

# MERCER WILDLIFE AREA

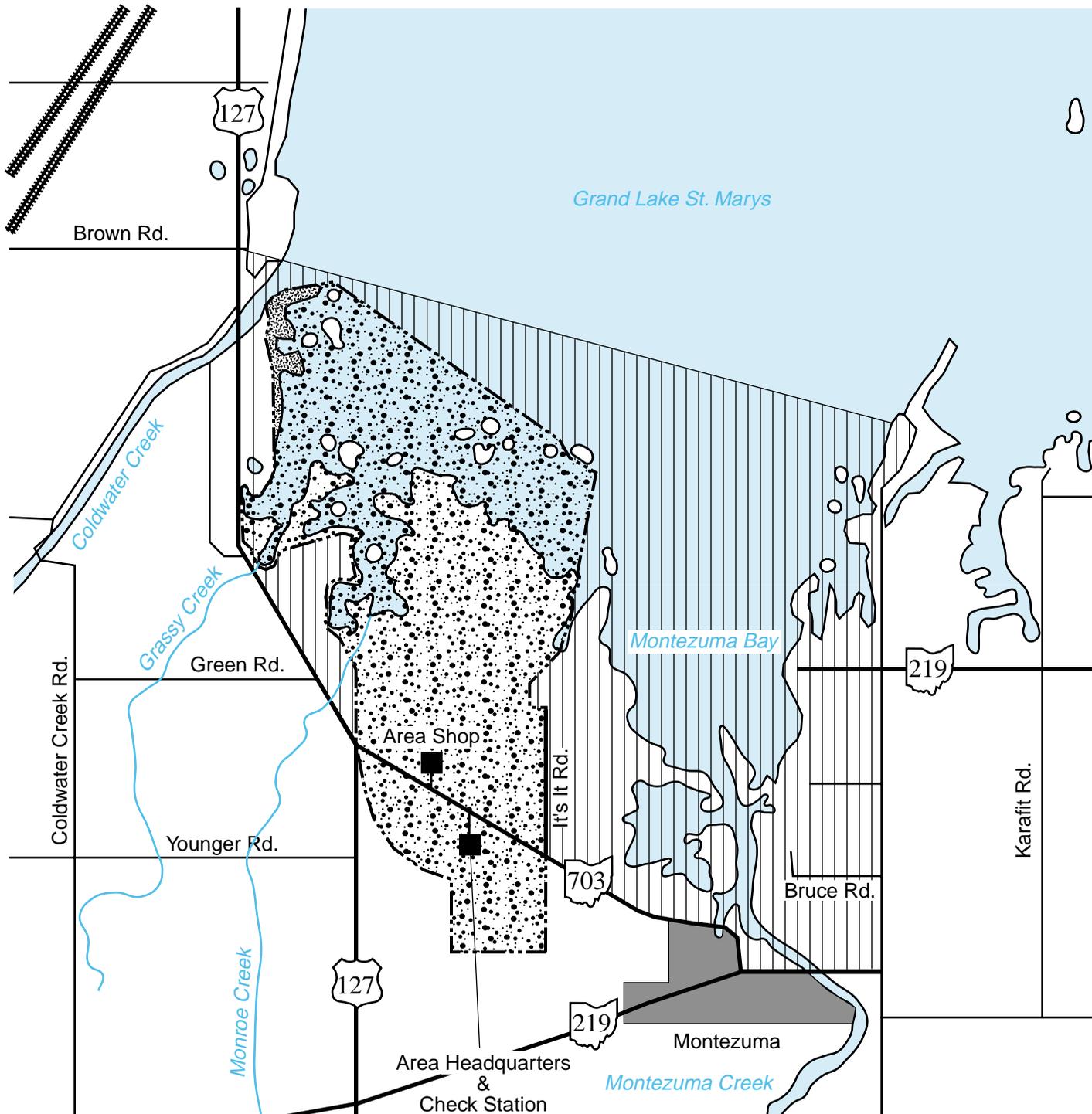
Mercer County  
Public Hunting & Fishing  
1,408 Acres



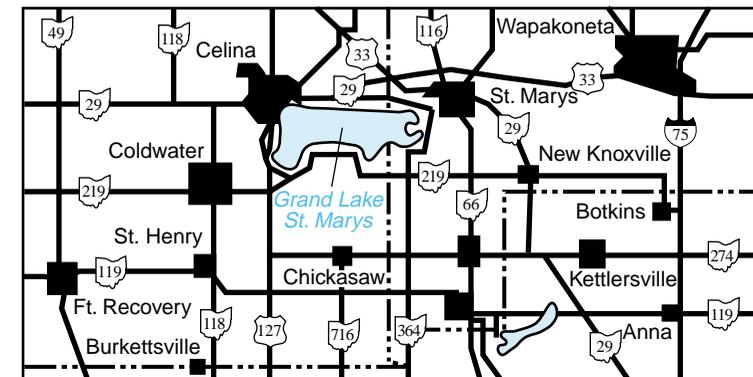
0 1/2 1  
Scale in Miles

### LEGEND

	Waterfowl Management Area
	No Waterfowl Hunting Area
	Water



### VICINITY MAP





# MERCER WILDLIFE AREA

## Mercer County

### DISTANCE FROM MAJOR POPULATION CENTERS

3 miles from Celina  
70 miles from Dayton  
75 miles from Springfield  
36 miles from Lima  
22 miles from Van Wert  
70 miles from Findlay

### LOCATION AND DESCRIPTION

This 1,408-acre wildlife area lies in the grain farming country of west central Ohio, three miles south of Celina. It is bounded by U.S. Route 127 on the west and It's It Township Road on the east; it extends approximately one-half mile south of State Route 703.

Mercer Wildlife Area is quite flat on the north side of the area bordering Grand Lake St. Marys. It is more rolling south of State Route 703. Approximately one-fourth of the wildlife area is in cropland and meadow. There are seven ponds (not shown on the map) totaling more than seven acres; the shallow bays of Grand Lake St. Marys make up the remainder of the area. Approximately 1,050 acres of water in the southwest corner of the 13,500-acre Lake St. Marys are managed for waterfowl through a cooperative agreement with the Division of Parks and Recreation.

### HISTORY AND PURPOSE

Mercer Wildlife Area is situated on the lake built as a water supply for the Miami-Erie Canal. Acquisition and construction of the lake took place from 1837 to 1845. Lake St. Marys has contributed to man's pleasure for over a century by attracting large numbers of ducks and geese. The Canada goose was a prized bird in early times, as well as today. Old timers hunted geese chiefly on the lake, where snags and stumps provided natural blinds. Few of them recall hunting in crop fields, the most popular method now.

The rapid increase in human population and the development of the lake for recreational uses have imposed many restrictions on the wildlife community. The primary purpose of the wildlife area is to act as a refuge, providing resting and feeding areas for local and migrant wildlife. The waterfowl management area provides the largest and one of the few remaining areas around the lake that is free from human disturbance.

The Canada goose management program began in 1956. Nesting and migrant goose populations have increased steadily since that time. Wildlife management activities have included development and management of grain crops and meadows, primarily for nesting and migrant waterfowl. Trees and shrubs have been maintained along the lakeshore to prevent erosion. Seven ponds have been constructed on the area to increase nesting sites and area utilization by waterfowl.

Waterfowl production has been enhanced by the use of several hundred wood duck nest boxes and Canada goose nesting structures on the management area and in shallow waters around Lake St. Marys.

### WILDLIFE

Intensive waterfowl management has resulted in peak spring and fall populations of Canada geese, mallards, wood ducks, blue-winged teal, black ducks, and coots. Canada geese, wood ducks, and mallards are the primary species of waterfowl which nest on the area.

Furbearers and native mammals occur in good numbers. A great variety of both nesting and migrant birds utilize the area. Of particular interest are the spring and fall migrations of waterfowl, shorebirds, hawks, and occasionally eagles and ospreys.

### HUNTING

Only waterfowl may be hunted, and only on a restricted part of the wildlife area. Other hunting, trapping, and fishing are not permitted. The refuge area boundary is well posted.

Waterfowl hunting is on a controlled basis and a permit is required. Hunting is primarily for Canada geese. Hunters are provided blinds and goose decoys on the wildlife area.

The remainder of Lake St. Marys is open to waterfowl hunting but a permit is required to construct a blind. Approximately 90 sites are allotted for blind construction each year; a drawing for these sites is conducted at the wildlife area headquarters in the early fall.

### UNUSUAL FEATURES

Many species of birds are attracted to the area. Among the rare and unusual birds which have been observed are the African cattle egret, bald and golden eagles, double-crested cormorant, mute and tundra (whistling) swans, sandhill crane, American avocet, greater white-fronted goose, and brant.

### PUBLIC USE FACILITIES

Public facilities include a parking lot and latrines. The area is not open for self-guided tours except observation from the parking lot or during special field days.

Further information may be obtained by writing: Area Manager, Mercer Wildlife Area, 5116 State Route 703, Celina, Ohio 45822; telephone (419) 268-2020 or the Wildlife District Five Office, 1076 Old Springfield Pike, Xenia, Ohio 45385; telephone (937) 372-9261.

### 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.