

plete nature study area, including a nature interpretive center which will be operated by Jim Robbins, an employe of the Bossier Parish School Board.

The area was designed in such a way as to preserve much of the unique natural habitat. Nature trails are being developed in conjunction with the interpretive center. Classes from area schools are expected to use the area extensively. The area will provide students with the opportunity to observe natural flora and fauna. In addition, it will include an arboretum, where local and imported plants may be studied, and a forestry demonstration area consisting of seven 1-acre plots, where various forestry techniques may be observed.

For the camper, there is virtually everything. The area offers 79 camping units complete with electrical and water hook-ups, with 40 per cent of these including direct sewage hook-ups. For those motor home owners using the remainder of the units, sewage dump stations are conveniently located at egress sites.

#### Table and Stove

Each camping unit includes a picnic table and benches, along with an iron cook stove designed to use charcoal. In addition, underground garbage receivers are located nearby along the hard-surface roads where they can be easily serviced.

In the camping area, there are two modern comfort stations which are completely tiled and offer showers with hot and cold water, lavatories and flush toilets. The comfort stations are heated for year-round use.

The camping area was located in such a way that most of the camp sites are within easy access of the lake. The deep-water shoreline will enable campers to tie their boats just a short distance away.

Picnic facilities for day use are

excellent. In addition to the established camp sites, the area offers 257 individual picnic tables with benches, camp stoves and underground garbage receivers.

Two group picnic facilities, each of which will include large barbecue grills and will accommodate up to 80 people at one time, will also be available on a reservation basis.

In conjunction with the camping and picnic areas, there will be two large open play areas and one wooded play area for the youngsters.

Swimmers should find the area particularly attractive, since it will offer some 1,600 feet of beachfront covered with clean, white sand. The entire recreation area is located on about one and one-half miles of beautifully wooded shoreline. The abundant dogwood trees make the area particularly appealing to the nature lover during the spring.

Fishing is expected to attract large numbers of visitors each year. All species of freshwater fish native to Louisiana will be available in both Cypress and Black Bayou Lake.

Some 50,000 channel catfish have already been stocked. The bayous feeding the two lakes presently contain large populations of bass, bream and crappie, but their numbers are expected to be supplemented with additional stockings by the Louisiana Wildlife and Fisheries Commission and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

One deep-water fishing pier with adjoining restroom facilities has already been completed, and two more are being planned. The fishing piers are being designed in such a way that they may easily be used by the elderly and the handicapped.

A marina for boaters will also be constructed — probably on a concession basis.

One double boat ramp has been completed, and another near the dam is expected to be available within the next two years.

Because of its size, Cypress Lake should be particularly attractive for swimming, pleasure boating, water skiing and sailing, while the smaller Black Bayou Lake is expected to attract the largest number of fishermen.

The brush and timber will have been removed from most of both lakes. However, contour maps available from the recreation and water conservation district show significant "structure" throughout Cypress which should prove interesting to today's scientific fishermen.

Extensive use of Cypress Lake is not expected until the recreation area (and boat ramps) open around the middle of next year. However, there are several places around the lake where small aluminum fishing boats may be launched.

Nominal fees not yet established by the district's board of commissioners will be charged for the use of the facilities. The fees will supplement a 1/2-mill tax paid annually by residents of the district for maintenance and upkeep of the recreation area.

That in itself will be quite a job. A full-time superintendent will be employed to oversee the recreation area. There will be six to eight permanent maintenance employes, with this number increasing considerably during the busy summer months.

For a number of years now, Shreveport area residents have had to travel to Arkansas or Texas during their vacations and over the weekends in order to enjoy high-quality recreational facilities. As a result, millions of dollars in revenues have undoubtedly been lost.

Now, however, one of the finest outdoor recreation centers that I've personally ever seen will be available right here in North Louisiana . . . and virtually in our own backyard.