as far as revenue generated annually, and combining it with “the Greenbelt, and Johnson Branch, and the lake parks and the boat ramps into the mix, Ray Roberts as a whole, we come in usually in the Top 5 or so,” he said.

If people planning to visit the park haven’t made reservations, Stewart said, he “would encourage them either to check Facebook or to call the park to ensure” there’s enough room in the capacity for them.

That includes annual passholders. Park capacity is determined by the number of vehicles that have entered the park unit, not a headcount.

That also means that people using the boat ramp who are out on the water throughout their time in the park are included in the count, Stewart said.

Although the park’s usually robust interpretive program has been hampered by the pandemic, there are several additional reasons to visit the park, Stewart said.

Mountain biking remains popular at the park, he said, while kayaking and paddle-boarding have seen an uptick in popularity on Ray Roberts.

“Rick Torres, our interpreter, has moved on to a job down by Austin with the Texas Outdoor Family program, and they’re currently holding his position for now,” Stewart said, adding “we will definitely miss Ranger Rick.”

The park staff in June was working on its plan for holding programs while complying with the COVID-19 restrictions.

“As they relax some of the restrictions, we’ll be utilizing our Master Naturalist volunteers and folks like that to start putting on programs, and some other staff will also be par-
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Ray Roberts provides family fun

It could be said that I got catfished at Ray Roberts Lake. Heck, that claim could even be directed toward my 4-year-old son, E.J.

Before someone suspects we were tricked on an online dating service, I should explain that this particular episode of catfishing occurred in a very literal sense.

When it came time to pass out writing assignments for the 2020 Lake Guide, I immediately got excited about the prospect of getting some hooks wet and writing a first-person account of a fishing trip.

It would be a shame to live and work right next door to one of Texas’ greatest lakes and not experience it personally, right?

Furthermore, my son had never really been on a fishing trip. What better way to bond with Pops than with a rod and reel.

Preparation for the trip took longer than the adventure itself. Luckily, I already had my own fishing gear.

But E.J. was starting from scratch. His extremely prepared mother had to make sure he had a fishing shirt with sufficient protection from UV rays. He also needed a rod and reel. And evidently his own tackle box.

Choosing all three items himself, E.J. went with the light green color for the remainder of the purchases. Duh.

After a bit of practice casting and reeling in the backyard the night before fishing, we were almost all set.

The morning of the adventure, I went to a local mercantile shop for the remainder of the supplies: extra bobber, extra hooks, minnow bucket, two dozen minnows and most importantly a cheeseburger and fries.

Almost $40 later I realized how long it had been since I purchased minnows. The little swimmers have definitely gone up in price the last decade.

I met up with E.J. and Wifey and we headed out to Lake Ray Roberts Marina. It’s really gorgeous there and also gave E.J. an opportunity to witness the beauty of the lake from the dam while driving over.

Arriving, we fed the last bit of Dad’s fries to the hungry carp in the kids’ area, then fished for a couple minutes from the dock. A very pleasant Marina staffer came out to remind us there is no fishing allowed from the area where we were positioned.

We paid the $7 adult and $5 child fishing rights fees, then moved to the covered area where fishing is allowed.

Except for one annoying turtle, we unfortunately didn’t get any bites.

My instincts told me we’d maybe have more luck in a different spot, so we loaded up and headed to Isle du Bois.

A quick pass through the park revealed some areas that were available, but this was quite a humid and hot Thursday, so I stayed on the lookout for a spot with more shade.

After pulling through a camping area, I noticed some lovely willow trees near a parking area.

Upon climbing out of the vehicle, we carefully walked down a rocky area towards the shore.

There was sufficient shade for the humans and a little bit of cover for the fish as well.

E.J. had no problem touching the minnows and even baited his own hook a couple times. We still need to work a bit on the casting.

The minnows, however, were not doing so great at this point.

About 45 minutes in, we’d still not caught any fish.

I grabbed one of the livelier minnows and cast into a new location. Instantly, I saw the familiar bobbing of the bobber. It dashed under water, and I excitedly reeled toward the shore.

“I got one!” I yelled to no one in particular.

The tugging resistance and weight on the end of the line was invigorating – a feeling I hadn’t experienced in far too long.

Pulling the fish out of the water, I was super surprised to see it was a catfish. Normally, I recalled, catfish bait resembling stinky brown wads of weirdness, not shiny minnows.

I’m pretty sure I had my own cheering section provided by my family members, but I only faintly recall that.

The excitement that can only be provided by a successful landing of a fish was all I could concentrate on.

I carefully removed the hook and set the catfish free.

Soon afterwards, E.J. finally got permission to set the remaining minnows back to nature as well.

“Bye fishies, go see your mommies,” he cooed.

Thanks to Ray Roberts Lake for creating some unforgettable family memories.

The following morning, E.J. awoke and was immediately begging for another day of fishing.

Isle du Bois and surrounding areas be warned: more minnows will soon be set free to find their mommies.

J.T. Strasner is general manager of the Post-Signal. Comments may be sent to jstrasner@postsignal.com.
Fun in the sun

Paddleboarding, such as in the picture above, and kayaking have gained more and more popularity at Ray Roberts Lake.

Before the pandemic hit, the state park was renting out kayaks.

“Because of the COVID stuff, ... all the loaner programs and rentals have been suspended across the state,” Isle du Bois Unit Park Superintendent Mark Stewart said.

Mountain biking has stayed popular, he added.

Swimmers were active at the swim beach June 13.

Photos by Abigail Allen/The Post-Signal
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A family gathered for a picnic, along with their small dog, on June 13.
Abigail Allen/The Post-Signal

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Ray Roberts offers refuge

Johnson Branch works toward opening new Nature Center

By Baylee Friday
Staff Writer

Chris True spent his Saturday strolling the trails that twist across the Greenbelt, navigating the dirt and gravel labyrinth with seasoned expertise.

The park superintendent at the Ray Roberts Lake State Park Complex says this year has unleashed an unforeseen myriad of change ... but the sundrenched trails remain the same. And he says, for the most part, the same goes for Johnson Branch.

“The biggest change, obviously, is our decreased capacity due to the COVID pandemic,” True said.

As COVID-19 cases rise and fall across the country, folks are flocking to the lake—electing a day spent on the water over a day at the mall, a roasted weenie served by the campfire to a four-course meal in a restaurant dining room.

Still, space is limited. True says park capacity has been reduced and social distancing practices are still being heavily enforced.

“We’re just trying to increase the space between people,” he said.

Adapting to the change hasn’t been easy, but True says park staff has done an excellent job across the board. And, while adjusting to new challenges brought on by the ongoing pandemic, staff has also been forced to tackle a more familiar foe: flooding.

“We had high water—up to four feet high—around the lake,” True said. “It caused a lot of repair work, and we had to close some of our boat ramp facilities. But we are completely open again. We’re welcoming people out, just not as many as we’ve had in the past.”

Now that the facilities are open, True says Johnson Branch is running as usual—for the most part. The trails are open, the water’s cool and folks have not hesitated to get out and enjoy the scenery.

“It’s like a big breath of fresh air,” said Tioga resident Carolynn Barr, laughing as she prepared an afternoon picnic with her family. “Like, a literal breath of fresh air. Just being outside and being with friends and, you know, just cooking a hamburger is nice. And it feels very normal.”

When guests are not out on the water or sunbathing on the beach, they might notice a new building tucked into the lush greenery of the park: The Nature Center.

The building has been under construction since last year and is finally finished—but not quite ready to open.

“The building itself and the grounds are finished,” True said.

“We’re just waiting on the exhibit staff down in Austin to finalize everything. We’re hoping it will be open this fall—for sure by next spring. We’re really excited about it. Just looking forward to eventually getting some groups in there and letting people explore.”

For now, staff members are preparing for the Fourth of July, a weekend that typically acts as a big money maker for the park. This year will be different. True says both units—Isle du Bois and Johnson Branch—are already at capacity “and then some.”

He says the holiday will be different for everyone, and he’s encouraging folks to be patient with the park staff and with each other. People have been venturing to the lake to destress, and True says the last thing they need is more chaos.

“With everything going on, it’s been a busy year,” True said. “A lot of people have been coming out to the parks to get away from the stress. We’re offering a refuge for people to come out and enjoy themselves ... and ultimately, to just get away from those stressors for a little while.”
Visitors familiar with the Isle du Bois Unit of the Ray Roberts Lake State Park may have noticed a few improvements to the park’s day use area and along the shoreline.

In March, the park reopened its playground, this time with entirely new structures and a rubberized play surface that should hold up better to the flooding that happens along the swim beach shoreline.

“The water was up onto the actual playground structures, and the beating of the waves broke apart several parts of the playground,” Isle du Bois Unit Park Superintendent Mark Stewart said regarding the damage done by the 2015 floods.

The old playground also featured pea gravel, which didn’t fare so well when flooded.

“The pea gravel surface was inundated with sand, and so that pea gravel-sand mixture was no longer a compliant surface for a play surface,” Stewart said. “So, that was part of that replacement, is coming up with a long-term structure and surface.”

Included in the playground is the
traditional equipment that features stairways, slides and bridges with two umbrella-style awnings to help provide a little relief from the Texas sun, as well as a swing that lies lower to the ground and is attached in four spots instead of two.

There’s also a small, faux rock area that small park visitors can climb or use as a spot to sit.

“It was open for maybe two weeks before all the COVID closures started,” Stewart said.

When the park reopened its day use area in May, he said, the playground reopened to use, too.

“There are drains underneath it,” Stewart said. “It is all ADA-accessible, and it’s a real nice playground that we hope everybody gets a lot of chances to play on it for a long time.”

A new playground wasn’t the only project completed this year.

Riprap rock has been added to the shoreline to keep the soil in place, even in the case of flooding.

“All of that was where wave action just eroded away,” Stewart said. “We’ve been fighting it for years. It wasn’t just from the 2015 flood, but that was just anytime all the waves were just slowly eroding away the banks, and we were finally able, as part of the flood repair project, to get a good repair that ought to last for a long, long time.”

Those rocks were added to the edges of the Wild Plum campsites, P1 Point and Hill Point. They sit on a bed of geotextile fabric and smaller rocks, Stewart said, “and that’s able to withstand the wave action.”

“When the water’s up, and the waves are crashing on it, that protects the soil underneath from eroding away,” Stewart said.

The previous erosion prevention was using concrete bag walls, Stewart said, but flooding that went over the walls washed those out from the shore side out toward the lake, resulting in erosion.

“In the past, park staff was able to do minor repairs to it, which is like putting Band-Aids on it, and this is more of a long-term, permanent fix,” Stewart said.

The riprap rock shoreline provides some new opportunities for people fishing to be able to sit along the edges and for animals looking for a place to live.

“People can go out there and sit on those rocks and fish, although it does create additional potential habitat for some different animals out there,” Stewart said. “Probably a lot of snakes and rodents and different things. So people need to be careful while they’re on the rocks.

“Plus, if they’re walking on them, there is always that chance for tipping and twisting an ankle.”

Having the riprap rock on the banks near the swim beach should help preserve that beach.

“With the erosion stopped or at least severely slowed down now, we’ll be able to keep [both points] to protect the swim area,” Stewart said.

The project was a big undertaking, and it has a big impact on what the park has to offer, he said.

“We’re excited to have it done,” Stewart said about the new structures. “It allows us to have it open for the public, having the playground and now with the beach open. And actually, the flooding that we had earlier this year, with all of that being over with, and then the long-term for the projects with the riprap is that protects those facilities for years and years and years.”

“The total, which included all of that and the Greenbelt, was over $2 million,” Stewart said.

Some of that total also went toward sidewalk repair, Stewart said.

The volleyball court was also worked on during the winter, Stewart said, swapping out the sand for some better designed for a court.

“We also put a drain in underneath it, so that the rainwater drains out of it, and we redid the poles and everything to make it a better volleyball court,” he said.

Work has also been put into getting the Greenbelt Trail, specifically the section between FM 428 and U.S. 380, back online from the lasting damage from the 2015 floods.

The Greenbelt project is not yet finished, partially because this year’s flooding during the spring has continued to hamper the ability to fully reopen the trail to its termination at the
Highway 380 Park, Stewart said.

“It’s been continuously flood-
ing due to the slowdown of the water from the logjam south of [U.S.] 380,” he said, adding that the logjam is not on Texas Parks and Wildlife Department-controlled land.

He added that some volunteer groups are possibly interested in helping to keep the pathway clear once the obstruction is cleared “to prevent future logjams,” Stewart said.

Shoreline erosion is one of the problems.

“Trees have fallen into the water, other debris and stuff that’s floating down the river,” he said. “If there’s a tree that falls down and then other trees wash up against it, they just start stacking up.

“Once the water slows down, when we have flooding events, everywhere that the water slows down, it drops the silt that’s being carried in the water ... and then slowly the silt builds up, and then it starts slowing down the water even more.”

He related the situation similar to a “kitchen strainer” that allows some water to go through but the flow is different.

“It’s going to be a lot of work, clearing that out, but we’re hoping it will be something that ... the Corps can get done,” Stewart said.

Riprap rock has been added to multiple shoreline points throughout the Isle du Bois unit to keep the soil on the beach from washing away, even in the face of flooding.

Abigail Allen/The Post-Signal

“This is the Lord’s doing; it is marvelous in our eyes.”

Psalm 118:23 ESV

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The deer population has been increasing within the Ray Roberts Lake State Park this year, including several sets of twins being born, Isle du Bois Unit Park Superintendent Mark Stewart said.

Photos by Abigail Allen/The Post-Signal

Growing wild
Isle du Bois Assistant Office Manager Cecily Rebarchek and Unit Assistant Superintendent Denice Hardy are new to the Isle du Bois team.

Amanda Mchenry/For The Post-Signal
Rebarchek loves work, play at Ray Roberts

By Amanda McHenry
Contributing Writer for the Post-Signal

Cecily Rebarchek started her job at Isle du Bois in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic without ever seeing the park or having a face-to-face interview.

“It’s a weird time to be moving and starting fresh with most of the country shut down,” Rebarchek said.

She is one of two assistant office managers. Her previous position was in customer service for about four years at Palo Duro Canyon State Park.

Rebarchek is from Healy, Kansas, a small town of less than 300 people. She currently lives in Sanger with her dog, Remington, a healer-mini Aussie mix.

Both enjoy spending time outdoors and near the water, she said.

She has a parks and recreation degree in wildlife biology from West Texas A&M University in Canyon, Texas. She decided to shift her focus to becoming a game warden in lieu of another four years of college.

Rebarchek plans to make a career with parks and recreation. Another aspiration she has is to be a park superintendent for a small state park.

“The goal, if I can’t get into the academy, is find a really little Texas state park and just be the superintendent for a location that sees less than 60,000 people a year and get to actually know my people on a different level as they come in and spend time in a park and just develop awesome programs for the locals,” Rebarchek said.

Her duties include accounting and park fee deposits. She also has shift supervisor responsibilities. Customer service is a big part of her job as well.

She helps with annual passes and currently answers questions about COVID-19 and the park restrictions.

Now that the office is back open, Rebarchek is able to deal with larger transactions as park visitors come inside.

She helps with new campsites and providing first-time annual passes for visitors.

Rebarchek appreciates the closeness of having park staff in the same building with the opportunity to chat and get help as needed.

“I enjoy here being able to see my supervisors on a daily basis, being in the same office with the people who are above me and below me in the hierarchy of the park,” Rebarchek said.

In her spare time, Rebarchek likes spending her time outdoors.

She loves the water, and that was a big draw for coming to Isle du Bois, she said.

Driving over the dam on her way to work, Rebarchek said, is a great way to start her day.

Rebarchek also likes boating and distance hiking. She recently bought a kayak and is excited about taking it out on the lake. She can often be found hanging out at Lost Pines Trail Cove with her head in a book.

She looks forward to discovering new taco places once more of the COVID-19 restrictions are lifted. She especially appreciates the mom-and-pop ones, she said.

She also plans to travel to other state parks now that she is in a good location to do so. She has visited only eight so far in Texas.

“I really enjoy what I do, and I pick my parks based off of a standpoint of not just where I would like to work, but where I would like to hang out in my personal time, and so that made Ray Roberts Lake Isle du Bois super high on my list,” Rebarchek said.

Hardy finds home with work at state park

By Amanda McHenry
Contributing Writer for the Post-Signal

A chance to be closer to home and her aging father brought Isle du Bois Unit Assistant Superintendent Denice Hardy to North Texas.

“Texas is home,” Hardy said. “All my family is here.”

Originally from San Antonio, she has also spent time in Arizona and New Mexico. She managed parks in Oregon before returning to Texas last August after a 20-year absence.

She’s also dabbled in many different fields during her professional life.

Hardy’s first career was in restaurant management for about nine years. She also spent several years working in nonprofits. She worked her way up to CEO.

Her first nonprofit experience was with an environmental company under a nonprofit in Austin.

Hardy also served with domestic violence groups and youth prevention. She helped build community coalitions along with substance abuse and pregnancy prevention programs.

In addition, Hardy had a construction company doing commercial and residential remodeling and building.

“Whenever I would get burned out on my management, I would go back to construction,” Hardy said. “I had my own business for many years.”

Hardy was a park ranger until a back injury necessitated a move back in wherever she’s needed throughout their job.

“My [park] hosts are rockstars,” she said. “Our [park] hosts are rockstars,” Hardy said. “I’ve worked with a lot of hosts and volunteers throughout my career. We have an outstanding group of volunteers and some amazing staff. And I think it’s those interactions that bring the most job satisfaction.”

Hardy appreciates the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department’s dedication to resources. She says the structure is conducive to carrying out the mission.

Hardy lives at the park. Her hobbies include hiking, camping and swimming. She also loves gardening, woodworking and reading two to three books a week.

“I’m ecstatic to be with the agency, and I really am loving the North Texas area and this area in particular,” Hardy said. “I think it’s absolutely gorgeous. I’ve met some just really down to earth, great people. I’ve been more inspired and recharged since I’ve been at Ray Roberts than I have in several years in my job.”

Isle du Bois Assistant Superintendent Denice Hardy loves the area and the people around her new park home. Amanda McHenry

or predictability where I’m going to be on any given day because working at parks, everything changes on a dime,” Hardy said.

That variability requires flexibility.

“You might have your whole day planned out and never get to anything on your list,” she added.

Her favorite part of her job is working with the people. Hardy likes playing a supportive role to help them do their job better.

“Our [park] hosts are rockstars,” she said. “I’ve worked with a lot of hosts and volunteers throughout my career. We have an outstanding group of volunteers and some amazing staff. And I think it’s those interactions that bring the most job satisfaction.”

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State park staff tackles COVID-19 procedures

Isle du Bois Unit makes changes to handle pandemic safety

By Abigail Allen
Managing Editor

The Texas Parks and Wildlife Department staff is trying to do its part to protect state park visitors from contracting COVID-19.

There’s an entire list of steps being taken at parks, including the Ray Roberts Lake State Park units, across the state.

“The staff wear masks when they’re working in front of the public, when they’re dealing directly with customers,” Stewart said.

And the staff asks visitors to be considerate of others around them, he said.

“For the public, when they’re going to be interacting or near other people, we recommend masks, but they’re not necessarily required here at the park, either,” Stewart said.

When headquarters opens up, it will look a bit different than it has in past years.

“We actually have some circle stickers that we specially made for the department on the floor to show them where they can stand, and inside we normally have four registration stations,” Stewart said. “We’re only going to have two of those open to ensure that they can distance.”

One person from each group only will be allowed inside headquarters, too, to attempt to limit the exposure risk for the staff.

Keeping the number of campsites down to every other spot has more to do with facility usage than the sites themselves, Stewart said, to “minimize the potential risk.”

“That has to do a lot with minimizing any of the choke points like the bathrooms,” Stewart said. “If we’ve got 80 campsites in a camping loop, and they’re all trying to use the same bathroom, it’s a lot of people coming to one facility.”

In June, that meant every odd-numbered site was closed at Isle du Bois and Johnson Branch.

“All the odd ones are out,” Stewart said.

Spaces intended to accommodate large groups, specifically the pavilions, were also closed.

“The number right now is no bigger groups than 10, where our pavilions allow, I believe, 50,” Stewart said. “So, we’re waiting until the restrictions get relaxed enough to be able to accommodate groups that size.”

Isle du Bois Unit Superintendent Mark Stewart and the rest of the unit staff are working to keep visitors safe and the park open for fun this summer.

Abigail Allen/The Post-Signal

TPWD provides guidance about visiting state parks

EDITOR’S NOTE: The following was published by the Texas Parks and Wildlife Department on its website, tpwd.texas.gov.

Keeping You Healthy
We are working to keep your family healthy on your next visit to Texas State Parks.

Continue reading to learn more about our efforts. We’ll update this page as the situation develops.

Please talk to a ranger if you have any safety concerns while you are visiting a state park.

Expect some changes
Many parks are open, but you’ll notice some changes. Many parks are reducing their capacity at this time.

• We highly recommend reserving and printing day passes before coming, even if you have a park pass. You can also call the Customer Service Center at (512) 389-8900. If you don’t have a printer, you may show park staff the confirmation email on your phone.

• Most parks are open for limited camping. We strongly recommend making camping reservations in advance.

• Most park headquarters, visitor centers and stores are open.

• We have cancelled all in-person events and equipment rentals and loans.

• We have increased our cleaning efforts.

Further changes are possible as we receive new information from health authorities.

Temporary guidelines
Please help everyone stay healthy by following these temporary guidelines while at the park:

• Maintain at least a six-foot distance from anyone not in your group.

• No groups larger than 10 people are allowed, except for families or people living in the same household.
• Most park staff will be wearing face coverings - we strongly encourage you to do so, as well.

Planning ahead

What should I do to stay safe when I visit?

You will be sharing some spaces with other visitors, including restrooms and trails. Follow CDC guidelines for keeping you, your family and other park visitors healthy.

We strongly encourage you to wear face coverings the entire time you are in the park.

Maintain at least a six-foot distance from anyone not in your family.

How often do you clean in parks?

We clean and disinfect restrooms frequently. We also wipe down hard surfaces and other commonly touched items in both public and staff areas with a disinfectant.

We will try to provide hand soap or hand sanitizers in all bathrooms, but please bring your own as some parks have limited access to resupplies at this time.

My group is gathering at a park this summer. Can we still come?

No more than 10 people (except those in the same family or household) can gather under current park guidelines. All group sites are closed.

The Customer Service Center will contact you to process a refund if you have a group site reserved for your gathering.

When will the parks open for camping?

The parks are open for camping now! We will honor most existing reservations. We are also taking new reservations for stays through Sept. 7.

Reservations

How do I make a reservation online?

Learn more about making online reservations on our state park reservations page.

How do I print permits at home?

Log in to your account and select “Pre-Registration & Site Permits” for camping reservations or “Print Tickets & Daily Entrance” for day passes, and then follow instructions on the page.

What if I don’t have a printer?

You may show park staff the confirmation email on your phone.

I have an upcoming camping reservation. Is it still valid?

We are honoring most camping reservations. We cancelled some existing reservations to comply with guidelines for social distancing.

What if I want to cancel my reservation?

If you have a camping or day pass reservation that begins any time in June, you can cancel it without penalty by contacting the Customer Service Center:

• Call (512) 389-8900
• Email customer service

What if I have a reservation at a park or site that is closed?

Customer Service Center agents will contact those with reservations affected by closures to offer a full refund. We’ll be contacting customers in order of arrival date - so please be patient with us. We will not charge cancellation fees for these reservations.

Closures

What if someone at a park has the virus?

We will close any park that has a connection to a person with a presumed or confirmed case of COVID-19. Check our alert map for closures.

If you are diagnosed after visiting a park, please call the park to let them know.

Are all the park closures due to virus cases?

Most of our park closures are because of operational issues. There have been no presumed or confirmed cases of the virus in most closed parks.

-Texas Parks and Wildlife Department
Marina time

The Lake Ray Roberts Marina is a popular destination for boaters in the area. Features include wet and dry boat slips, fuel dock, private launch ramp and a convenience store.

J.T. Strasner/The Post-Signal
Sandy construction builds lifelong memories

Gracie, Garrett and Kaden Hemmen dig sand for their latest sandcastle creation at the Isle du Bois swimming area. The siblings were honing their crafts June 26 at the lake.

J.T. Strasner/The Post-Signal