

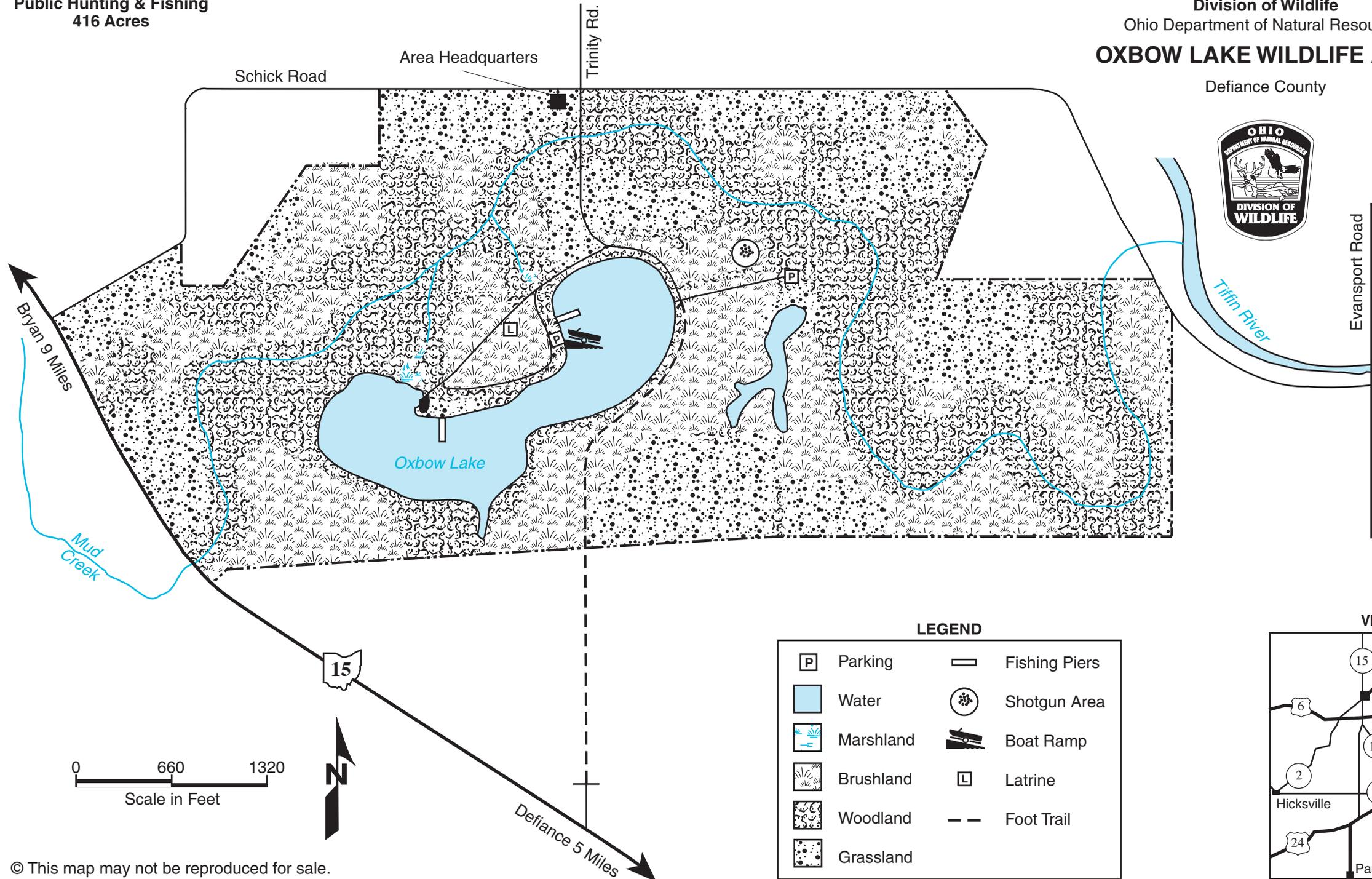
Public Hunting & Fishing
416 Acres

Division of Wildlife
Ohio Department of Natural Resources

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OXBOW LAKE WILDLIFE AREA

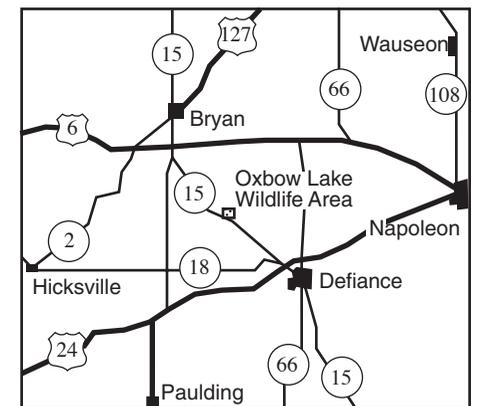
Defiance County



LEGEND

Parking	Fishing Piers
Water	Shotgun Area
Marshland	Boat Ramp
Brushland	Latrine
Woodland	Foot Trail
Grassland	

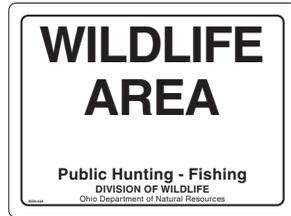
VICINITY MAP



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OXBOW LAKE WILDLIFE AREA

Defiance County



DISTANCE FROM MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS

- 7 miles from Defiance
- 11 miles from Bryan
- 20 miles from Napoleon
- 30 miles from Wauseon

LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

The Oxbow Lake Wildlife Area is located in northwestern Ohio near the city of Defiance. The 416-acre area is situated in the glaciated lake plain of Ohio and has a slightly rolling topography. Some steep land lies adjacent to Mud Creek, which bisects the area. Large cottonwoods and sycamores are found along Mud Creek. The upland woods consist mostly of oaks and hickories. Substantial amounts of brushland and meadow are maintained by the Division of Wildlife for upland game habitat. Oxbow Lake and Little Oxbow Lake provide habitat for fish, furbearers, waterfowl, and other interesting birds such as great blue herons, belted kingfishers, tree swallows and pied-billed grebes.

HISTORY AND PURPOSE

Originally, the entire area was forested. During the latter part of the last century, the virgin woods were cut down to utilize the moderately fertile soil for agriculture. The wildlife area was purchased by the state of Ohio in 1948. The 38-acre Oxbow Lake was constructed in 1953. In 1954, the area headquarters was established. A smaller, 4.5-acre impoundment, called Little Oxbow Lake, was constructed in 1958.

FISH AND WILDLIFE

Oxbow Lake and Little Oxbow Lake have both been stocked with largemouth bass, Northern pike and brown bullheads. Oxbow Lake was also stocked with smallmouth bass, rock bass, redear sunfish, and channel catfish. Both lakes contain bluegills. To maintain fishable populations of these species, Division of Wildlife personnel employ fish management techniques such as chemical control of aquatic vegetation, removal of undesirable fish and maintenance stocking of largemouth bass and Northern pike.

Northern pike are taken during early spring and late fall, but winter ice fishing is best. Pike fishing techniques involve the use of tip-ups and large minnows. Largemouth bass fishing is best during the spring, using spinners, artificial worms, and minnows for bait. Summer and fall bass fishing is especially good with top-water baits. Bluegills are taken throughout the year on worms, insect larvae and artificial flies. Bass and bluegill fishing is most productive in the fallen tree and stump areas. Bullheads are caught throughout the year, especially during April and May. Good bullhead baits are nightcrawlers and cut baits fished on the bottom.

Boat fishing with electric motors is permitted on both lakes. Gasoline motors are not allowed.

The wide variety of cover types on the Oxbow Lake Wildlife Area is beneficial for many species of wildlife. The meadows and brushy fields are of special value to rabbit and deer populations. Accordingly, wildlife management activities have been designed to improve and maintain these conditions. The upland woodlots support a moderate population of fox squirrels. White-tailed deer are often seen in the early morning in the fields adjacent to these woodlots. Migratory woodcock are found in substantial numbers on the area, usually in the low, wet places along Mud Creek and next to Little Oxbow Lake. Wood ducks nest in the area, utilizing both natural cavities in trees and artificial nest boxes. Many species of waterfowl, including Canada geese, stop over at Oxbow Lake during their migratory flights in the spring and fall. Muskrats and other furbearers are found in moderate numbers along the edges of the lake and the banks of Mud Creek. Wild turkeys may also be seen on this area.

PUBLIC USE FACILITIES

There are three parking lots on the area: two adjacent to Oxbow Lake and one adjacent to Little Oxbow Lake. Drinking water, latrines and a boat launching ramp are located at Oxbow Lake. A shotgun range for paper and clay targets only is also located on the area. For more information contact the Wildlife District Two Office, 952-A Lima Avenue, Findlay, Ohio 45840; telephone (419) 424-5000.

WATCHABLE WILDLIFE

Migrating shorebirds and songbirds can be observed utilizing the lake edges and woodlots during spring and fall. Other types of wildlife such as tree swallows and great blue herons make Oxbow Lake their home territory for the summer months.

TURN IN A POACHER

Ohio's TIP, "Turn In a Poacher," program is helping to curtail poaching throughout the state. TIP is designed to involve the public in reporting wildlife violations. Citizens who observe wildlife violations should call the TIP toll-free hotline, 1-800-POACHER.