

CHEYENNE BOTTOMS

Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area lies two miles east of U.S. Highway 281, midway between Great Bend and Hoisington. Access is also available from K-156, or by turning off K-4 Highway at Redwing. It is owned by the people of Kansas and managed by the Department of Wildlife and Parks.

The 19,857-acre area is part of a 41,000-acre natural land sink just northeast of Great Bend.

During the 1950s, the State of

Kansas acquired the land, and dikes were constructed to impound water in five pools. Canals and dams were built to divert water from the nearby Arkansas River and Wet Walnut Creek to supplement water provided by two intermittent streams, Blood and Deception creeks.

During the 1990s, extensive renovation divided some of the pools. In addition, pump stations were built to allow for increased management flexibility and water level manipulation. This ren-

ovation effort also provided increased water conservation to better meet wildlife needs during dry periods.

Manipulation of water levels in the pools is a major tool in managing the marsh for water birds. Each year, one or more of the pools is drained as deemed necessary. Often these areas are seeded to millet and/or wheat and undesirable vegetation is controlled by burning, mowing and disking while the pools are dry.

HUNTING INFORMATION

Hunting is not allowed in the refuge areas (see map). Hunting pressure on the Bottoms can be heavy during waterfowl season, particularly on weekends. Hunters planning trips to the Bottoms should consider weekday hunts.

Prior to hunting any species on Cheyenne Bottoms Wildlife Area, all hunters are required to obtain and complete a Daily Hunt Permit. These permits can be found at all entrances to the wildlife area, at all parking lots and most boat ramps. Silver colored, iron dispensers are located at these points. Each permit is a two piece card. Before hunting, complete the top portion of the card and separate it from the lower portion and place it in the permit box. Carry the lower portion of the permit with you while hunting. Upon completion of your hunt, fill out the lower portion and place it in a permit box. Each hunter must complete one for each day hunting at Cheyenne Bottoms.

BIRD WATCHING

Because Cheyenne Bottoms is such a diverse, large and unique marsh, birdwatching is one of the more popular activities on the area. The spring and fall migration periods offer the best opportunity to view large numbers of different species in this one location. In spring, waterfowl and sandhill cranes can begin arriving as early as February. Wading birds, such as herons and egrets, begin arriving in March and April. Most shorebirds arrive in late April and early May. By late May, the birds that are still present on the area will tend to remain and nest.

The southward migration in fall can be a rewarding and challenging time for the birdwatcher. Most of the birds moving through the area during this time of year have replaced their breeding plumage with a set of feathers that lack much of the color they had just a few months earlier. This can make identi-

Pools 1, 5 and a portion of Pool 2 are refuge areas and closed to all activities. Exceptions to this occur for some special hunts. Check with wildlife area personnel for more information.

In addition to waterfowl, other game may be legally taken at Cheyenne Bottoms. Pheasant hunting is usually good. Snipe and rail hunting is good along the shallow marsh margins. Quail and deer are also present in fair numbers.

A handicapped accessible hunting/photo blind is available by reservation. Call the office for additional information and reservations.

In the event of whooping crane activity, the pool the birds are in is closed to all hunting and the goose hunting zones are closed to crane and light goose hunting.

fication difficult, especially when looking at shorebirds.

The fall shorebird migration can begin as early as July and extend well into September and October. Because of this, the bird numbers are not as impressive as the spring movement since the birds do not achieve as great a number at any one time. The peak period for duck viewing in the fall occurs early to mid-October. Most wading birds remain on the area until the marsh freezes. This is especially true for the great blue heron. Whooping cranes are most apt to stop at Cheyenne Bottoms in late October into early November. Bald eagles winter on the area and are present from as early as November to as late as March. A checklist of birds found on the area and the seasons they are present is available at the area office and the information signs at the main entrances.

OTHER ACTIVITIES

Fishing at Cheyenne Bottoms is limited mainly to carp and bullheads. Occasionally channel cat, crappie and largemouth bass are found if several years of water is maintained.

Trapping is permitted on the wildlife area. Special permit are required and available at the area office free of charge. Trapping is not permitted at any time in the refuge area nor during waterfowl seasons.

GENERAL REGULATIONS

Vehicles are permitted only on established roads and parking areas.

Camping is permitted only in the primitive campground located 1 mile west of the area office.

The use of watercraft is restricted. Watercraft are not permitted in the refuge areas. During the waterfowl season, in-water propeller-driven boats and hand powered boats can be utilized in Pools 2, 3 and 4. Airboats are not allowed at any time. Outside the waterfowl seasons, only hand-powered boats are allowed. From April 15 to August 15, hand powered watercraft are not permitted between 10 a.m. and 5 p.m. Life jacket laws will be enforced.

Littering is prohibited. Take all trash with you.

Boats, decoys, ammunition, binoculars and other supplies are not available at the area office.

The Mitigation Marsh, located in the southeast portion of the Wildlife Area, is managed as a youth hunting area. It is open to hunters less than 16 years old hunters accompanied by no more than two adults.

Non-toxic shot is required for all shotgun hunting. The possession of lead shot in the field is prohibited.

No shooting is allowed on or from the dikes.

No holes or pits may be dug for any purpose. Portable blinds and temporary blinds made of native vegetation may be used but must be removed within 10 days after the close of the hunting season or after the last day of use.

SAFETY CONSIDERATIONS

Be sure you are at a foot crossing before leaving dikes. Barrow ditches along the dikes are deep. In addition, caution should be used when crossing all open water. Water depths can exceed 4 feet especially around renovated islands. This is particularly true in Pool 4 where extensive level ditches have been dug.

Rattlesnakes are common during warm months, so caution should be used.

Equal opportunity to participate in and benefit from programs described herein is available to all individuals without regard to race, color, national origin, sex, age, disability, sexual orientation, gender identity, political affiliation, and military or veteran status. Complaints of discrimination should be sent to Office of the Secretary, Kansas Department of Wildlife and Parks, 1020 S Kansas Ave., Topeka, KS 66612-1327. 11/10

Cheyenne Bottoms

Wildlife Area



The primary management goal of Cheyenne Bottoms is to provide a diverse marsh habitat for waterfowl and shorebirds during the migrational periods. This includes providing food, water and resting places. A secondary goal is to increase the production of waterfowl and shorebirds that nest on the area.

Approximately 13,000 acres of the wildlife area are open to hunting. This brochure is not intended to be a complete listing of area regulations. Some restrictions vary from year to year. If you have further questions contact Wildlife and Parks personnel.


















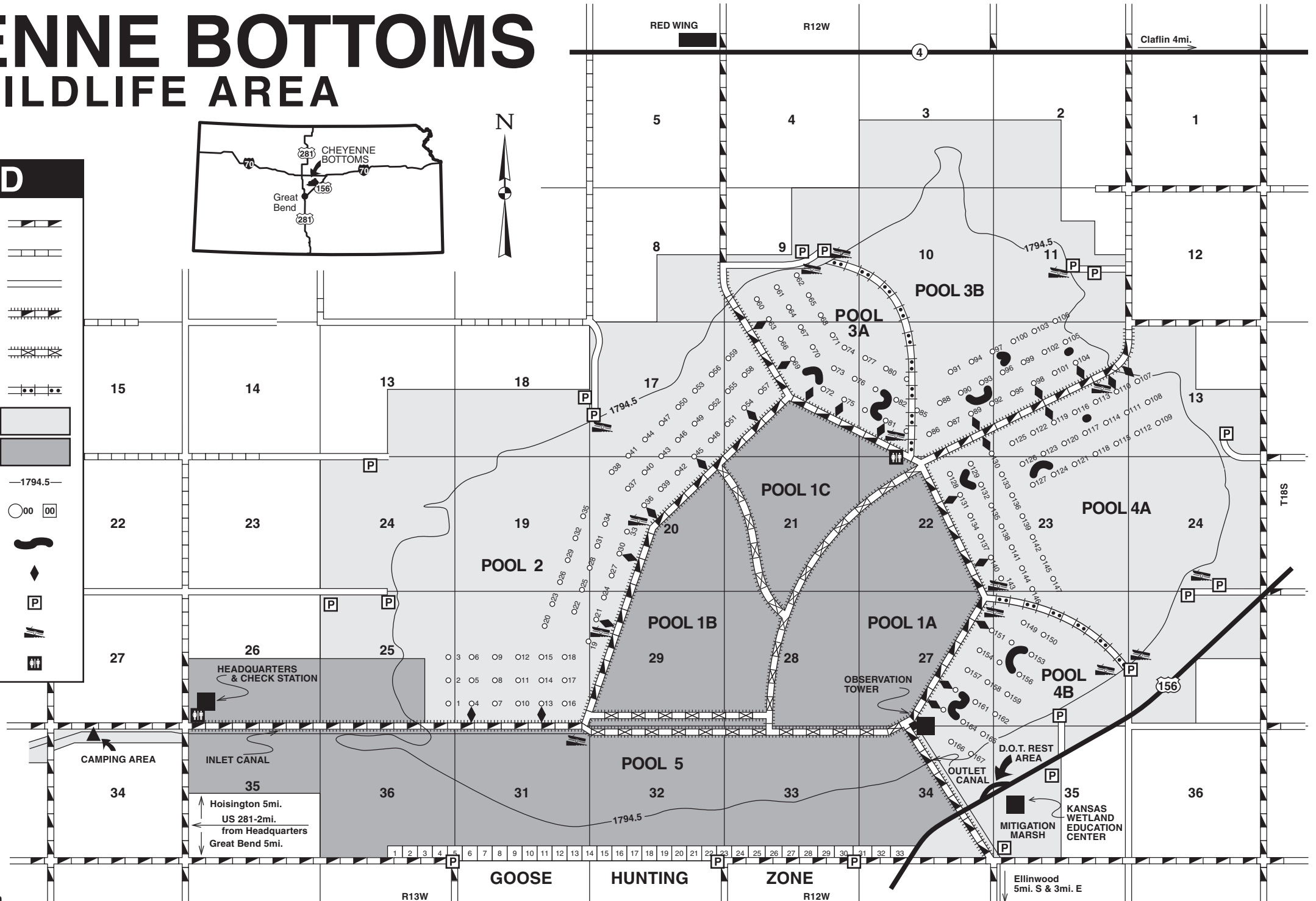
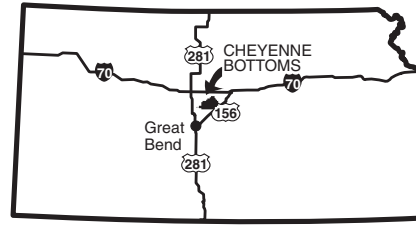
Cheyenne Bottoms
Wildlife Area
56 NE 40 Rd.
Great Bend, KS 67530
(620) 793-7730 (24-hr. Hotline)
(620) 793-3066 (Area Office)
(620) 227-8609 (Regional Office)

Department Website:
kdwp.state.ks.us

CHEYENNE BOTTOMS WILDLIFE AREA

LEGEND

- Gravel Surface Road 
- Improved Earth Road 
- Unimproved Earth Road 
- Dike with Gravel Surface Road 
- Refuge Area Dike
(Closed to all Activities) 
- Dike (Available to Foot Travel only) 
- Area Boundary 
- Refuge Area 
- Normal Pool Elevation  -1794.5-
- Duck and Goose Blinds  00 00
- Renovation Island 
- Foot Crossing 
- Parking Area 
- Boat Ramp 
- Vault Toilet 



Funded in part by your hunting license dollars and the federal excise tax on sporting arms and ammunition for wildlife restoration.