
Caddo Lake National Heritage Area

Frequently Asked Questions

What is a National Area Heritage Area?

A National Heritage area commemorates, conserves, and promotes areas that include important natural, scenic, historic, cultural, and recreational resources.

Will the Heritage Area be controlled by the federal government in any way?

No.

Will the creation of a National Heritage Area lead to restrictions on hunting or fishing?

No. Currently, activities on Caddo Lake are regulated at the state level. That will not change.

Will the creation of a Heritage area increase federal land or impose more burdensome federal regulations?

No. National Heritage Areas are not controlled by any entity of the federal government. They are not federally owned and managed.

Will the designation affect people's property rights?

No.

What role does the federal government have?

The National Park Service can provide financial aid to heritage areas but is not able to take any action beyond providing advisory input. National Heritage Areas are not part of the National Park System.

How does the creation of a national heritage impact oil and gas activity on Caddo Lake?

Owners of oil and gas leases will not be impacted by the designation. In fact, the petroleum industry is part of the unique cultural heritage of the area. Currently, activities on Caddo Lake are largely regulated at the state level. That will not change.

Who manages a National Heritage Area?

For Caddo Lake, the proposed legislation creates a local commission to coordinate with state and local partners. It specifically says that an equal number of members must come from Louisiana and Texas, and include individuals from

the forestry and energy industries, and environmental, cultural heritage, and tourism groups and regional partners.

Can this local commission create new taxes?

No.

Why will the Caddo Lake National Heritage Area be beneficial to our region?

The National Heritage Area will be able to receive federal funds to commemorate, conserve, and promote areas that include important natural, scenic, historic, cultural, and recreational resources.

An example of the beneficial opportunities provided to National Heritage Areas can be found at the Cane River National Heritage Area in Natchitoches. Last year, in partnership with the Natchitoches Parish Library and the City of Natchitoches, Cane River National Heritage Area created the Pierson and Mallet Children's Park Reading Trail. The trail is designed to feature a children's story book that focuses on Louisiana history or a Louisiana author. Each sign depicts pages from the selected story, along with a physical activity for readers. The Heritage Area also sponsors heritage events and programs such as music and folk life festivals that contribute to the interpretation, education and public awareness of the Cane River culture.

Why is this area being selected for a National Heritage Area designation?

Caddo Lake is a special place. Nowhere else in America did a steam boating-based economy, a railroad-based economy, and a petroleum-based economy successively combine over the course of a century to create such a unique cultural heritage. It is that combination that makes the area unique.

I have additional questions and concerns. Who can I talk to?

Since the Caddo Lake National Heritage Area Act of 2018 is in the very beginning stages of the legislative process and is by no means a finished product, U.S. Senator Bill Cassidy's office is actively seeking input from the community. Any questions, concerns, or comments can be directed to Brian Garand or Blake Schindler at 202-224-5824. You can also contact Stephanie McKenzie in my Shreveport office at 318-798-3215.