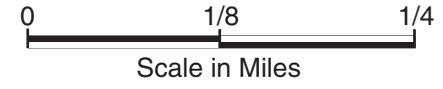


Division of Wildlife  
Ohio Department of Natural Resources  
**LITTLE PORTAGE WILDLIFE AREA**



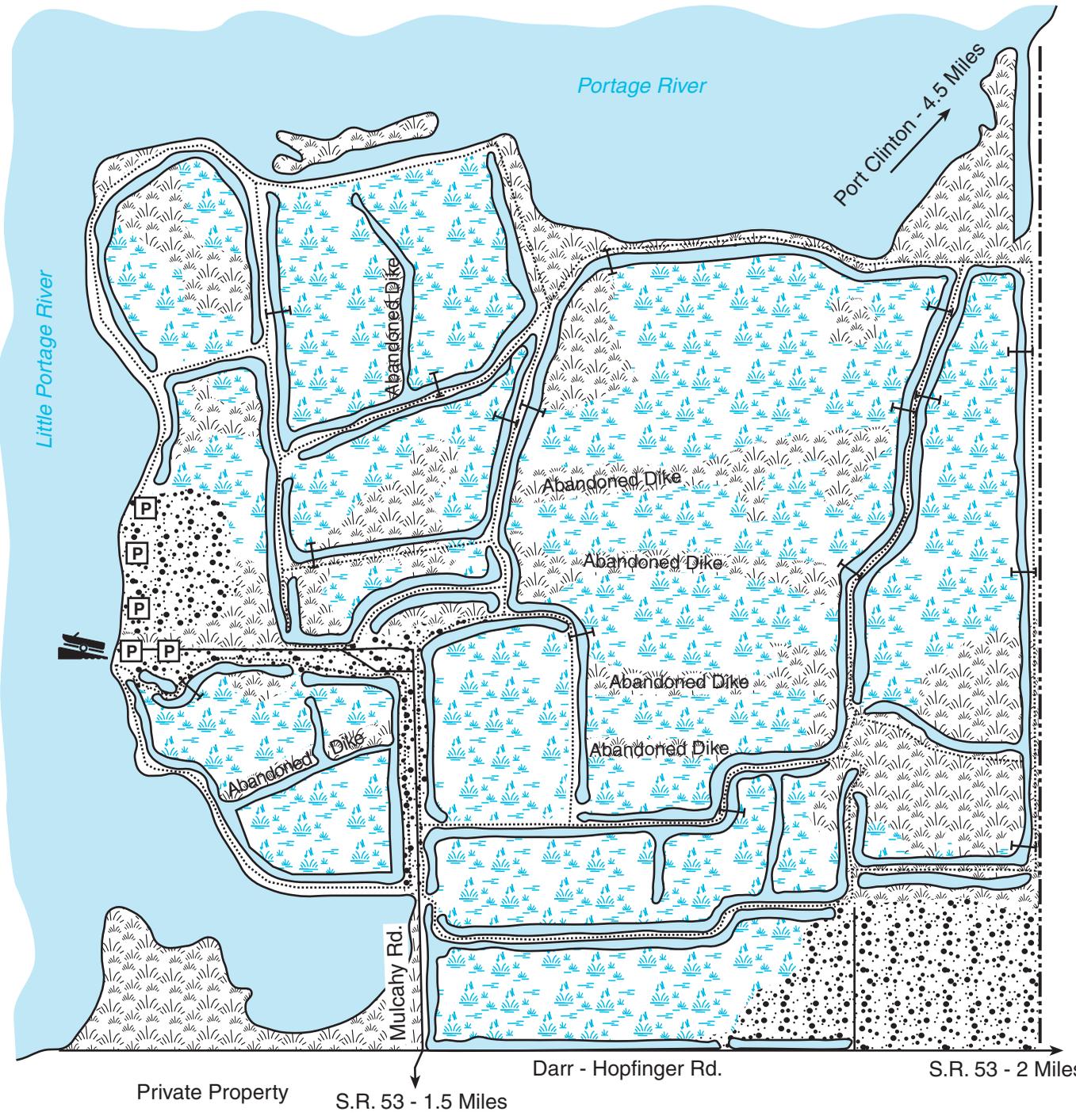
Publication 309  
(R296)

Ottawa County  
**Public Hunting & Fishing**  
407 Acres

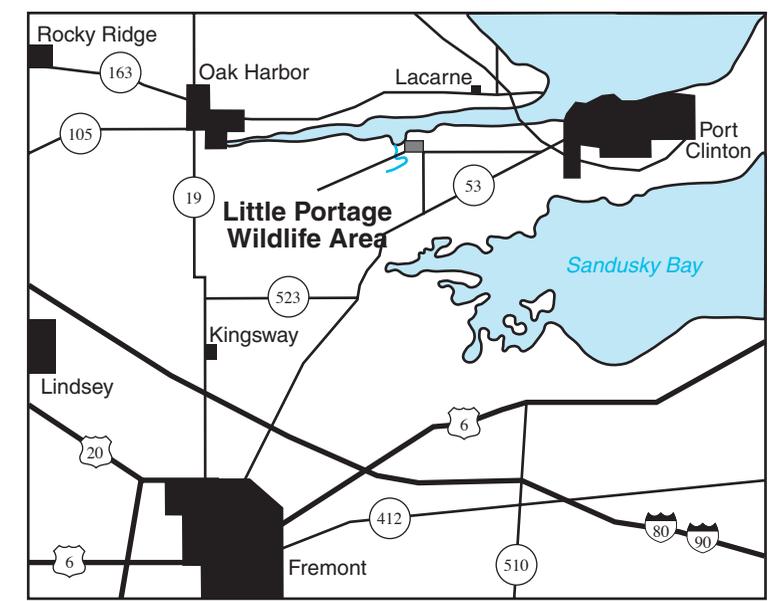


**LEGEND**

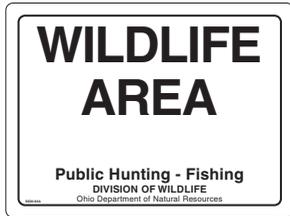
	Parking		Dike
	Brushland		Footbridge
	Marshland		WA Boundary
	Grassland		Boat Ramp
	Water		Channel



**VICINITY MAP**



© This map may not be reproduced for sale.



# LITTLE PORTAGE WILDLIFE AREA

Ottawa County

## DISTANCE FROM MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS

18 miles from Sandusky

30 miles from Toledo

35 miles from Bowling Green

120 miles from Columbus

60 miles from Cleveland

## LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

This 407-acre wildlife area lies at the confluence of the Little Portage and Portage rivers, approximately six miles west of Port Clinton. It is easily reached from State Route 53, four miles southwest of Port Clinton, by traveling two miles west on Darr-Hopfinger Road.

The Little Portage Wildlife Area is situated in the flat glacial lake plain region of northwestern Ohio. The area is a river marsh, bounded on the west by the Little Portage River and on the north by the Portage River. Approximately two-thirds of the area is wetlands, with 223 acres of diked marsh and 75 acres of uncontrolled wetlands. Eighty acres of upland are maintained in a mixture of meadow and brushland. The marshes are shallow, varying from one to three feet deep, with the exception of channels up to eight feet deep which were created in the construction of the dikes.

## HISTORY AND PURPOSE

The wildlife area was purchased in 1956 for waterfowl hunting and for angler access to the Little Portage and Portage rivers and Lake Erie. In the mid-1920s, much of the land adjacent to the Portage River was diked and flooded by pumping from the river, and was utilized as a private waterfowl shooting area.

Prior to purchase by the state, this area was known as the Zimmerman Marsh. Waterfowl use originally was limited because the area does not lie within the normal routes of waterfowl movement or near large concentrations of waterfowl. However, the highly effective technique of marsh baiting successfully attracted waterfowl to the marsh for harvest by club members. The former owners maintained nine blinds on 317 acres of marsh, with only four blinds ever occupied at one time. With the enactment and strict enforcement of the "no baiting" regulation, however, duck hunting on the marsh declined.

Wildlife management work has included renovation and modification of four miles of dikes, installation of a modern 24-inch electric pump, and seasonal flooding of the diked marsh units. Upland areas have been maintained in a mixture of grassland and grain crops.

A boat launching ramp has been constructed to furnish access to both the Portage and Little Portage rivers and, after a five- or six-mile trip downriver, access to Lake Erie at Port Clinton.

## WILDLIFE

This area is managed principally for wetland wildlife and fishing access. Game species to be found are puddle ducks, woodcock, common snipe, sora, Virginia rail, and mourning dove.

Approximately 80 acres of upland has a good rabbit population. Plovers, herons, bitterns, and a variety of other birds may be observed on the area. Waterfowl may be viewed during migration by walking the dike tops. Spring is an excellent time for viewing songbirds, shorebirds, and waterfowl at Little Portage.

## HUNTING, TRAPPING, AND FISHING

Waterfowl are extremely wary and their sight and hearing are very keen. Therefore, concealment is extremely important. Hunters shouldn't wear bright or shiny clothes, or expose their faces. Paper or empty shells scattered around may frighten ducks away before they come within range.

Decoys will generally help, but a duck call should be used only by an expert. One phony note will ruin the chance for a shot. "Sky busting" is discouraged because it spoils the hunting for everyone. The shooter should hold fire until ducks are within 30 yards.

The waterfowler should pick a spot with some open water and good concealment, and then stay put. One place is as good as another; moving around will ruin the hunting for everyone involved.

Trapping on the Little Portage is open to the public and is unrestricted. Good catches of muskrat are common.

Since approximately half the perimeter of the wildlife area is bordered by the Portage and Little Portage rivers, much of the area is available for bank fishing. A boat ramp on the Little Portage River enables anglers to use a boat. Because of this boat ramp, float line and trotline fishing are very popular on these parts of the two rivers.

The best baits for bullheads and channel catfish are dead minnows, night crawlers, and cut bait fished on or close to the bottom. Many bow and arrow anglers also have great success hunting the enclosed marshes for carp in the spring.

Channel catfish and bullheads are the most sought-after and prevalent of the game and food fishes. These can be taken almost any time of year, but channels are caught in largest numbers from late May to July. Bullhead fishing, although good year-round, is outstanding during April. Crappies, carp, and occasionally some Northern pike are also taken.

## PUBLIC USE FACILITIES

Small footbridges are maintained for access over the channels surrounding most of the flooded marsh units. A parking lot and boat launching ramp are also located on the area. The map shows their locations.

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

The nearest wildlife district office is at 952 Lima Ave., Box A, Findlay 45840; telephone (419) 424-5000.

## 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.