

# Lakes on Cypress, Black Bayou Seen As Fishing Bonanza

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With an eye toward ecology and impact on wildlife, the Louisiana Wild Life and Fisheries Commission has studied the site of the planned dual-lake Cypress-Black Bayou project near Benton and the report indicates a sport fishing bonanza may follow development of the lakes.

The report has some praise and some criticism for the project but the overall thrust seems to point to substantial recreational opportunities that will follow the filling of the lakes.

The report on the Cypress-Black project is one of several such reports the commission is making or has made of such projects in the state to determine their impact on the environment.

The Cypress project, the report says, will result in a loss of hunting potential but the fishing potential will soar dramatically on the two lakes. Cypress Lake will cover about 3,000 acres and Black Lake will cover about 700 acres.

The project is sponsored by the Cypress-Black Bayou Recreation and Water Conservation District and the lakes will be formed by putting dams across the Cypress and Black bayous.

## Values Compared

The report says the present value of sport fishing in the area is \$249 a year and that the game fish, spotted and largemouth bass, will increase from five pounds per acre at present to 40 pounds per acre upon completion of the project.

Total poundage is estimated to rise from 350 pounds on the present two bayous to 124,000 pounds on the two lakes. Total poundage of forage species such as sunfish is expected to rise from 350 pounds at present to 77,500 pounds after completion of the project.

Other species such as bullheads, shad and carp are expected to undergo a similar population explosion.

The monetary value of sport fishing is based on an estimated \$4.98 spent per fishing day. The lakes will provide an estimated 100,000 man-days of recreation compared to the present 50 man-days of recreation.

The report said, "With proper management in the form of water level fluctuation this reservoir has the potential of being classed as good to excellent sport fishing." It also made the opposite prediction for sport fishing potential without proper management.

The lakes also have a commercial fishing potential which now stands at zero but is estimated to be \$38,750 after completion of the project.

Hunting potential will decline with completion of the project as wildlife is denied habitat in and around the acreage to be flooded. The estimated annual value of hunting will be reduced from \$23,672 to \$1,494.

The report indicates a loss of 116 deer, 175 dove, 175 quail and 4,550 squirrels. However, the potential harvest lost to hunters is not as great as the actual loss of wildlife. The report says the project will mean 39 less deer, 35 less quail, and 1,346 less squirrel will be available for harvest by hunters.

The resident woodduck population will increase slightly from an estimated 50 to 69 and migratory waterfowl will increase from an estimated seven to 350.

## Little Duck Potential

Cypress officials do not view the lakes as potentially good duck hunting areas because the hunting pressure will be too great for what are relatively small lakes.

The Wild Life report anticipates extensive use of the facility by people living in the Shreveport-Bossier City area through swimming, water skiing, fishing, boat riding and picnicking.

It said the district's estimated 146,000 man-days usage is very low compared to the Caney Lakes area north of Minden. It said the area experienced 186,000 man-days usage during a peak five-month period and that this figure does not include fishing. It said 60 per cent of this use came from the Shreveport-Bossier area.

The report did not mention the planned 335-acre recreation area on the Cypress Lake which should also influence use of the lake.

Tentative plans call for such facilities as a 1,500 to 1,800-foot sand beach, an 85-unit camping area, fishing pier, boat launch area, boat stalls, cabin area and primitive camping area.

The district is also planning a 110-130-acre nature study area in the recreation area which the district feels will be unique to this part of Louisiana.

It will be designed as a place where school children and other interested persons can investigate nature projects. Trees and plants will be labeled with their scientific and colloquial names and the land will be developed into a bird-attracting area.

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